Module 1 multi-professional training: Basic information on gender based violence

**Timeframe:** app. 2 hours (long exercise on human rights)

**Content of Module 1:**

**Topic 1:** Violence against women as a human rights violation – forms and prevalence of violence

**Topic 2:** Consequences of violence

**Topic 3:** Domestic violence and effects on children

**General objectives of module 1:**
- To raise awareness about the issue
- To become aware that violence against women is a human rights violation
- To become familiar with different definitions
- To obtain knowledge about prevalence and consequences
- To get in touch emotionally with dynamics of violence and barriers to leaving a violent partner
- To learn that domestic violence always has effects on children
Background information

**Topic 1: Violence against women as a human rights violation – forms and prevalence of violence**

**International key instruments and recommendations**

"Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women..."


Women’s groups have long pushed for such responses, and have placed women’s rights firmly on the agenda of international human rights through their advocacy. The 1990s, in particular, witnessed concentrated efforts on the part of the world community to legitimize and mainstream the issue. The World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (1993) accepted that the rights of women and girls are “an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights.” Gender-based violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation, including those resulting from cultural prejudice and international trafficking, are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person, and must be eliminated.”(United Nations 1993a, 18). In December 1993 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. It is the first international human rights instrument to deal exclusively with violence against women, a groundbreaking document that became the basis for many other parallel processes.

The Declaration defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." (General Assembly Resolution 48/104 of 20 December 19931)

It broadens the definition of violence by including both the physical and psychological harm done towards women, and it includes acts in both private and public life. The Declaration defines violence against women as encompassing, but not limited to,

“( a ) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence to exploitation;

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1 http://www.unhchr.ch/huridoca/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/A.RES.48.104.En
Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;

Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs" (General Assembly Resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993).

This definition has been adopted by several international organisations.

Women are entitled to the equal enjoyment and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. These rights include the right to life, to equality, to liberty and security of person, to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health, and the right not to be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (General Assembly Resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993, Article 3).

The definition urges states to condemn violence against women and not to invoke any custom, tradition, or religious consideration to avoid their obligation toward its elimination.

Although this declaration is a policy statement without binding force, it carries significant international legitimacy as an expression of the collective body of member nations of the UN.

In 1994, the Commission on Human Rights appointed the first UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, entrusting her with the task of analysing and documenting the phenomenon, and holding governments accountable for violations against women. The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) included elimination of all forms of violence against women as one of its twelve strategic objectives, and listed concrete actions to be taken by governments, the United Nations, international and nongovernmental organisations.

**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW)**

In 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which is often described as an international bill of rights for women. The Convention defines what constitutes discrimination against women and frames an agenda for action to end such discrimination. The Convention came into force in 1981.

By accepting the Convention, States commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end all forms of discrimination against women by

- incorporating the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system, abolish all discriminatory laws and adopt appropriate ones prohibiting discrimination against women;

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establishing tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination; and to ensure the elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organisations or enterprises (*CEDAW 1979* ²)

While gender-based violence is not specifically mentioned in CEDAW, in 1992 the Committee overseeing CEDAW implementation adopted General Recommendation 19, which instructs states to take all necessary and effective measures to combat all forms of gender-based violence, which “is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men” (*CEDAW General Recommendation No. 19 11th session, 1992, item 1³*).

“States parties should establish or support services for victims of family violence, rape, sexual assault and other forms of gender-based violence, including refuges, specially trained health workers, rehabilitation and counseling.” (item 14 k)

The recommendation urges governments to ensure that laws penalising violence in the family, rape, sexual assault and other forms of gender-based violence provide sufficient protection for all women and that women’s integrity and dignity be respected (item 24 b).

Victims are also entitled to services to assist in their recovery from violations of their human rights. According to General Recommendation No. 19, the state has a clear duty to provide and adequately resource protective measures, including refuges, counseling, rehabilitation and support services for women who are the victims of violence or who are at risk of violence (item 24 r iii).

Under the new Optional Protocol to CEDAW, adopted by the UN General Assembly in October 1999, ratifying States recognise the authority of the Committee to receive and consider complaints from individuals or groups within that State’s jurisdiction. The Optional Protocol authorises the Committee to receive and examine communications from individuals claiming to be the victim of a breach of one of the provisions of the Convention by a party State.

On the basis of such complaints, the Committee can then conduct confidential investigations and issue urgent requests for a government to take action to protect victims from harm, bringing the Convention into line with other human rights instruments such as the Convention against Torture.


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Beijing Platform for Action

In 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action (from the Fourth World Conference on Women) called on governments to "condemn violence against women and refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women..." (Beijing platform for action, 124a).

Objectives and Actions to be taken are to:

- Integrate measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.
- Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.
- Eliminate trafficking in women and assisting victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking.

In 2000, a comprehensive review and approval of progress made in the implementation of the Platform for Action was undertaken by the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (Beijing +5) entitled "Women2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

The Assembly adopted a Political Declaration and Further Actions and Initiatives to Implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Outcome Document).

In the Political Declaration Member States agreed to "assess regularly further implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with a view to bringing together all parties involved in 2005 to assess progress and consider new initiatives, as appropriate, ten years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action". (Forty-ninth session of the commission on the status of women, 2005).

Council of Europe

In 1993 the European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men adopted a declaration stating: "Violence against women constitutes an infringement of the right to life, security, liberty and dignity of the victim and, consequently, a hindrance to the functioning of a democratic society, based on the rule of law.".

In Recommendation 1450 (2000) the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe "condemns violence against women as being a general violation of their rights as human beings - the right to life, safety, dignity and physical and psychological well-being". This Rec. clearly

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5 http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/violence.htm
6 Violence against Women Diagnosis
8 http://www.humanrights.coe.int/equality/Eng/EqualityCommittee/Conferences/ministerialconferences.htm
9 http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=Documents/AdoptedText/ta00/EREC1450.htm
states the widespread existence of oppression of women as manifested in domestic violence, rape and sexual mutilation. It also recognises the important role played by NGOs and "invites member states to fully support such NGOs in their national and international activities" (Parliamentary Assembly 2000).

In 2002 Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the Protection of Women against Violence was adopted:

"Recommends that the governments of member states:
Review their legislation and policies with a view to:
- ensuring that all measures are co-ordinated nation-wide and focused on the needs of the victims and that relevant state institutions as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) be associated with the elaboration and the implementation of the necessary measures, in particular those mentioned in this recommendation (article I 3); […]
- Recognise that states have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence, whether those acts are perpetrated by the state or private persons, and provide protection to victims (article II); […]
- Improve interactions between the scientific community, the NGOs in the field, political decision-makers and legislative, health, educational, social and police bodies in order to design co-ordinated actions against violence (article VII)" (Council of Europe 2002).

It was the first international instrument to propose a global strategy to prevent violence and to protect the victims, and that covers all forms of gender-based violence. The Recommendation also calls on governments to inform the Council of Europe on the follow-up given at national level. In 2006 the Council of Europe launched the campaign11 “Stop violence against women, including domestic violence”.

**European Union Initiatives**

In the European Union Amsterdam treaty (1997) equality between women and men was established as a crosscutting goal of all EU policy. Recent developments point to a trend towards extending the EU mandate in the field of gender equality policy (Walby 2004). Measures against violence and sexual harassment at the workplace are already part of the EU mandate and are regulated in corresponding legal documents. Similarly, legal regulations to combat trafficking of women already exist. Although there is little EU law in the field of domestic violence, the activities of the EU to combat violence against women and children are expanding. The obligations imposed by the EU legal framework (like the Amsterdam Treaty or the European Social Charter) include Member States’ obligations to fight violence against women and domestic violence. Also, all EU Member States took part in the 1995 Beijing Con-

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10 http://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=280915&BackColorInternet=9999CC&BackColorIntranet=FFBB55&BackColorLogged=FFAC75
11 http://www.coe.int/t/dc/campaign/stopviolence/default_en.asp

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ference on Violence against Women and adopted the Declaration and Platform for Action emerging from it. In 1997 the European Commission Justice and Home Affairs started the DAPHNE programme\(^\text{12}\), which has funded several hundred projects to combat violence against children, young people and women.

An important and legally binding instrument of the EU concerning women and children who are victims of violence is the Council Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings (2001), which establishes minimal rights of victims.

In February 2006 the European Parliament adopted a resolution\(^\text{13}\) on the current status of combating violence against women and any future action. The resolution “[r]ecommends, as regards men’s violence against women, the Commission and the Member States:

a) to regard it to be a violation of human rights, reflecting unequal gender power relations and to adopt an all-encompassing policy approach to combat it, including effective methods of prevention and punishment;

b) to adopt a framework for cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), with a view to developing policies and practices to combat domestic violence;

c) to formulate a zero-tolerance policy as regards all forms of violence against women;

d) to adopt a framework for cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), with a view to developing policies and practices to combat domestic violence”. (European Parliament 2006).

The Resolution calls on the Member States to take appropriate measures to ensure better protection and support of victims and those who are at risk of becoming victims of violence against women by among other measures:

- recognising the importance of providing support to victims, whether women or children, to help them become financially and psychologically independent from the perpetrator;
- adopting a proactive, preventive and penal strategy towards the perpetrators of violence against women in order to reduce recidivism, and providing advisory services for access by the perpetrators either on their own initiative or under a court order; always carrying out adequate risk assessments in order to ensure the safety of women and any children in the process;
- providing all necessary assistance, including transitional housing, to women and their children in cases of separation or divorce;
- treating women who are victims of gender-based violence as a category entitled to priority access to community-housing projects;
- providing safe shelters including sufficient financial resources;

\(^{13}\) www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/DownloadSP.do?id=4462&num_rep=5585&language=en -
• conducting specific employment action programmes for the victims of gender-based violence, so as to enable them to enter the labour market and achieve financial independence;
• planning services and centres for the care and support of children of women who are victims of violence;
• providing social and psychological support to children who have witnessed domestic violence;
• providing proper protection for immigrants, especially single mothers and their children, who often have inadequate means of defence or knowledge of available resources to counter domestic violence in Member States (European Parliament 2006)

**Expanded definition on violence**

The WHO (2002) broad definition of violence is “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group of community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation…” *(WHO 2002: World Health Report. Geneva)* 14, p.5).

This broad definition of violence recognises a wide range of outcomes beyond injury or death and highlights the need to tackle the challenge of the immense burden violence poses to individuals, families, communities and the health care system.

The Home Office of the UK defines domestic violence against women as “any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality” *(Department of Health, UK 2005: Responding to domestic abuse: a handbook for health professionals)* 15).

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Forms of domestic violence

Domestic violence is not an isolated, individual event, but rather a pattern of perpetrator behaviours used against a victim. The pattern consists of a variety of abusive acts, occurring in multiple episodes over the course of the relationship. Some episodes consist of a sustained attack with one tactic repeated many times (e.g., punching), combined with a variety of other tactics (such as name calling, threats, or attacks against property). Other episodes consist of a single act (e.g., a slap, a “certain look”). One tactic (e.g., physical assault) may be used infrequently, while other types of abuse (such as name calling or intimidating gestures) may be used daily. Some parts of the pattern are crimes in most countries (e.g., physical assault, sexual assault, menacing, arson, kidnapping, harassment) while other battering acts are not illegal (e.g., name calling, interrogating children, denying the victim access to the family automobile). All parts of the pattern interact with each other and can have profound physical and emotional effects on victims. Victims respond to the entire pattern of perpetrators’ abuse rather than simply to one episode or one tactic.

Physical violence
Physical abuse may include spitting, scratching, biting, grabbing, shaking, shoving, pushing, restraining, throwing, twisting, slapping (with open or closed hand), punching, choking, burning, and/or use of weapons (e.g., household objects, knives, guns) against the victim. The physical assaults may or may not cause injuries.

Sexual violence
Sexual violence consists of a wide range of conduct that may include pressured sex when the victim does not want sex, coerced sex by manipulation or threat, physically forced sex, or sexual assault accompanied by violence. Victims may be coerced or forced to perform a kind of sex they do not want (e.g., sex with third parties, physically painful sex, sexual activity they find offensive, verbal degradation during sex, viewing sexually violent material) or at a time they do not want it (e.g., when exhausted, when ill, in front of children, after a physical assault, when asleep).

Psychological violence
There are different types of psychological assaults.

Threats of violence and harm
The perpetrator’s threats of violence or harm may be directed against the victim or others important to the victim or they may be suicide threats. Sometimes the threat includes killing the victim and others and then committing suicide. The threats may be made directly with words (e.g., “I’m going to kill you,” “No one is going to have you,” “Your mother is going to pay,” “I cannot live without you”) or with actions (e.g., stalking, displaying weapons, hostage taking, suicide attempts).
**Emotional violence**

Emotional abuse is a tactic of control that consists of a wide variety of verbal attacks and humiliations, including repeated verbal attacks against the victim’s worth as an individual or role as a parent, family member, friend, co-worker, or community member. In domestic violence, verbal attacks and other tactics of control are intertwined with the threat of harm in order to maintain the perpetrator’s dominance through fear. While repeated verbal abuse is damaging to partners and relationships over time, it alone does not establish the same climate of fear as verbal abuse combined with the use or threat of physical harm. The presence of emotionally abusive acts may indicate undisclosed use of physical force or it may indicate possible future domestic violence.

Emotional abuse may also include humiliating the victim in front of family, friends or strangers. Perpetrators may repeatedly claim that victims are crazy, incompetent, and unable “to do anything right.” Not all verbal insults between partners are acts of violence. In order for verbal abuse to be considered domestic violence, it must be part of a pattern of coercive behaviours in which the perpetrator uses or threatens to use physical force.

**Isolation**

Perpetrators often try to control victims’ time, activities and contact with others. They gain control over them through a combination of isolating and disinformation tactics. Isolating tactics may become more overtly abusive over time. Through incremental isolation, some perpetrators increase their psychological control to the point where they determine reality for the victims. Perpetrators’ use of disinformation tactics such as distorting what is real through lying, providing contradictory information, or withholding information is compounded by the forced isolation of the victims. For example, perpetrators may lie to victims about their legal rights or the outcomes of medical interventions. While many victims are able to maintain their independent thoughts and actions, others believe what the perpetrators say because the victims are isolated from contrary information. Through his victim’s isolation, the perpetrator prevents discovery of the abuse and avoids being held responsible for it.

**Use of children**

Some abusive acts are directed against or involve children in order to control or punish the adult victim (e.g., physical attacks against a child, sexual use of children, forcing children to watch the abuse of the victim, engaging children in the abuse of the victim). A perpetrator may use children to maintain control over his partner by not paying child support, requiring the children to spy, requiring that at least one child always be in the company of the victim, threatening to take children away from her, involving her in long legal fights over custody, or kidnapping or taking the children hostage as a way to force the victim’s compliance. Children are also drawn into the assaults and are sometimes injured simply because they are present (e.g., the victim is holding an infant when pushed against the wall) or because the child attempts to intervene in the fight.
Use of economics
Perpetrators control victims by controlling their access to all of the family resources: time, transportation, food, clothing, shelter, insurance, and money. It does not matter who the primary provider is or if both partners contribute. He may actively resist the victim becoming financially self-sufficient as a way to maintain power and control. Conversely, he may refuse to work and insist that she support the family. He may expect her to be the family “bookkeeper,” requiring that she keep all records and write all checks, or he may keep financial information away from her. In all instances he alone makes the decisions. Victims are put in the position of having to get “permission” to spend money on basic family needs. When the victim leaves the battering relationship, the perpetrator may use economics as a way to maintain control or force her to return: refusing to pay bills, instituting legal procedures costly to the victim, destroying assets in which she has a share, or refusing to work “on the books” where there would be legal access to his income. All of these tactics may be used regardless of the economic class of the family.

normally is not perceived as ‘violent’

**Defusion of sexual and aggressive instinctual drives**

Inherent – probably so far hidden - Personality structures in men and women, can be triggered by stressful life-events (e.g. pregnancy or childbirth; unemployment, etc) and might cause a defusion of this normal fusion of sexual and instinctual drives. The consequence is a splitting of sexual lust from consciousness, whereas aggression remains, leading to violent behaviour, which neither for the victim nor for the perpetrator has any sexual connotation at all.

Physical and psychological violence, establish/create closeness – even if it is a perverted, painful closeness.

*Why discussing this process of normal fusion and pathological defusion of sexual and aggressive drives in this context?*

The knowledge of this developmental/psychological process is of paramount importance for health professionals working as counsellors, trainer in various settings, caring for victims of domestic violence. Understanding of these processes could – in mild or initial cases of domestic violence – help the couple to find a way out from the helix/hairspring of domestic violence.

Compiled by Prof. Marianne Springer-Kremser, Medial University of Vienna

**Prevalence and consequences of violence against women in Europe**

Since the 1990s many European countries have conducted national prevalence studies on the extent of physical, sexual and psychological violence against women. Some of the surveys have concentrated on violence by intimate partners; other surveys have also included other victim-perpetrator relationships and violence outside the home. They showed that women experience violence predominantly by current or former partners and less often by known or unknown persons in other relationship contexts (*Martinez, Schrott et al. 2006*). A few prevalence studies have also obtained information about the health impact of different forms of interpersonal violence on victims, indicating that violence against women greatly affects all aspects of women’s health, from immediate physical harm to the long-term impairment of victims’ mental, physical and social health. “The lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence by current and/or former partners ranges in the European studies from 4% to over 30%; the lifetime prevalence of physical violence alone ranges from 6% to over 30%, and the lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by intimate partners from 4% to over

20%, depending on methodology and also on the broad or narrow definitions of violence. Psychological violence by intimate partners has been published in some studies as a separate category; the lifetime-rate is between 19% and 42%.” (Martinez, Schröttle et al. 2006:13)

Because these European studies are not directly comparable a group of researchers in the CAHRV\(^{18}\) project carried out a systematic reanalysis of data from five European countries (Finland, Sweden, Germany, Lithuania, France). The reanalysis allowed more accurate data comparisons between countries by restricting comparisons to studies with similar definitions of violence, of age-groups and calculation bases for prevalence rates.

For example, the following comparisons show the extent of violence to women in the central age group of 20-59 across four countries.\(^{19}\)

**Physical violence by intimate partners**

The lifetime prevalence rates for physical violence by current and/or former partners documented in table 1 range from almost 21% to 33% for women who have ever had a partner. The detailed re-analysis by the CAHRV expert group finds lowest rates of physical partner violence in Sweden and highest rates in Lithuania (Martinez/Schröttle et al. 2006: 12). Between 9% and 23% of women in the central age group have experienced at least one act of physical violence by a current partner. Here again prevalence rates in Sweden are lowest and prevalence rates in Lithuania highest, whereas the rates for Finland and Germany fall in between.

The prevalence rates for violence by former partners are very similar and extremely high (32% to 42%) relative to the prevalence rates by current partners (13% to 24%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Physical violence by intimate partners – lifetime-prevalence. Age-group: 20-59. (Martinez/Schröttle 2006, p. 12)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical violence by current and/or former partner</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(based on women who ever had a partner)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical violence by current partner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(based on women who currently have a partner)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical violence by former partner</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(based on women who had a partner before)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\(^{18}\) Coordination Action on Human Rights Violations (CAHRV) see: www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de

\(^{19}\) They stem from the CAHRV-data reanalyses conducted by several prevalence researchers in 2006. See same, pp. 10ff.
Sexual violence by intimate partners

It is very difficult to define exactly where sexual violence by intimate partners begins and where pressure is perceived as an (unwelcome) sexual advance, but not a violation. In some studies a rather broad definition of unwanted sexual acts is used, other studies define it by forced acts that refer to legal definitions of rape and attempted rape. Some studies use very exact and clinical phrases to identify sexual violence in the questionnaires, others remain rather vague (Martinez/Schröttle et al. 2006:17). In all studies there is a relative consensus on the contents and the categorisation of acts of sexual violence but the detailed description of the actions, the structuring of the questionnaires, the time frame, and above all the grouping together of events in the subdivision of private and public spheres differ. Thus the comparability of sexual violence between countries is limited. However, the CAHRV expert group came to the conclusion that cautious comparisons between countries are possible because all five surveys that were included in the reanalysis obtained information on forced sexual acts, and did so in a similar way. All but the Finnish study differentiate between forced sexual acts and attempts to force acts (see table 2).

Table 2: Sexual violence by intimate partners – lifetime-prevalence. Age-group: 20-59. (Martinez/Schröttle 2006, p. 18)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual violence by current and/or former partner (based on women who ever had a partner)</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual violence by current partner (based on women who currently have a partner)</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual violence by former partner (based on women who had a partner before)</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the CAHRV expert group the differences may to some extent be a consequence of methodology and wording, and might reflect differences in reporting or in the sensitivity of the topic (for which empirical evidence is lacking at present). It seems that in the Finnish study rates of sexual violence by partners are relatively high compared to the rates in the German, Lithuanian and Swedish studies. Furthermore, the Finnish and Swedish surveys were administered in the same way. Thus there may in fact be higher rates of sexual violence against women by current and former partners in Finland. It seems that they are extremely high with regard to sexual violence by former partners that was experienced by almost one in six women (18%) who had ever separated from a partner in Finland and by 11-12% of the women in the other countries (Martinez/Schröttle 2006: 18f).
Psychological violence, threat and control by partners

It is still very difficult to define exactly what psychological violence in intimate partner relationships is, where it begins and when it is just one aspect of “bad partner behaviour”. In most prevalence studies several dimensions of dominance, humiliating behaviour, threat and control in order to measure psychological violence are used; sometimes indicators are developed in order to assess lower or higher levels of psychological violence Martinez/Schröttle et al. 2006:22). In the data reanalysis only those questions on psychological violence were included that were similar in the surveys (see table 4).

Table 4 shows relatively high overall rates of psychological violence in the Lithuanian study, lower rates in the Finnish and German study and again lowest rates in the Swedish study. Between 12% of women in the Swedish study and 29% of women in the Lithuanian study have reported at least one of these behaviours for the current partner. This was the case for 14% of women in the German study and almost 17% of women in the French study.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) extreme jealousy</td>
<td>(4.4%)</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) restricting the woman from seeing friends or other relatives</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) humiliating behaviour</td>
<td>(24.5%)</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>(2.6%)</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) economic control</td>
<td>(1.2%)</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>(12.2%)</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) threatening to harm the children</td>
<td>(1.1%)</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>(0.6%)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) threatening to commit suicide</td>
<td>(1.0%)</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one of these ...</td>
<td>(24.3%)</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The French data refer to annual rates only, whereas the other surveys have no set time periods; where these questions refer to the ‘current’ partner, comparing the French data with the other surveys is unreliable. The figures that are not fully comparable are given in parentheses ( ).

Conclusions about the extent of violence against women in Europe

The analyses of prevalence data on violence against women in several European countries show that women experience sexual as well as physical and psychological violence to a high extent, mostly through intimate partners but also through other known or unknown perpetrators. There seem to be differences between countries and regions in the extent of violence against women that cannot yet be explained in a conclusive way but that may have to do with differences in the life situations and gender relationships of women and men; with differences in law and politics; but also with differences in the openness to report on violent experiences to third persons. Future research should monitor the extent and development of prevalence
of violence against women in European countries and pay attention to political and societal contexts that may contribute to lower rates of violence against women and positive changes and improvements over time.

Compiled by Dr. Monika Schröttle, University of Bielefeld, Email: monika.schroettle@uni-bielefeld.de

The WHO conducted a multi-country-study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence including mostly non-European, resource-poor countries. Over 24,000 women aged 15 to 49 years were interviewed at 15 sites in 10 countries. The results show that between one-third and three-quarters of women (35 to 76%) had been physically or sexually assaulted by someone since the age of 15 in 13 of the 15 sites studied. In almost all the settings the majority of this violence was perpetrated by a current or previous partner, rather than by other persons (Garcia-Moreno C, Jansen AFM, Ellsberg M et al. 2005). According the study, from 15 to 71% of women who ever had a partner had been physically or sexually assaulted by an intimate partner. About half of these women reported that the violence was currently ongoing (i.e. occurred in the past 12 months preceding the interview). In the majority of settings a greater proportion of women had experienced "severe" physical violence than "moderate" physical violence. More than one-fifth (21 to 66%) of women reporting physical violence in the study had never told anyone of their partner’s violence before the study interview (Garcia-Moreno/Heise et al 2005: 1282).

Topic 2: Consequences of violence

The consequences of intimate partner violence are many and go beyond the actual physical or psychological trauma generated by the violent acts themselves. There are many health-related consequences that include actual physical injuries (abdominal and thoracic trauma, chronic pains, bruises, abrasions and ocular damage among others). There can be reproductive consequences including infertility, gynaecological disorders sexual dysfunction, sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies.

The psychological and behavioural consequences include alcohol and drug abuse, depression, anxiety, eating and/or sleep disorders, poor self-esteem, panic disorders, phobias and suicidal behaviour.

The most common fatal outcomes are mortality from AIDS, maternal mortality, homicide and suicide.  

The economic impact is reflected by work absenteeism from injuries and a lower ability of the victims to maintain employment.

20 For more information on health consequences see module 1 for the health professionals topic 1
Intimate partner violence often interferes with women’s ability to form and maintain social relationships. This is particularly clear where isolation is a predominant tactic but it is also an issue in the sense that third parties may limit or end contact with a woman because they are uncomfortable in the presence of an abuser or afraid of him. In either case lack of social contacts and shrinking social networks mean that women have less access to resources that are not controlled by the abuser. It also means that women may have fewer opportunities to validate their own experiences and get a ‘reality check’ from a trusted third party.

Intimate partner violence also interferes with women’s access to education and work. Abusers often make it difficult for women to study or go to university. Interference from abusers may range from ridiculing and dismissing academic work, to keeping women up late so they cannot study, or blocking access to education altogether. With regard to the workplace, evidence is increasing that abusers use a variety of tactics to jeopardise women’s chance of steady employment. Studies from the U.S. have shown that such tactics include interrupting women at the workplace through excessive phone calls or personal visits, stalking women after work, assaulting women before they go to work, threatening to harm children while mothers are at work, and assaulting women at work.

**Topic 3: Domestic violence and effects on children**

Child abuse is closely connected with partner violence. Medical care facilities found that 45% to 59% of mothers of abused children are likewise affected by violence (US DHHS 2003). Research by Stark and Flitcraft (1996) determined that 45% of the mothers of 116 maltreated or severely neglected children were also exposed to violence. The authors concluded that violence against women in partnerships is one of the main factors correlating with child abuse.

When women suffer violence in a partnership, children are also affected in different ways. According to Heynen (2004), children are facing four typical forms of violence:

1. Fathering through rape (forced pregnancy)
2. Mistreatment during pregnancy
3. Direct experiences of violence as co-/victims of battering
4. Growing up in an atmosphere of violence and humiliation.

As direct or indirect witnesses of violent acts, children observe the events when they are in the same room. They register the entire spectrum of the violent act when they are in an adjacent room. They can feel the escalation and the destructive emotions and they wonder what it is all about (Kavemann 2000a). Research shows that the strains, insecurities and the stress
children experience as a result of violence in partnerships not only have immediate consequences but also interfere with child development in the long term (Kindler 2006).

Being a witness of domestic violence is especially stressful for children as they are deprived of the fundamental needs for safety and comfort and grow up in an atmosphere of fear and terror. For example, children feel helpless, unprotected, responsible, or partly to blame or they want to interfere and get injured themselves. Particularly when the woman is exposed to constant violence the consequences can be traumatic.

Witnessed or directly experienced violence has various effects on girls and boys. Such experiences can impair the emotional, physical and cognitive development of the affected children and in the case of chronic forms of violence or with very small children can lead to traumatic damages. Researches found that 50% to 70% of children exposed to domestic violence suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder (Klotz 2000), with symptoms including sleep disorders, loss of concentration, depressive moods, increased irritability and aggression (Heynen 2003).

Depending on the child's age their symptoms may include sleep disorders, bedwetting, problems at school, delayed development, eating disorders, aggression, fearfulness, self-mutilation as well as drug and alcohol abuse (Kavemann 2002b; DHHS 2003). Children's reactions to the experienced violence and their strategies for overcoming trauma depend, among other things, on the intensity and the frequency of the violence. Children may fearfully withdraw or show their anger and display aggressive and violent behaviour. Older children often show a high degree of responsibility and try to protect the mother and younger siblings (Heynen 2003).

In the case of co-experienced partner violence, studies of child behaviour disorders show outward directed reactions such as anxiety and aggressiveness ("Externalization"). However, most of all they show inward directed reactions such as intense depressiveness or fearfulness ("Internalization"; Kindler 2002). Kindler determined that compared to control groups, children affected by domestic violence show a five-fold risk of symptoms that require treatment (ibid).

Research by Kerig (1998) regarding gender-specific differences indicates that girls are more inclined to feel partly responsible for violence, whereas boys feel a stronger sense of threat. Girls showed externalised symptoms in the immediate social environment but the danger of chronic externalisation signs was thought to be higher for boys (quoted according to Kindler 2006).

Co-experienced violence in relationships can severely impair the development of children in the long term. It is thought that such experiences are related to the "risk paths" disturbance of learning ability and the ability of constructive problem solving. Studies indicate that domestic violence has significant consequences for age-appropriate learning of problem solving meth-
ods and conflict resolution competences, and possibly for violent behaviour or violent experiences in the future. Children who co-experienced partner violence had more frequently developed gender role stereotypes, were behaving more aggressively or had greater problems in building positive relationships. An important part of the “joy of life” is disturbed when the ability to relate to others is compromised. Many signs point to a tendency towards continuing violence in later partnerships and the negative effects of such violence on the next generation (ibid).

Research has documented the limited educational and child-rearing capacities of parents who suffered partner violence. For example, women who suffered PTSD as a result of partner violence showed increased aggressive behaviour towards their children (Jones/Hughes et al. 2001). However, it has also been shown that these facts do not suggest a generally negative perspective on parental care and educational practices. Once violence stopped, signs of PTSD and aggression towards children diminished. Childcare and educational services were able to make up for parents' lack of educational skills (Kindler 2006).

References:


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Practical Part

Topic 1: Violence against women as a human rights violation – forms and prevalence of violence

Aims and objectives:
- sensitise participants to the issue
- become aware that violence against women is a human rights violation
- become familiar with different definitions
- gain knowledge about prevalence

Timeframe: Input 20 minutes plus 10 minutes discussion, exercise on human rights 40 minutes (long version), 15 minutes (short version)

Input on definition, forms and prevalence of violence

Method: Input and exercise
Material: list of human rights, handouts
Topic 1: Violence against women as a human rights violation

Notes for trainer:
• Trainer can use the long version if there is enough time, otherwise the short version of 15 minutes. If the multi-professional training takes place over only one day, the short version is recommended.

Human rights and DV
(Universal Declaration of Human Rights)
Time frame: 45 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Title</th>
<th>UDHR</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Background</td>
<td>Before we go into the detailed analyses of cases/situations during the training, it is important to make sure participants have common, shared knowledge about human rights. Also, it is important that they do not consider human rights as some abstraction, but have a „personal” connection to them.</td>
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<td>3. Goal</td>
<td>Learning the contents of the UDHR, bringing participants to the same level of knowledge regarding HR.</td>
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<td>4. Objectives</td>
<td>Information: articles of the UDHR Skills: identifying dilemmas due to the possibly conflicting nature of, or hierarchy between, specific rights; debating skills Attitudes: „bringing home” human rights, recognizing the fact that abused women need to bargain about their basic human rights on an every-day basis, for them HR is not an abstract concept</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Competencies</td>
<td>• Effective communication • Cooperation • Handling information • Critical thinking • Handling problems</td>
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<td>6. Methods</td>
<td>• Small group discussion • Reporting in big group</td>
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<td>7. Program</td>
<td>Zeppelin method: The task: The group is broken down into small groups of 3-4 members each. Each group receives an envelop with the short version of the articles of UDHR (30). The groups are members of a zeppelin on a trip above the city. Due to some problem with the balloon,</td>
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they have to throw out 5 rights. (They have to agree among themselves which rights to discard.) The discarded rights are collected by the facilitator and pinned to the flipchart next to their articles. However, there still is a problem with the balloon, and now the zeppelin can only stay up in the air if no more than five rights are retained. So the groups have to choose the 5 rights they wish to save. When they are finished, the facilitator collects the rights and pins them to the flipchart.

**Reflection, tips for facilitator:**
The facilitator may ask any or all of the following questions:
- How did you decide which rights to throw out and which to keep?
- Was it easy or difficult to agree? Were there any disagreements?
- Which factors may determine one’s choice?
- If any frustration in the small group was discerned by the facilitator during the discussions, even if they don’t bring it up, it is possible to ask about it and address it, and acknowledge that it is usually frustrating to have to prioritize over inalienable, connected and basic human rights.
- Final question: Do you think there are any groups of people, or any situations where someone has to do exactly the same sort of weighing of rights?
- The group may take a shorter or longer reflection period to see which rights were actually saved and why, whether there may be cases or groups of people where priorities may be different.

It is important to call attention to the fact that women who suffer partnership violence may live every day with a task similar to this: their survival may depend on the correct evaluation of which of their human rights they should stick to on the given day. They may chose one or the other; their priority may not always be the same as an outsider’s but then, they are the ones in danger. Also, a different set of priorities for someone else does not mean that battered women are entitled to fewer rights or a narrower scope of human rights.

| 8. Background material (optional) | • Reports, if they exist related to human rights abuses of women in the given country (court cases, evaluations, surveys on DV, rape, sexual abuse, etc.)  
• International documents (CEDAW, Case of M.C. v. Bulgaria before the European Court of Human Rights in 2003. [application no. 39272/98]) |

Adopted from the Compass Training Manual (www.eycb.coe.int<http://www.eycb.coe.int>)

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Example of flipchart if there are two groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Of Article</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
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Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 1. Right to equality in dignity and rights for all human beings

Article 2. Freedom from discrimination of any kind

Article 3. Right to life, liberty and personal security

Article 4. Freedom from slavery and servitude in all its forms

Article 5. Freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

Article 6. Right to recognition as a person before the law

Article 7. Right to equality before the law and the protection of law without any discrimination

Article 8. Right to effective remedy by competent courts if one's fundamental rights have been violated

Article 9. Freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and exile

Article 10. Right to fair public hearing by independent and impartial court
Article 11. Right to be considered innocent until proven guilty, and freedom from being charged for an act that was not considered a crime when it happened

Article 12. Freedom from interference in one’s privacy, home, family, correspondence, or from attacks upon one’s honour and reputation

Article 13. Right to free movement within and out of one’s country

Article 14. Right to asylum in another country in case of persecution (except in cases of non-political criminal offences)

Article 15. Right to a nationality, and right to change one’s nationality

Article 16. Right to marriage for women and men of full age, freedom to chose one’s spouse, and establish a family based on the mutual consent of the spouses

Article 17. Right to own property

Article 18. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 19. Freedom of opinion and expression, and right to receive and impart information within and without countries
Article 20. Right to peaceful assembly and association, and freedom from compulsory membership

Article 21. Right to participate in elections and government (active and passive suffrage)

Article 22. Right to social security

Article 23. Right to work, favourable working conditions, equal pay for equal work, favourable remuneration, and right to participate in trade unions

Article 24. Right to rest from work, and holiday

Article 25. Right to living standards adequate for one’s health, without disadvantage because of his/her circumstances

Article 26. Right to free and compulsory elementary education, and right to further education on the basis of merit

Article 27. Right to participate in the cultural life of one’s community and right to authorship

Article 28. Right to a social and international order in which these rights and freedoms can be fully realized

Article 29. Duties and responsibilities to the community shall be observed by all, one may not infringe on these rights of others

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Article 30. Right to the free exercise of these duties, freedom from violating these rights by other persons, groups or governments
Exercise II (short version):
**Aim:** participants become aware that many human rights are violated in the case of domestic violence
**Method:** brainstorming and whisper groups
**Material:** Human Rights list of exercise I, case study, flip chart
**Description of exercise:**
Each of the participants receives the list of human rights and the case study. They have a few minutes time to read it and 5 minutes to discuss with their neighbours the following question: Which of the human rights are violated/ignored in the case of the abused woman? The trainer gathers the results in the whole group and writes the articles down on the flip chart.

Topic 2: Consequences of violence

**Aims and objectives:**
participants should be aware of the short- and long-term social, economic and health consequences of violence
**Method:** brainstorming and input
**Timeframe:** 15 minutes brainstorming, 15 minutes input about research results
**Material:** flipchart
**Exercise description:**
participants of each profession are asked to talk about their awareness of consequences. These are listed on the flipchart (15 minutes)

**Notes for trainer:**
Question: With which consequences are you confronted in your professional daily praxis? No comments are allowed.

Trainer summarises the results and gives an overview of research differentiating between short-term effects and long-term consequences. (15 Minutes)
Topic 3: Domestic violence and effects on children

**Timeframe:** 15 minutes  
**Aims and objectives:** participants should be aware about the effects on children witnessing domestic violence  
**Method:** input  
**Material:** none  
**Handouts for the whole module 1:** PPT files, theoretical reading on human rights instruments