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Gendering Human Rights Violations: The case of interpersonal violence: Final Report 2004-2007

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CAHRV
Gendering Human Rights Violations:
The case of interpersonal violence

FINAL REPORT

Gendering Human Rights Violations: The case of interpersonal violence

Coordination Action on Human Rights Violations (CAHRV)

Final Report 2004-2007

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Preface

Three years of project work are hardly enough to declare that a radical change has taken place in the overall understanding of violence in interpersonal relationships. However, it is fair to say that a new basis for conceptualising and using knowledge on violence has been laid by this Coordination Action on Human Rights Violations (CAHRV).

The final report of CAHRV details on the objectives, methodology and scope of the project. But what is the value of this type of project for the European Union? How does this project contribute to the overall policy objectives of the EU?

The European Union created an area of freedom, security and peace which is shared today by 27 countries. The newly signed Treaty of Lisbon, currently under ratification by the EU Member States, re-emphasises the need to continuously build on a Europe of rights and values, freedom, solidarity and security. Continuously, not only because these principles are at the heart of the democratic life of Europe but also because society is transforming - and so are its peculiarities and needs.

One of the main challenges that the EU has taken on is the transformation of Europe into a fully functional knowledge-based society, ensuring prosperity and well being for its citizens. The contributions of Social Sciences and Humanities to the overall understanding of this transformation and to better policy making is crucial. It is in this light that I welcome the outcomes of the Coordination Action on Human Rights Violations.

Between 2004 and 2007, the project produced multiple results resulting from its four sub-networks. But above all, this extensive consortium of partners, counting 22 research institutions and over 60 individual experts across 14 European countries has made a statement to which we can all firmly subscribe – all interpersonal violence can represent a threat to democracy and social cohesion. It follows from here the critical importance of analysing the roots of violence; identifying its impact and in particular profiling victimisation; working on gender-based human rights violations; and identifying protective environmental factors securing human rights. These four are the areas of work of the sub-networks of the project, and they give rise to interesting results which impact on the Gendering Human Rights Violations report.

The CAHRV research looks at different violence situations, where victims are women, children, the elderly, and men. By comparing national representative studies across Europe, CAHRV confirms that violence against women remains a major problem affecting the lives of one quarter to one third of all women in European countries. Interpersonal violence is one of the most pressing issues facing European citizens, and even in a society apparently at peace, physical, sexual and physiological violations are widespread. Research shows that private violations are a major cause of health problems; they block achievement in education and at work, restrict social networks and severely limit the option of self-confidence required for social and political participation.

Last but not the least, CAHRV represents a successful example of a multistakeholders' platform, having pooled resources and actors from universities, institutions, civil society, and networks. The literature produced by the project, the networking established within its platform, the gendered dimension of human rights – all this is material that can and should contribute to a better understanding of society, stimulate new research, and produce valuable insights for policy making.

I wish to thank the consortium of partners for the quality of their work.

Jean-Michel Baer
Director of RTD directorate
"Science, economy and society"

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The Coordination Action in Brief

The Co-ordination Action on Human Rights Violations (CAHRV) addresses human rights violations in the context of interpersonal relationships. CAHRV is a broad-based, collaborative effort of 22 research institutions in 14 European Countries, policy networks, and individual researchers, funded through the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme.

Objectives

Violence against women and abuse of children are recognized as grave human rights violations. This framework needs to be extended to recognize elderly and male victims; all interpersonal violence can represent a threat to democracy and social cohesion. The field of interpersonal violence typifies fragmentation in addressing human rights violations. Theoretical and practical links between the different aspects of violence have been neglected.

CAHRV aims to account for and overcome fragmentation in research, policy and practice, linking and building on networks for women, children and men. It is working to integrate parallel research discourses on violence and:

- unify a theoretical and empirical basis for policy
- survey a wide territory with a case study approach,
- establish and structure co-operation through sub-networks
- identify further sites of excellence.

In a practical perspective, CAHRV aims to:

- build a research foundation for recognizing good practice,
- make standards for services and interventions available on a European level,
- contribute to policy-related data collection,
- improve dissemination and co-operation with NGO's, agencies and governments.

The work program over three years included the following:

With regard to data towards identifying and profiling victimization:

1) Compile a comprehensive collection of state-of-the-art studies that measure the occurrence of interpersonal violence and its impact, in particular on health;
2) Produce a trans-national overview of prevalence data with attention to the role of gender, socio-economic status, race, disabilities, sexual identities, migration status in defining vulnerability;
3) Compare the methodology of data collection and the structure of available data sets and develop a common framework for cross-national re-analysis;
4) Develop methodology for studying patterns of different types of violence and their consequences and standards for future studies and for regular data collection relevant to policy needs.

For comparative research on the roots of interpersonal violence and men's gendered practices:

1) Secure a baseline of existing research on men's gendered practices and social exclusion, especially as these may relate to violent conflicts;
2) Design a shared methodological framework, including common concepts, definitions and standards for European level research on the roots of violent behaviour, social inclusion/ social exclusion and violation.

3) Produce and disseminate a methodological framework report as a foundation for culturally sensitive studies that could gather new comparative data.

On addressing gender-based human rights violations:

1) Gain a systematic overview of research on the failures of legal and policy systems to address interpersonal violence on the one hand, and on the central role of active civic participation in addressing gendered violence and related human rights concerns on the other.
2) Collect existing documentation, analysis and evaluation of intervention by agencies, projects, inter-agency approaches, activism and other civil society strategies;
3) Compile information on intersections between criminal, civil and family law in response to gender-based violence, and develop the methodology for systematic comparison between countries and monitoring changes over time.

In the area of protective environmental factors securing human rights:

1) Identify, document and map out research on countering human rights violations and developing security and protective factors in areas relevant to families, intergenerational relations, work and conflict resolution.
2) By comparative study, develop grounded hypotheses on how those who are vulnerable or victimised can be given the psychological and social resources and skills for confident and secure lives free of violence and conflict.

Integrating and cross-cutting tasks

1) Hold two conferences for all members of the co-ordination action, as well as addressing the scientific community and the actors involved in dissemination and implementation of research results;
2) Identify, document and establish regular communication among sites of excellent research according to agreed-upon criteria;
3) Convene sustainable interdisciplinary transnational groups of experts on crosscutting issues to develop in-depth analysis and policy input.
4) Integrate the results of the four sub-networks to shape a larger framework for future research on securing human rights.

The entire work program was successfully completed and the results presented at conferences, published, and disseminated to the wider public and policy-makers.

Individual members

In addition to the researchers affiliated directly through the Consortium, 64 individual experts from overall 26 countries had full membership status and were contributing to the work of the Co-ordination Action on Human Rights Violations.

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1. Introduction

Human dignity, fundamental rights and human security set standards by which individuals, communities and societies can develop their potential and learn to resolve or transform conflict constructively without violence. Yet these standards are frequently disregarded, not only in times of war, but also in everyday life – in homes, in schools, at work and in public places. Painful acts of violation occur in close personal relationships or within social environments such as neighbourhoods. The research network "Coordination Action on Human Rights Violations" was founded to look at the structural patterns underlying these everyday injuries, many of which have only recently become an object of public concern, and to develop a comprehensive and integrated perspective towards understanding and addressing them.

There is a need for such a systematic view, for both research and policy have tended to look at interpersonal violence piecemeal. A national prevalence study will set off a discussion on violence in the family against women. An outbreak of violence in schools will be followed by a spurt of public statements about youth, unemployment and cultural conflict. A case of abuse or fatal neglect of a child mobilizes concern about social services and child protection. Each wave of concern seems to call attention to a new and different problem, while in fact research has the tools and theoretical resources to describe their interconnections, and to suggest approaches to broader-based strategies of overcoming them.

The time is ripe for an integrated approach, and the great interest and enthusiasm raised by the CAHRV project is a sign that the European research community was more than ready to study, describe and present to policy-makers the linkages between the problem areas. Unchecked interpersonal violence represents a threat to democracy and social cohesion, but to understand how and why it is still present in our midst requires in-depth understanding of how violence is shaped by gender for both women and men, both boys and girls; how stressors and power imbalances between the generations lead to violence, and how these interconnect.

The CAHRV philosophy of linking the gender and generational dimensions that appear in interpersonal violence proved highly successful. 22 partner institutions took responsibility for the work program comprising literature reviews across numerous countries, thematic and cross-cutting workshops, large conferences with high public impact, and internet communication activities such as a newsletter, an internet mapping of literature, a publication site with carefully edited papers of professional quality, and analytical reviews on central issues. In all, over 100 researchers from 20 countries[1] in the enlarged Europe contributed actively (and often without compensation) to the work. In this final report, we would like to express our especial gratitude to the co-authors of collaborative papers and to the speakers at key conferences and workshops. The present summarizing report builds on and uses their work, seeking to pull together the issues and insights that arose across the different working groups; they should be considered co-authors.

PART ONE of the report offers an overview of the aims and the achievements of the CAHRV project and presents some of its over-arching themes. The following chapter 2 presents the project objectives and explains the rationale behind them. In chapter 3, the working methods and specific achievements in coordinating research are outlined, showing how this broad-based enterprise became meaningful and useful. Chapter 4 reviews and assesses the contribution of the work completed towards the overall objectives as set out in the original project proposal. In chapter 5, advances in developing a shared theoretical framework for understanding interpersonal violence in a human rights context are discussed. This includes weighing of the benefits and limitations of human rights frameworks for research on interpersonal violence. Chapter 6 discusses "fruits of collaboration": insights that emerged across the different thematic focal areas.

PART TWO looks more closely at the specific content areas of the work program and at the progress of knowledge within each area. In a summarizing form, the main results of the collaboration are presented. For more detailed consideration of the specific topics, we refer to the reports published on the CAHRV website www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de.

2. Project objectives and rationale

2.1. Objectives

The Co-ordination Action on Human Rights Violations (CAHRV) seeks to bridge the divides between differing perspectives on violence in research, policy and practice. CAHRV focuses on all forms of interpersonal violence, centres them conceptually and strategically within a human rights discourse, and aims to integrate relevant strands of research. Funded from 2004 to 2007 through the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme, CAHRV has been a collaborative effort of 22 research institutions in 14 European countries, national and trans-national policy networks, and numerous individual researchers.

Major goals of the action were to integrate parallel but separate research discourses on interpersonal violence; unify the theoretical and empirical basis for policy; stimulate new, interdisciplinary and transnational research; and support practitioners, policy-makers, and scientists by facilitating the dissemination of knowledge and expertise. Such integration requires collaborative work across multiple disciplines and languages. It becomes more pressing for European research as the growing political and economic integration of Europe calls for data and theory that are valid across linguistic and national borders. Mindful of these challenges, CAHRV has sought to bring into clearer relief European approaches that can inform methodology, practice and policy across the continent.

Interpersonal violence is one of the most pressing issues facing European citizens. Even in societies apparently at peace, physical, sexual and psychological violations are widespread and their impact can be devastating. There is a growing body of knowledge showing that seemingly private violations are a major cause of health problems, block achievement in education and at work, restrict social networks and severely limit the options and self-confidence required for social and political participation. The evidence indicates that the majority of perpetrators are men, but the study of masculinity has only begun to explore the roots of such gendered practices. A variety of measures has been devised and implemented to support victims and deter perpetrators, but evaluation and monitoring are spotty at best and often lacking. Research on protective factors or environments and the effects of societal changes is rudimentary.

While the pertinent literature has burgeoned over recent years, research efforts are very unevenly distributed, both topically and regionally. In an effort to cut conceptual and empirical paths through the wide realm under scrutiny CAHRV was structured into four thematic areas:

1) identifying and profiling victimization,
2) analyzing the roots of interpersonal violence,
3) intervening with gender-based human rights violations, and
4) identifying protective factors.

For each area, a "sub-network" was constituted whose members come from a wide range of countries, disciplines, and methodological and conceptual backgrounds, while sharing a thematic interest in the central issues. It was further the ambition of CAHRV to include research on women, on men and on children in each area; this was partially successful. Within CAHRV, as in the international political and scientific arena, concern for violence against women was the driving force for developing a

gender perspective on all of interpersonal violence, and thus was central to many of the discussions. In practical terms, each "sub-network" took on one medium-term work task for the entire coordinated action, using its more specialized topical focus as the example or demonstration case. Thus, the products of the work were intended to serve as models for implementing an integrative perspective.

2.2. Why is there a need to overcome fragmentation?

The CAHRV endeavour diagnosed at its outset a state of fragmentation in both research and practice towards interpersonal violence. During three years of collaboration and discussion, substantial progress was made towards understanding different approaches, concepts of violence, victimization, or protection, analyses of relations of power and abuse, and methodological frameworks.

Yet these three years of dialogue have also shown that the fragmentation is not merely an accident through lack of communication; rather, it is built into the framings on which the study of interpersonal violence and the policy approaches to addressing it have been, and still are grounded. The different framings appeared within CAHRV as challenges, sometimes obstructing or slowing the process of collaboration across different areas of specialized knowledge, but also stimulating in-depth discussions for which longer and more frequent meetings would have been fruitful. For example, applying the concept of "gender-based violence" to the victimization of men as well as to violence against women remained controversial to the end. Violence against the elderly tended to be marginal, reflecting the fact that there has been very little research in Europe to enlighten debate on how gender plays out in these contexts. And it was not until the third annual conference that a fuller discussion unfolded on the need to look at abuse of adult power and maltreatment of children on a potentially equal basis with violence against women, allowing the group to consider how the two issues should be linked.

A closer look at the literature reveals the effects of fragmented approaches. Depending on the type of violence under debate, the typologies describing perpetrators give the impression that different types of violent acts are carried out by entirely different people, while prevalence studies suggest considerable overlap. The fractioning of discourses also appears in the tensions between a widening concept of violence and a narrow, often criminal-justice oriented scope of intervention, with the former encompassing a much wider scope of harm done and support needed than a criminal prosecution can address. Another persistent contradiction appears between the clear identification of male power as the source of gender-based violence, and complexity of women's and men's involvement in constructing and maintaining gender relations.

There are real and reasonable grounds for the partiality of discourses. Hidden and forgotten problems are often first revealed by social movements that draw their force from a sharp focus on specific issues for mobilisation. Policy action is then shaped by the institutional substructure, so that child protection and protection of women against violence necessarily proceed along separate paths to some degree. However, there are powerful grounds not to let the divisions stand.

> Discussing violence in parallel, but unconnected ways weakens the effectiveness of intervention strategies.

The inadequacy of isolated approaches is most evident where there are intersecting layers of violence in experience, dealt with by uncoordinated policy and practice.

Violence and gender

Social movements against violence have profoundly shaken the legitimacy of direct patriarchal violence and achieved substantial shifts in awareness, changing many of the frameworks within which violence is addressed, including concepts of choice, justice, and dignity. They have been less successful in establishing recognition for the links between and among the phenomena. Fragmentation can be seen as a symptom of persistent gender

orders that undercut recognition and awareness or render them ineffectual.

Growing from a focus on women's rights, the social discourse on gender-based violence has bracketed out forms that are seen as normal for ordinary masculinity: physical testing of strength, fist-fighting, getting one's way by hitting someone or threatening to do so. When this occurs between boys or between men, it is often assumed that there are two "perpetrators" or actors, but no victim. In the wider society, hitting and physical fighting are still seen as a part of daily life for boys and men, while similar forms of aggression by girls and women are viewed with alarm in the media. Indeed, studies of male youth have found that they often attach high value to not being afraid to fight, and that they regard minor injuries as unimportant as long as they feel they have acquitted themselves honourably. There are few role models for boys to reject this role, or this concept of "honour".

As long as such ideas hold sway in society, violence against men and violence against women are measured by a double standard. A slap, a bloody nose, a black eye are – today! – considered grounds for intervention and protection when they happen to women, but not if they happen between men. Bringing the discourses together, as CAHRV has done, challenges all participants to reflect on these issues.

Generational violence

Fragmentation has also emerged as a division between gender-based and generational issues of power, control and abuse. Much of the research on child maltreatment is almost with intent ungendered: Neither is there consistent attention given to the victims as girls and boys, nor is the gender of the abusive or the non-abusive parent regularly seen as significant. One effect of this splitting was the failure to recognize how abuse of a mother impacts on the daughter or son; this blind spot in research and policy continued for at least two decades after reports from shelters described the devastating effects on children differentially by gender. Living in a household with a violent adult man is in itself damaging to children's basic rights and to their well-being. Yet policy, law and social work are prone to treat such men as good-enough fathers who deserve the right of access to the child.

Conversely, research on gender-based violence has rarely addressed the ambivalent position of women between being subjected to male violence and caring for children. Traditionally, women have been compensated for their subordination to men by being granted a sphere of control over (young) children. Caring includes elements of coercive control, and thus demands complex skills of taking responsibility and respecting limits, the very skills that are missing in violent behaviour. Although both women and men may fail in this regard, the potential for violence within caring emerges differently with mothers and fathers. Mothers abused by male partners are subject to contradictory evaluations: some are recognized as competent mothers when protected from male violence, others may be seen to abuse a daughter or a son directly; and some are labelled abusive mothers for not leaving a violent man. A gender perspective on perpetrating violence could help clarify these generational issues.

Definitions of what constitutes "violence" towards a child have varied historically, and vary greatly between European countries today, both legally and culturally. The discussion of these issues within CAHRV led to considering whether a gender/power analysis needs to be further differentiated to consider a wider variety of roles and relationships and the different axes of social power.

Joining the fragments

The CAHRV project has used interpersonal violence as an overarching concept to encompass violences associated with gender and generation, and has extended its work to consider ethnically framed violence and the influence of inequality and social exclusion. The ambition to develop a unified framework moved the project forward through cross-cutting discussions that brought the four thematically based sub-networks into lively and creative debate, and attracted new members as well as forging links to further centers of excellence, but the difficulty of mediating the perspectives remains.

> Power and vulnerability are constructed at the intersections of gender, generation and race/ ethnicity

Power and vulnerability are constructed at the intersections of gender, generation and race/ethnicity, each of which are persistently naturalized in social life and thus usually treated as simply given. It is difficult to maintain a focus on even two of these simultaneously and to see them as connected, but changing within these connections. Children and elders are in some ways vulnerable because of their dependency, in other ways because of their gender; and the ways in which dependency is played out and possibly abused are themselves often (but nor invariably) gendered. The work of CAHRV was not aimed at resolving these tensions, but at articulating them and finding ways of keeping them in mind, rather than putting them aside for another discussion, another day.

3. Working methods and achievements of the project

Within a field that is often characterized by emotional and even deeply acrimonious struggles over the "correct" way of thinking, the CAHRV endeavor has succeeded in creating space for controversy to be explored and addressed as an intellectual challenge. In doing so, it elicited more complex and nuanced understandings of the connections between gender, violence and human rights. The outlines of a shared theoretical framework for discussing interpersonal violence in a human rights framework have become clearer (see chapter 5)

3.1. Profiling victimization and its effects

Within the first subnetwork, CAHRV successfully brought together in a shared dialogue researchers who have studied violence against women, violence against men, violence against children and violence against the elderly, as well as those who have studied connections between immigration and violence. Researchers from ten countries with original data from these four areas, and from the study of the health impact of violence, compiled an overview of the state of European research on interpersonal violence and its impact on health and human rights. They cooperated further to develop recommendations for future research on the prevalence and the health impact of violence, developing both general recommendations and more specific considerations for aspects in which the study of prevalence must differ.

The challenge of "profiling victimization" in a cross-European perspective is to arrive at an analysis of who becomes a victim of violence, in what context, what factors increase the risk, and how the impact is to be measured. By reason of the distinct cultural and political traditions and the policy-related circumstances under which prevalence studies were funded, researchers in each European country have developed their own instruments, categories and modes of data analysis. While this is a rich deposit of variation in approaches and experiences for future

learning, it can also be disappointing to note that, of at least 22 national representative prevalence surveys on violence against women, no two are immediately comparable in their published form.

> Reanalyzing original data in a comparative framework

Post-hoc secondary data analysis suggests itself as a path towards opening up a comparative discussion. The CAHRV network was able to bring together researchers with access to original data from five national prevalence studies of violence against women, who were willing to dedicate the time for re-calculation of their data according to agreed-upon variables and categories. In this work, important steps towards comparative study were taken. Scrutinizing the data and the instruments closely, it was found that there were sometimes good reasons for differences in the phrasing and the construction of questions; these relate, for example, to the different connotations of similar terms, to the need for cultural sensitivity in asking about intimate experiences, and the degree of social progress towards reducing shame and encouraging disclosure.

However, even without perfect comparability it was possible to study whether similar patterns emerge within the data of different studies. Differing findings on re-victimization and on the overlap of different forms of violence suggested important connections that need to be explored in future comparative studies. Thus, varying results on whether childhood experience with violence increases the probability of becoming a victim later in life point to unidentified intervening variables that could mediate such connections. And while all studies find that emotional violence is both widespread and can cause great harm, neither the definition nor the instruments of measurement are sufficiently clear for comparative analysis. The CAHRV initiative was the first interdisciplinary and international approach to collecting detailed information from the diverse existing studies with the aim of coordinating future research on interpersonal violence, considering this from the perspective of human rights violations for women, men and children. It uncovered many integrating themes that have the potential to improve standards of data collection.

Comparing overall prevalence levels between countries is fraught with difficulties, and these would not be removed if cross-national surveys with identical questionnaires were installed. Nonetheless, there is a need for more comparable instruments and items, and the CAHRV project set up a high-level expert group with a link to the UNECE Task Force on measuring violence against women to pursue this aim. The work on post-hoc comparison was especially fruitful in defining standards for future research. The group was able to agree on a number of important criteria to consider when conducting and comparing such surveys and their results (see chapter 7).

The final report of the group was condensed into an executive summary for dissemination in the Council of Europe campaign to combat violence against women, of which one main focal area is data collection. The CAHRV experience-based comparative analysis of prevalence and health impact studies is thus feeding into a wider European policy discussion. There is now a sustained effort to develop harmonized guidelines for data collection towards a more regular and systematic monitoring of interpersonal violence at both national and international levels.

3.2. Methodological guidance to study the roots of men's violences

Although growing awareness of widespread gender-related interpersonal violence regularly raises questions about why and how it arises, there has been very little solid research in Europe to uncover how masculinities or men's gendered practices relate to the use of violence. The second subnetwork in CAHRV aimed to design a shared methodological framework for comparative research, including common concepts, definitions and standards for European level research on the roots of violent behavior.

To explore potential approaches, the existing research baseline "European Documentation Centre and Database on Men" was expanded and then searched for relevant studies relating specifically to men's gendered practices and social exclusion in relation to the potential for violence. Three new reports were added and the older ones updated, so that national databases from 13 countries in all were available for study, with much of the literature in the country reports summarized in English, thus making it accessible to researchers unfamiliar with the original language. These national reports focus on (a) research on men's practices (b) statistical data on men's practices (c) legal and governmental data. This database proved a valuable resource for other working groups within the CAHRV project, especially for those seeking to define what factors need to be changed to prevent violence.

Yet the database also reveals how little research is actually directed at understanding men's use of violence. Much of it approaches men's violence through women's experience of victimization, thus bypassing the question of which men employ violence and how this comes about. When perpetrators are studied, for example out of concern over xenophobic juvenile violence, social exclusion is foregrounded, but gender tends to be downplayed, with the exception of some smaller qualitative studies. Research in the UK has

raised the issue of the complex linkages between different forms of men's violences towards different victims, especially the interconnections between intimate partner violence, abuse of children, and sexual violence, but there has been no systematic exploration on how men's violent gendered practices more generally intersect with other power relations.

A process approach to equal participation and equal voice

A central aim of this group was to work together on a level of equal participation and equal voice. Always a challenge in interdisciplinary research, the risk of hierarchies of power and exclusion becomes much greater when some participants (this is especially, but not only the case for EU accession countries) have fewer resources at their command than others. Relevant resources are a secure academic position with the freedom to study innovative and potentially controversial issues; an existing body of pertinent research in the country and the language on which new efforts can build; recognition of the quality and importance of one's research at home and internationally, as well as, of course, material resources for original research, which a coordination action could not provide. This was all the more challenging as the material at hand consisted of national reports on state of the research, much of which was published in a language not accessible to most other members of the group, such as Czech, Swedish or Danish.

To create a "level playing field" for a shared methodological framework, the group developed a process approach. In this extended iterative process, members of the interdisciplinary working group re-read the material in the database, wrote country reports and commented on these. The aim was to develop guidance on a methodological research strategy for future researchers, policy-makers and practitioners about the best means for transnational researching of men's violences, allowing for the dynamics of time, space and culture. This process was a conscious effort to reflect the state of knowledge throughout the countries and disciplines represented. As a result, the group presented a report that offers a nuanced conceptual approach to central concepts, beginning with the concept of violence itself, as well as formulating general methodological guidelines agreed to be fundamental to developing a research strategy.

On a more concrete level, the group agreed that a comparative approach offers potential for deconstructing the assumptions that underpin social practices and policies in different countries. Existing transnational studies[2] find that in general there are substantial continuities and significant variations in the forms of such violences and in their underlying dynamics across broadly differing cultures. The group thus concluded that a research strategy for exploring the dynamics of men's violences transnationally must at present give a primary role to qualitative approaches. Possible themes for future collaborative study were outlined as well.

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[2]see, for instance Keith Pringle and Bob Pease, 'Afterword', in *A Man's World?* Ed. Bob Pease and Keith Pringle, London: Zed, 2001, 245-252

3.3. Assessing practices and advising policy

A third major drive in the CAHRV project was to provide policy-makers and practitioners with research-based assessments of both practical measures and legal frameworks. While considerable knowledge of specific actions and local programmes exists across Europe, the research is primarily locally based. Networks, seminars and internet sites undertake to disseminate examples of "good practice", but criteria are rarely formulated on what makes practice "good". The working groups in the third subnetwork aimed to assemble existing knowledge in order to further national, international, and European overviews, examinations and exchanges, as well as providing a foundation for recommendations.

Aware that practice-related research is usually published in the language of the country, the group first conducted a multi-lingual search for

research data and documentation of good practice. Eleven countries were selected to include new and old EU members and non-member countries, geographical diversity, and a broad variety of social policy traditions and research strategies. Over 265 documents were located in the areas of domestic violence, rape / sexual violence and prostitution / trafficking.

This was an important achievement, but the documents alone would not have sufficed, since assessing practice requires extensive background knowledge of the institutional structures and traditions, that is the context in which agencies work. Experts with knowledge of the legal and social systems wrote seven independent country reports on how the justice system responds to women and children experiencing violence and abuse; at a seminar in Warsaw the reports were discussed and compared.

> ## Towards research-based policy: recommendations for legal and service strategies

On this foundation of contextualized expert knowledge, a comparative report was written with a focus on statutory agencies and on the obligation of the state to exercise due diligence in preventing, protecting and punishing human rights violations. Sooner than foreseen in the original proposal, this report at the midway point of CAHRV not only identified issues and barriers, but also formulated clear recommendations for policy in European countries. The results of this analysis were taken up in a stocktaking study for the Council of Europe[3] and have thus entered into the European policy debate.

In parallel, a second report was developed to focus on the evaluation of good practice by agencies (both statutory and voluntary), exploring the research base for evaluating and monitoring service provision. Beyond interest in disseminating existing knowledge on what changes have been most effective, a central aim was to initiate a process of mutual learning between countries with a longer standing infrastructure and Eastern and Central European countries where measures against

violence are more recent and less well established.

At the outset of CAHRV, it was not known how much research exists in the EU documenting and evaluating practical measures to address interpersonal violence. Based initially on data from 6 Western European member states, the draft report presenting findings on good practice was distributed to practitioners from NGOs in ten new member states or candidate countries at a workshop in Budapest. Their assessment of the usefulness and relevance of research from older EU countries, as well as their own experiences, yielded insights into developing good practice, and gave space to prepare recommendations for European policy that take fuller account of the different situations across Europe.

An important insight from this interchange concerned the interactions between voluntary and statutory agencies and the process by which progress towards good practice is achieved. Since the watershed year 1993[4], a number of European states in social and economic transition have introduced explicit policies and legislation on domestic violence (more rarely on sexual assault and rape). This suggests that international conventions can initiate change in statutory agency responses, possibly "leapfrogging over" the decades of voluntary sector activities in Western Europe. However, reports at the Budapest seminar made clear that in all of the accession and candidate countries to the EU at least 15 years of activism and voluntary services, often far less visible due to lack of resources, had prepared the way for what are sometimes hesitant, inconsistent or even outright indifferent policy approaches. Furthermore, some governments shelved all plans for action to address gender-based violence upon accession to the EU when they could no longer be monitored as to their actions on human rights. As international donors withdrew from the service projects at the same time, only the long history of voluntary engagement helped these NGO projects survive at all.

The work of this group took place in a period of increasing policy attention to violence against women across Europe. For this reason, a five-page policy brief was distilled out of the completed reports, and disseminated to policy-makers in the context of the Council of Europe campaign. Furthermore, the results were fed

into an "implementation study" carried out for the Council of Europe to assess progress in addressing violence against women[5], in use by the Task Force on combating violence against women reporting to the Committee of Ministers.

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[3] Carol Hagemann-White, *Combating violence against women: Stocktaking study on the measures and actions*

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taken in Council of Europe member States, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2006
[4] United Nations and Council of Europe resolutions on gender-based violence
[5] Carol Hagemann-White and Sabine Bohne, *Protecting women against violence. Analytical study on the effective implementation of Recommendation (2002)5 on the protection of women against violence in the Council of Europe member states.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2007

3.4. Identifying environments to protect against human rights violations

A central goal of studying the human rights violations that permeate everyday life must be to protect individuals and society from the ensuing harm. Following the conceptual framing in the child abuse literature, CAHRV originally put the question as one of identifying what research can contribute to the recognition of "protective factors securing human rights". An initial definition was: structural, environmental, inter- and intra-personal factors that protect against violence impacting either on victims (potential or actual) or perpetrators (potential or actual). In the area of violence against women, however, the concept of protection focuses on the victim, while conditions and strategies that might keep someone from becoming or remaining a perpetrator would be called prevention.

It was soon evident that the difference in use of concepts struck directly to the core of fragmentation in discourses. Since the 1970's, practice and research on child maltreatment have seen potentially abusive parents as entangled in pressures and emotional tides beyond their control, and thus in need of help; early intervention aims to protect both parents from becoming abusive, and children from becoming victims. The framework addressing violence against women, by contrast, has stressed that the use of violence is a choice, not excused or explained by stress or conflict, since behavioural alternatives are available. Male violence and control is implicated in gender power structures and reinforces them; to speak of "helping" a perpetrator suggests shoring up the power advantage that led to the violence in the first place. Thus, it was a major achievement for CAHRV to develop a constructive and multi-facetted debate that, moreover, did not remain within the working group, but was developed and articulated for the use of CAHRV as a whole.

A preliminary review of literature on protective factors encountered several difficulties: the lack of a universal definition, an individualistic and behavioral approach taken in much of the research, and the tendency to focus on individual characteristics of victims rather than perpetrators. Too often, identified "risk factors" based on statistical correlations are hypothesized to define, in reverse, protective factors. But if unmarried mothers face a higher probability of encountering partner violence, it does not follow that marriage is a protective factor; correlations are not causes. The working group concluded that the focus must be on describing *environments* that protect against violence occurring. They explored what might explain why violence happens, and arrived at four core issues that cut across the thematic areas of work within the project as a whole:

- differentiating types and levels of violence
- situational factors: individual, settings, opportunities, catalysts
- inequalities and social divisions (particularly gender, age, class and ethnicity)
- socialization, cultures that promote violence or non-violence.

These were used to structure a discussion in four panels at the second CAHRV conference.

Mapping research to describe environments that can protect against violence

The search for research findings that could illuminate protective environments proved

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challenging. Several different areas were explored relating to changing patterns in the family and in households of choice on the one hand, the workplace and work-life balance on the other. Existing data sets were re-analyzed, and for areas of specific debate, such as the role of alcohol abuse, or the potential for resiliency, literature was assessed. To bring these diverse aspects together in an overview, the method of mapping was chosen; it offers the possibility to connect and structure complex discussions and present them for further development. Besides core statements, the dynamic of the arguments and counter-arguments in the process of development can be depicted. Cognitive maps are created by a step-by-step compression and ordering of the material, in order to arrive at rule-based, comprehensible and repeatable analytic evaluation[6]. Maps as visual (preliminary) results are an adequate starting point for further dialogic validation; further additions can be included easily. They are particularly useful as a

tool of interdisciplinary collaboration: In actual as well as in virtual meetings spontaneous statements of group members can stimulate new ideas of other group members (snowball effect). Consequently a group normally has access to a larger stock of knowledge than it would have without the mapping process. Although the goal of developing a sustainable working group on mapping could not be realized, due to time constraints of the researchers involved, there was success in jointly setting up a structure of a mapping that can be used in future collaboration.

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[6] see Philip Mayring , *Einführung in die qualitative Sozialforschung [Introduction to qualitative research]*, 5th ed., Weinheim: Beltz, 2002; Annette Schmitt and Philip Mayring, Qualitativ orientierte Methoden [Qualitative methods], in *Handbuch Emotionspsychologie [Emotional psychology: A manual]*, ed. Jürgen H. Otto, Harald A. Euler and Heinz Mandl, 469 -477, Weinheim: Psychologie Verlags Union, 2000.

4. Progress towards the larger project objectives

In planning the work program, the objectives of the coordination action were translated into specific aims and activities of the subnetworks. In addition to the 22 consortium partners a wider circle of individual researchers contributed to completing the projected reviews of literature, writing country reports, re-calculating data to pursue specific issues comparatively, and developing ideas and theoretical framings for interpreting the shared research knowledge. Many such "individual researcher-members"

wrote sections for the papers being produced, as well as offering critical reading and editing.

At the end of the project, it is appropriate to ask how far and in what ways implementing the work program actually did contribute to the overall objectives, and to assess the degree to which these objectives could be achieved. There were four general goals, as will be discussed in the following.

4.1. Integrating parallel discourses

The first overarching objective was to integrate parallel research discourses on violence. This objective arose out of the initial diagnosis of a dual problem: The CAHRV proposal identified fragmentation of both research and policy discourses in two dimensions:

- across gender, generation and social divisions
- through an overly problem-specific approach to interpersonal violence.

Both dimensions were addressed and progress made.

4.1.1 Integration across social divisions

The differences and divisions among the discourses were addressed both in thematic work and in cross-cutting conferences and workshops. To achieve more integration, every subnetwork meeting also invited one researcher from each other subnetwork to attend and comment on the work in progress. Significant new cross-national and cross-disciplinary collaboration also helped towards overcoming fragmentation. Especially in the work on prevalence and impact of violence, and on environments to protect against violence, contributions were mobilized from researchers working on different gender, generation and social problems. In other thematic areas, the differences in research traditions and framings were better understood and effectively bridged. Over the course of the project, 29 additional researchers and new centres of excellence were recruited and joined the project.

> Integrating discourses stimulates new debates, extending the breadth and depth of research in its own right, as well as clarifying important issues for practice.

From the beginning, CAHRV had organized conferences and meetings on the principle of asking for contributions to common issues from each of the subnetworks. At the first conference, these were topically open invitations to four speakers who came from different disciplines as well as subnetworks.

For the second annual conference, with an aim to exploring what could protect against violence, four panel discussions were set up on key dimensions relevant to understanding whence interpersonal violence arises: differentiation within "violence", socialization and culture, situational factors, and social inequalities. In the panel discussions, each speaker considered how this dimension had become relevant in their subnetwork discussion and raised an issue or question for general debate.

In the third project year, a cross-cutting workshop – "Benefits and limitations of human rights frameworks: the case of interpersonal violence" – was organized to allow for more extended open discussion. Questions had arisen on how the focus of the Coordination Action on human rights violations intersects with the theoretical and empirical frameworks across the research field of interpersonal violence. Different points of view had emerged on the policy conclusions to be drawn from research findings as well. Six session themes were selected to cut across the areas of victimization (women, men, children and elderly), and the theoretical tasks of the subnetworks. Each session focussed on a central issue and aimed to make controversy explicit and present as an intellectual challenge. An analytical report helped to clarify how engaging with the discourse on human rights shifted perspectives within research approaches to the different aspects of violence.

4.1.2 Integrating across issues and perspectives

To overcome the narrow focus on isolated "problems", the coordination activities sought to generate contributions to an integrated approach.

The CAHRV proposal identified a need to create links between issues and perspectives for the purposes of high-quality research and good policy. There is considerable research to show that such links exist, and effective strategies towards reducing interpersonal violence need to know more about them and take them into

account. Alarmed responses to outbreaks of youth violence, for example, will be ineffectual if not informed by an understanding of the relative contribution of social exclusion, ideals of masculinity, and family interaction patterns.

Both having been a victim of child maltreatment, as well as witnessing abuse of the mother (even without any direct maltreatment of the child) may predict later intimate partner violence, and there are indications that this differs by gender, boys being more likely to become perpetrators and

girls more likely to suffer violence. Child sexual abuse seems to have the most significant impact in this regard. Yet these links have not been studied well enough to permit generalization across countries, cultures, and types of violent experience. Comparative re-analysis of prevalence studies within the CAHRV project did not confirm the correlation for women in all countries, but there was a correlation on the more abstract level, in that an accumulation of "difficult childhood experiences" increases the risk of later victimization. This is consistent with general results in criminology of re-victimization. For the specific problem of

Frameworks for good practice should be applicable to different issues

interpersonal violence in close personal relationships, however, it is crucial to understand and identify the protective environments and intervening conditions that can interrupt this sequence, since both domestic violence against women and child maltreatment are widespread, and removing children from families can only be the solution in exceptional cases. The critical comparison of legal frameworks and agency practices also highlighted the need for risk assessment.

To develop linkages among the problems, the activities in CAHRV sought to generate analytical frameworks from which standards for good practice can be derived, and to discuss these with respect to at least two different issues or problems. As a case in point, the concept of "resilience", intended to describe the capacity to overcome or reduce the negative consequences of trauma in the short and longer term, was explored for its possible gender dimension (seriously understudied in existing research) and its applicability to domestic violence, both with regard to children and with regard to women. For children, this developmental and ecological model will need to be expanded beyond the case of child sexual abuse to apply to witnessing domestic violence, and probably needs to include family members, informal social networks and professional support systems.

There are negative linkages in the policy area. A model of 'three planets'[7] , developed by Marianne Hester, was found useful to explain the relationships and contradictions between

different aspects of policy on violence against women and children. Underpinning the model is the observation that the different 'planets' of violence against women, child protection and visitation/ child contact have their own separate cultures and professionals, with different laws, policies, practices and discourses being apparent. It is these different cultural and institutional practices that create difficulties in linking the work on the different 'planets', leading to often contradictory outcomes and lack of safety-oriented practice. With this model, it was possible to highlight the fact that across Europe, different areas of protection, criminal justice, child contact and immigration have frequently been separated, with no coordination and thus often working in conflict or in opposition to each other. Not only are there many contradictions within European legal systems between and within laws and implementation of these laws relating to domestic violence, child protection, child contact and immigration, but specific problems can be pinpointed when 'planets' come into each other's orbit.

A third linking framework involves conceptualizing the alternatives to social conditions of gender violence, taking account of the violence among and against men as well as violence against women. "Cultures of peace" and "cultures of care" were explored as possibilities, and neither found entirely satisfactory. It was suggested that the more

Both gender-related and inequality-related violence should be studied

productive approach might be found in a research paradigm that focuses on the process of changing gender relations and includes both women and men. Similarly, the working group on research methods to study the roots of male violence also concluded that both women and men should be included as researchers. The prevalence research group considers that studies need to ask not only about victimization but also about violence employed by the interviewee.

The emerging conceptual approach suggests that attention should be given to violence among and against men, as well as to violence among and against women – not because these are equal, but because both play a part in sustaining

an unequal gender order. It calls for both women and men in research to develop gender expertise in a constructive dialogue.

[7] Marianne Hester, Future Trends and Developments – Violence Against Women in Europe and East Asia, *Violence Against Women* 10, 12 (2004) 1431-1448.

4.2. Building a unified knowledge base

To unify the theoretical and empirical basis for policy, the CAHRV project worked towards building a transnationally validated knowledge base, collecting existing research, scrutinizing the comparability and the transfer potential of results, bringing the current state of existing research into a sphere accessible for European policy debate, and laying foundations for future transnational study. The project was highly successful in making research results from different countries available in frameworks that allow for, or encourage, comparative interpretation.

Unlike many transnational reviews that often prioritize or even limit themselves to work published in English, CAHRV members systematically surveyed literature published in the various languages of their countries and summarized the methodology and the results for joint analysis. For the project website, information and executive summaries of all major results have been translated into English, French, German, Spanish and Polish. The partners in these and in other language regions also surveyed the literature in at least one, and often several focal areas of the work program. Thus, the reports also draw on and integrate research published in Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, Lithuanian, Norwegian and Swedish.

As an added benefit of recognizing and valuing research in different languages, participants in CAHRV had numerous occasions to reflect how different conceptual framings, intellectual traditions, styles of academic work and cultural understandings flow into the definitions and measurement of violence, the ways it is addressed, and the linkages that are made in trying to prevent or protect against it. Across Europe, there are widely different notions of what measures are permissible to control or discipline a child, and when actions transgress against the norm and should be considered violence. Similarly, legal and social norms differ with regard to the types and degrees of force required and the kinds of imposed sexual intimacy that define an act as rape, or even as sexual coercion. Conceptual dissonances were discovered on less dramatic, but nonetheless significant levels; for example, the two concepts of "counselling" and "advice" turned out to have very different connotations on German and in English discussion of services, so that the description of agency-specific good practices needed to use a dual terminology.

Finally, the coordination action led to identifying more precisely the need for more thorough comparative examination of certain issues. Defining the topics for new collaborative research motivated the search to identify additional "sites of excellence" and thus mobilize specific resources for new research. Three transnational projects growing out of the CAHRV cooperation were funded[8] and took up their work before the work in CAHRV was completed, and at least three further proposals were pending.

[8] These are: PRO TRAIN: Improving multi-professional and health care training in Europe - building on good practice in violence prevention (2007-2009) www.pro-train.uni-osnabrueck.de
Different systems, similar outcomes? Tracking attrition in reported rape cases in eleven countries (2007-2009) www.cwasu.org → projects
Work with perpetrators of domestic violence in Europe http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/

4.3. Applying a case study approach

The CAHRV project was constructed so as to survey a wide territory with a case study approach. The "case study" method of cutting paths across a vast field proposed that the

specialized activities should become recognizable as cases in point, and that they illuminate the contours of the field they traverse, defining points of departure for an expanding discussion.

This was, perhaps, the most challenging of the objectives, since researchers enter collaboration out of their interest in its specific goals, and not primarily to provide a case in point of how something might be done. All of the subnetworks engaged in their tasks and found them meaningful for their own sake, and at times it fell to the Coordinator to ask for consideration of possible transfer. Nonetheless, substantial progress was made towards locating the specific collaborative results in a wider context.

For example, the working group on prevalence surveys could carry out a post-hoc comparative data re-analysis only for five surveys on violence against women, but they reflected on their experience with this procedure in more general terms. Furthermore, they went on to develop recommendations in conjunction with experts on violence against men, against children, and against the elderly, and were able to formulate both general standards and recommendations for future research, as well as specific additional considerations differentiating among these groups, and suggesting ways to differentiate for immigrant populations and ethnic minorities. Thus, the specific work on existing data sets yielded results capable of transfer.

Similarly, the working group on developing methodological frameworks for future research, while they limited their study to violence perpetrated by men, discussed in a more general way what understandings of "violence" can be useful in research, as well as reflecting on the process of finding a common ground in transnational collaboration. The groups working on good practice and policy issues, and on protective environments, engaged in lively cross-network debate on the benefits and limitations of human rights frameworks when applied to different forms and contexts of interpersonal violence.

The reports themselves often characterize their results as examples of more general problems. Thus, the analysis of the justice system as an arena for the protection of human rights highlights how different areas of law and policy pursue contradictory values, attitudes and practices and thus impose measures that are mutually incompatible or fail to protect those at risk. In the selected European countries used as examples it was found that the law is both a facilitator and a barrier to justice and protection for women and children suffering violence. This analysis of how decisions in criminal law, civil law, family law and police law in practice may undercut each other presents itself for transfer to other areas of interpersonal violence such as elder abuse.

4.4. Developing sustainable cooperation

The CAHRV project structured cooperation through subnetworks, aiming to develop sustainable structures for co-operation and dialogue. The work plan was designed to build bridges selectively to intensify co-operation, the goal being for the strongest of these bridges to carry cooperation forward beyond the duration of the action. One striking success of this strategy emerged from the working group on agencies and good practice, whose initial results from 6 countries were presented to practitioners from NGO's from the enlarged Europe in the Budapest seminar. The dialogue initiated at that meeting generated plans for a future joint conference on gender and human rights, a number of the participants subsequently joined

the CAHRV network, and the conference idea became embedded in planning for a three-year dissemination project.

High-level expert groups for sustained policy consultation

CAHRV aimed to create at least one high-level expert group to be available for consultation on specific policy issues on a European level. In fact, three such groups were set up. Two of these, the expert group on the criminal prosecution of rape and sexual assault[9], and the

expert group on multiprofessional training to build competencies in the health system[10] submitted successful proposals to the DAPHNE program to continue their cooperation and deepen their knowledge of what does and does not work in different European contexts. The third high-level expert group on prevalence and health impact research is represented in the UNECE Task Force on the measurement of violence against women[11].

From the work on protective environments, several project proposals also emerged focussed on changing gender relations and their potential to reduce or protect against violence. Cooperation with the other emerging or actually funded projects is planned within an overarching discussion of the links between violence prevention and gender equality.

Finally, the discussion across subnetworks on the roots of interpersonal violence, the impact on individuals' lives of having suffered violence, and the challenges to ensuring human rights generated a cluster of project ideas with the goal of understanding the connections between interpersonal violence and collective - and

sometimes extremely violent - conflict. Nearly all European countries have experienced wars and/or periods of militarized, sometimes even genocidal collective violence within the past few generations; and although there is a growing body of research both on the effects of personal experience of trauma and on collective memory over several generations, the links to interpersonal violence in everyday life have not been forged in a systematic way. To explore these connections, the CAHRV coordination group entered into dialogue with another Framework 6 program studying community conflict (PEACE-COM) and developed ideas for joint research, submitting a research proposal in Framework 7. With this development the CAHRV collaboration and its philosophy of integrative thinking was carried over into new fields.

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[9] coordinated by Liz Kelly, London Metropolitan University
[10] coordinated by Sabine Bohne, University of Osnabrueck
[11] coordinated by Carol Hagemann-White, University of Osnabrueck, Task force of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

5. Advances in the shared theoretical framework: Interpersonal violence as a human rights violation

Discussing interpersonal violence in terms of human rights violations was accelerated significantly during the 1995 Beijing conference where women's advocates successfully argued for recognizing the multiple forms of violence against women as grave human rights violations. Since then, international actors such as the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Council of Europe, and the European Union have stepped up their efforts to sponsor research on violence against women and issue recommendations on intervention and prevention strategies, often framed in terms of human rights violations.

Nonetheless, recognition is slow of the full extent to which not only violence against women, but also violence against children, against men, against the elderly may, indeed, violate human rights in multiple and significant ways. Continuing to dominate human rights discourses are war crimes and torture as violations typically attributed to state actors and

located in public contexts. The gendered dimensions of human rights and their violations are often overlooked. Connections between human rights and gender justice are underdeveloped, as are connections between violence and other human rights such as the right of access to social participation, to personal dignity, to social support and health care.

The difficulties were compounded for CAHRV by the ambiguities in using a human rights framework in a research context. The foundations of human rights and social research differ: the former relies upon assertions of universality, commonalities and setting boundaries, whereas the latter has, especially in the last decade, paid increasing attention to diversity, differentiation and cultural contexts. The vocabulary of international documents is only rarely creative and mostly cumulative in nature: consensus is often reached with the help of "agreed-upon language" from earlier

documents. Conceptual framings in research, by contrast, are subject to constant analytic re-examination, critique and refinement. Thus, a research network aiming to study human rights violations must differentiate two levels of thinking:

- the political and legal process of defining, advancing and gendering human rights – which can be understood as a process of building a global culture to ensure that human rights be respected and safeguarded, but which is also a process of emerging international law;
- the theoretical and empirical process of clarifying what we mean when we aim to study human rights violations, their causes, how they are addressed, and what can protect against their occurring or recurring.

The dominant research paradigm in the area covered by CAHRV is, however, not human rights but violence. The research network has engaged in critical examination of concepts and explanations, explored contradictions and inconsistencies, and tried to bridge the divisions between disciplines, research traditions and discourses towards a more holistic understanding. Thus, it was necessary to question when and how it is useful and enlightening to frame acts and situations, or even structural conditions as human rights violations, and when this framing might limit our understanding of the full range of phenomena that can be called "violence".

5.1. Using a human rights framework

Formally, human rights are defined by international law, aspects of which may be introduced into domestic law, through both constitutions and statute. "Human rights" has also, at the end of the twentieth century come to have a more normative, and vaguer, meaning as a fundamental moral basis for regulating the contemporary geo-political order. To commit a human rights violation is to treat a person, or group of people, in a way that undermines, denies or violates any legally established human right. Established human rights are defined by international law, primarily the conventions of the UN, although regional bodies such as the Council of Europe are also important actors. Human rights, therefore, are in some ways more limited in scope than civil rights under national law, which is especially relevant to violence; in other ways they are more extensive than national law insofar as they constitute aspirational normative standards for human freedom and well-being.

Initial conceptions of human rights applied only to states and state actors, but have gradually been extended to encompass civil society and private actors in certain contexts. Most human rights are only indirectly connected to violence, covering matters such as the right to a fair trial, freedom of thought and expression, access to education, shelter and health care. Formulations

that explicitly deal with violence refer only to torture, and 'cruel and degrading treatment'; specifications which led some feminists to analyse domestic violence, for example, as torture.[12]

Given that human rights were intended to function transnationally, jurisprudence outlined a set of principles which underpinned their meaning and application. Human dignity, bodily and personal integrity and privacy constitute the foundational ethical standpoint. In addition human rights are regarded as:

- universal – apply to all human beings in all contexts;
- indivisible – have to be considered as an integrated whole;
- interdependent – the realization of each depends on the realization of others;
- interrelated – ones cannot be denied or suspended without putting the whole framework into question;
- inalienable – they cannot be taken away.

The power of human rights is both the extent to which states respect them and the extent to which the principles can be successfully invoked by civil society actors in local contexts. The application to everyone living within national boundaries is also important, as it asserts that

human rights must be respected for those who break the law, including by evading immigration law.

[12] Rhona Copelan, Intimate terror: understanding domestic violence as torture, in *Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives*, ed. Rebecca Cook *,* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994, 116-152

5.2. When is interpersonal violence a human rights violation?

For many decades, specific infringements of women's rights were regarded as cultural or private, thus not of concern to human rights activism. The extraordinary process whereby feminists not only reversed these perceptions, but also transformed the meaning of human rights is increasingly documented[13]. Key moments include: a general recommendation by the CEDAW[14] Committee which recognized violence against women as a manifestation of unequal gender relations, noting it was 'one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position'[15]; a strong statement on violence against women at the 1992 UN human rights conference in Vienna; a General Assembly resolution in 1993 to the effect that women were 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[16]. This was further embedded into UN frameworks in the outcome document from the 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women, in which violence was one of 12 priority areas for action and placed at the core of objectives to the achievement of gender equality.

Both violence against women and child abuse (including sexual exploitation) have been defined as human rights violations within international law, and their meaning expanded in the development of work within the UN machinery. In both instances the connection of violence to systematic discrimination is a critical element in the specification, as is the understanding that individual abuse serves to confirm and continue inequality. Where there are incontrovertible human rights issues involved, states that are signatories to the relevant conventions have international obligations of both intervention and prevention. It is not possible to make such arguments for all the forms of interpersonal violence. Thus, research on violence and its connections to gender is a broad field that only partially overlaps with the study of human rights violations.

In discussing the need to differentiate among levels and forms of violence within CAHRV, the need to clarify the concept of "violence" arose. From a research perspective, violence is not a "thing" that can be defined and delimited, but a process defined in part by its context. It is

defined in prevalence research by using a broad range of specific acts, many of which may or may not be experienced as violent, depending on context. Increasingly, both research and policy frameworks subsume many actions under the heading of "violence" that cannot be equated with the strong concept of "human rights violations". Thus, the right of a child to be raised free of violence is an aspirational goal for human interaction; when it is raised to a legal norm, this may incriminate not only all forms of physical punishment, but also ridicule or humiliation as violence. Yet not every slap or cutting remark constitutes a violation of human rights: sometimes adults apologize; some such events do not undermine fundamental rights. They may occur within a relationship of affection and respect, or they may be experienced as marginal and not seriously hurtful.

Both "child abuse" and "intimate partner violence" signify an abusive pattern of coercive control, in which specified transgressive acts are part of a larger picture, and associated with the threat of repetition or escalation. Sexual violence has been described as a continuum, in which minor intrusive acts can signal the possibility of greater harm to come[17]. In conjunction with the hierarchy of power in a relationship of gender affiliation or generational care, the probability is high that other fundamental rights will be threatened: in this context, violence against women is typically a human rights violation. Furthermore, there are specific acts such as rape that constitute human rights violations in themselves, regardless of whether the victim is a woman, a man or a child, regardless of whether the victim is selected

based on ethnic identification, disabilities, or some personal relationship.

[13] see Liz Kelly, Inside outsiders: Mainstreaming violence against women into human rights discourse and practice, in *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 7, 4 (2005), 471-495; also Sally Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence. Translating international law into local justice*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 2006

[14] Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979.
[15] CEDAW Committee, Eleventh session, 1992
[16] Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, 20 Dec 1993. A/RES.48/104 (1993), article 3
[17] see Liz Kelly, *Surviving sexual violence*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1988

6. Fruits of collaboration: shared insights across different thematic focal areas

In discussing the insights that each subnetwork considers an important result of the collaborative work, it emerged that these converged in central issues.

6.1. Differentiation of the phenomena vs. indivisibility of human rights

In all areas of research within CAHRV, a substantial proportion, but not all acts that qualify as "violence" necessarily violate human rights. The concept of "gender-based violence" is intended to focus on such a connection: To the extent that violence is founded on a gender-power structure and serves to reinforce that structure, its exercise systematically undermines the victim's access to a wide range of the fundamental rights anchored in international law. The most obvious cases, and the ones most widely recognized, are the repeated domestic abuse of women, rape (as a means of war the ICC recognizes it as a crime against humanity), and child maltreatment.

However, insufficient attention has been given to identifying when and how male-to-male abuse serves a gender-power order. Gang rape of presumed homosexuals by other inmates in prison is a clear case in point. A pilot study in Germany found that men report a higher frequency of different forms of violence during military service. At the time of this writing, a case is being tried in Germany concerning a mock hostage-taking with recruits in basic military training, in which the role-play included terrifying threats and physical abuse. At issue in the court case is not only the predictable question of who did what on whose orders, but also the question of legitimate exposure to violence: Is the military hierarchy justified in subjecting recruits to the violations expected (in wartime) from the enemy, teaching them to be fighting men?

> Human rights are indivisible, but perceptions of what is violence differ: The gender-power structure defines their point of intersection.

In order to capture the interweaving of gender power and overt violence in practical reality, the concept of violence has been expanding, for example in prevalence research and in international documents such as the Recommendation on the Protection of Women against Violence adopted by the Council of Europe in April 2002. The concept is now used to include a wide range of acts that might either express anger or be used to exert control, such as angry pushing or grabbing, verbal threats, psychological abuse, humiliating treatment, as well as kicks, blows and attacks with a weapon. Similarly, the concept of child abuse has widened, and child maltreatment is now understood to comprise not only physical harm, but also neglect, ridicule, emotional rejection. This wider concept derives from recognizing the child's dependency on adult power to fulfil or deny its needs, which implies that there are multiple and interconnected ways of doing harm to a child.

Interpersonal violence and gender-based violence are thus not the same, even though the physical and the sexual are infused with gendered meanings, as are close personal relationships. And neither is identical with human rights violations; this concept is appropriate for only a part of the whole range of violences. Indeed, if we use the broad definitional range that can be drawn from current discussions in policy, practice and research, there is probably no family that is free of some amount of "normal" violence.

With the growing awareness of violence in everyday life there is an increasing willingness to apply the same standards of peaceful conflict resolution to the private sphere as to the public. This includes a finer, more sensitive perception and a different moral sensibility for infringements than was usual in past generations. Consistent with this process is the demand for freedom from violence for men as well as for women, the call for empathy, solidarity and support for every victim equally, whether young or old, woman or man, native-born or immigrant. This is a normative aspiration that goes far beyond the framing of human rights, whose purpose is to secure the minimum of human dignity, not the maximum of productive conflict transformation and democratic equality. It can be expressed without any reference to deeper power structures in society, addressing rather the skills and choices in conflict management.

The obligation of states to exercise due diligence in preventing, protecting and punishing refers to forms of violence that constitute, or pose a threat of human rights violations. Thus, although all violence may be considered "serious" in terms of its potential to hurt and its inadequacy as a means of conflict management, both the research preparing data for policy and the evaluation of good practice in addressing violence find themselves obliged to define degrees of danger and harm.

Dilemmas of differentiation

Within prevalence data, analyses have been made to identify patterns of coercive control, domination and subordination that employ different types of (repeated) violations. Some recent prevalence research has departed from the model of including all potentially harmful single acts into the definition of violence, instead developing analytical categories such as

"domestic abuse" to arrive at data more directly relevant to policy.

What, then, is to be done (in terms of research, theory and practice) about the wider field of interpersonal violence in everyday life, much but not all of which is also gendered? Far more women than men have encountered sexual

New challenges: refining measurement and assessing risk

harassment (at work or in public spaces), obscene phone calls, uncalled-for grabbing or touching, and sexual threats; only in retrospect can they know whether the incident will escalate.[18] More women than men have been hit or otherwise attacked more than once by an intimate partner, without being trapped in an abusive and controlling relationship. Too little is known about such incidents of low- or middle-level or occasional violation. When the context is a partner relationship, does it later become abusive, or on the contrary are such events the aftermath of an episode of abuse in the past[19]? When do sexualized intrusions impact on women's self-confidence and sense of safety and liberty? How often do women, after "one or two times" of aggression, break off a relationship or act to prevent its recurring? These questions highlight the ways in which broadly framed violence research is relevant to understanding how human rights can be secured or violated, even when many of the acts do not qualify as human rights violations.

During the work of CAHRV, increasing thought has been given to issues of risk, danger and seriousness of violence, and to differentiating the phenomena more clearly. For the first area of work, describing the profile of victimization, its correlates and its impact, differentiating by severity might seem both an obvious and a simple step, but this is far from the case. Even after recalculating the data of five national prevalence studies on the basis of a common definition of the underlying variables, the working group on prevalence was unable to draw a valid comparison as to levels of severity of violence. They concluded that new research would be needed to develop well-defined instruments for the severity of violence.

Self-assessment by the victim has been used by asking whether the acts caused fear and distress, or serious disruptions in her further life,

but it is difficult to ask this across a number of experiences. Surveys often ask whether there were injuries that needed, or should have received, medical attention, and use this as an indicator of severity, but this is likely to refer only to the physical trauma. Victimized women are often not able to prevent the health consequences effectively and may not recognize these as potentially serious. Injuries such as minor cuts and bruises might heal

> ## What levels and forms of violence require and justify state intervention?

quickly, but the psychological health impact can last and consolidate in mental disorders like anxiety or depression. This is not surprising if we consider that violence is a source of (social) stress. Many of the health consequences of violence on women are not just due to the physical and sexual violence but also to the psychological violence and associated events. Consequently, we should not only expect specific illnesses or health problems in victims but also a stress-related deterioration of their general health status.

In sum, while there is agreement that the impact of violence would be crucial to identifying levels of severity, there is not yet an accepted measure for assessing this impact. This of course raises the issue of whether the effects of the acts should be part of the definition of "violence", or whether it is methodologically necessary to measure the acts and their impact separately.

In the research field of intervention and services, as responses move from advocacy, which could rely on the victim's own assessment of the situation and her needs, to legal and statutory agency responses, it becomes crucial to define the level of violence that requires, and that justifies, state intervention. Temporary and "weak" interventions, such as those evicting the apparent perpetrator from the residence for 10 days, or those which allow a victim control over the further procedure, can serve as protection from immediate harm. Increasingly, ex officio prosecution of every act that can be categorized as violence, whether "minor" or severe, is being set as a standard for the protection of women, albeit only for domestic violence. In countries that have not addressed violence against women in the past, this may provide a legal

point of entry for chronic cases otherwise hard to prosecute. Where intervention and awareness have a longer history, evaluation of police intervention finds that, while they are glad to have "tools" for intervening decisively in the familiar scenes of violence linked to male domination, they are also called to ambiguous situations.

Similarly, in social work there is a perceived need to define levels of severity and methods of risk assessment, lest child protection agencies be swamped with innumerable reports of children "at risk". With growing awareness that children can be harmed by witnessing domestic violence, there is a need to define when that risk is so serious as to require monitoring or child protection interventions. Proactive intervention projects and agencies also need to assess the risk posed by a perpetrator to act both safely and effectively. The points of reference are the perpetrator and the circumstances, not the victim.

Traditional notions of risk factors have isolated individual aspects, and cannot adequately grasp the complexity of situations that may be permeated by a variety of forms and levels of violence, or, on the contrary, may be within a woman's ability to handle on her own if an agency message of "zero tolerance" is present. In short, research would be well advised to develop environmentally based methods of risk assessment to support good practice.

The discussion of preventing and protecting against violence also encountered the question of differentiation. The conditions productive of violence may be related to the types of violence produced; they might differ between severe physical abuse and repeated emotional humiliation, or between what is done to the partner and what is done to the child. The lack of empirical research on when and how men turn to violence hampers any deeper discussion of these issues, but the question could not be answered by looking for factors that predict violence. Prediction should not be confused with prevention, most especially when the prediction is statistical and retrospective, but also because other prevention strategies may consist in providing learning alternatives. That is, if a man who was beaten in boyhood is more likely to abuse his wife later, the best prevention may actually be changing symbolizations of masculinity, thus increasing his chances of

choosing not to repeat acts of which he has been a victim as a child.

Violence is not a simple act. Current violence is often not the first encounter with violations or the threat of it, violences of different types and in different life stages constitute a sort of personal history of violence which shapes both vulnerability and the harmfulness of specific acts. The "incidentalization"[20] inherent in determining criminal accountability – very central to the legal strategies now being strongly pursued across Europe – obstructs understanding of the cultural context and the life context that define the violence and its severity.

In sum, differentiating among forms and levels of violence and clarifying when and why these are human rights violations has implications for the empirical methodology and for the theories applied to the appearance of violence in gender and in generational relations.

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[18] see Kelly 1988 (footnote 17)
[19] see Minna Piispa, Complexity of patterns of violence against women in heterosexual partnerships, in *Violence Against Women* 8/7 2002, 873-900
[20] see Jeff Hearn, *The Violences of Men: How men talk about and how agencies respond to men's violence to women*, London, Sage, 1998 for empirical data on how both perpetrators and social institutions use incidentalization to trivialize most of the violence, recognizing only the singular and massive incident and not the multiple threats and humiliations.

6.2. Methodology and ethics of collaborative research on interpersonal violence

While it is generally understood that there are ethical issues involved in empirical research on violence, related to the gathering, storage and distribution of data and other information, the ethical dimensions of a Coordination Action bringing researchers into dialogue are less obvious, but no less important. These came to the forefront especially in the work on methodological guidelines for possible new comparative research on the roots of violence and men's gendered practices, but also during cross-national reviews of research findings on good practice. These two working groups were most strongly involved in the effort to develop inclusive dialogue among researchers situated in countries with diverse backgrounds, differing both in research and in the degree of recognition given issues of gender and violence.

The substantial regional differences within Europe (and beyond) mean that single models, be they of research methodology or of practice and its evaluation, cannot be applied across Europe without great caution. Furthermore, some models come invested with more power to command respect than others. While there has been more research and more research resources in Western Europe, researchers there have much to learn from Central and Eastern Europe, including about the latter's historical situations. Recognizing this leads to valuing self-reflective approaches to the development of

multiple methods, and in the conduct of research, meetings and other activities.

Attention to diversity raises numerous ethical issues. Most participants in European collaboration are working in their second, third or fourth language. Thus, extra attention must be given to clarity in the working language, but beyond that, working methods (time and space) must be found for listening to each other and clearing up misunderstandings. It is vital to avoid native speakers of English having, by default and for lack of space and dialogue, definitional power over concepts, ideas and debates within the joint work. Collaborative research needs to create and maintain considerable "spaces" or fora - both initially and throughout the project – for ongoing discussions and consultations between the researchers involved about the methodologies or methods they adopt and about developing frames for accommodating, dealing with, or taking advantage of variations in methodology, meanings and concepts. This should include space to discuss analytical and theoretical variations, and develop frames to accommodate, deal with and harness such variations.

Furthermore, much research on issues of gender and violence is contributed by goodwill and indeed overwork, and with few or no additional resources. Collaboration requires a grounded understanding of the variety of conditions of participation: some researchers are working on permanent contracts, some on temporary contracts; some are well paid, others are not; some are in supportive working environments, others are in environments lacking support.

The CAHRV project was unique among the coordination actions in FP 6 in its broad coverage of countries, partners and researcher members. This grew from the knowledge that research on violence typically works "close to the ground" and close to policy and public awareness. Most of the important and groundbreaking research on gender and interpersonal violence, including the majority of prevalence surveys and almost all evaluation research, has been published in the language of the country. Furthermore, both violence and gender as research areas are typically dispersed across departments, institutions, regions; there are no large "centers" where a dozen or more researchers work together on the complex and multifaceted aspects of the problems. The only way towards creating a more integrated European discourse led through including a large number of researchers at widely different locations.

In consequence, writing a cross-national review of the existing research necessarily meant recognizing and valuing significant contributions to state-of-the-art research without actually being able to read the original work. All of the authors of the CAHRV papers needed to seize their courage and transgress academic norms by reporting on work that they had not read, and could not read, trusting in the integrity and good judgment of colleagues from that country who summarized the research or presented them with data. There could be no question of limiting the reviews to research published in English, nor yet in French or German only. Collaboration

required sharing drafts of papers with over a dozen other researchers who would ask for corrections and changes based on their understanding of the work that had been done in their own country and special field. This process is part of what constitutes a specific "European voice" in the gender and violence field. It requires finding and repeatedly re-constituting a balance between open "listening" and specialized "speaking strongly". It can be seen as one of the successes of CAHRV that this balancing act was carried forward successfully, and with enthusiasm for the discoveries thereby made possible, in all four working groups and in the cross-cutting activities as well.

> The importance of good collaboration and work process, and appropriate ethical practices cannot be emphasized too strongly in the development of high quality comparative, transnational research.

It is an important ethical issue in its own right, all the more so when the goal of research is to overcome violence, violation and abuse. This links to the questions of identifying and constructing environments to protect against human rights violations. Research collaboration is itself a work situation that needs to be designed in ways that are incompatible with violence by furthering mutual respect, creative potential and self-confidence in all participants.

This is also a practical question in terms of getting tasks done with the benefit of the greatest input and contribution from all concerned, from different ethnic(ised), gendered, sexual, linguistic, national and other socio-political contexts. Without this, there is a great danger of some participants dominating the research process, leading to a limited understanding of violence. Indeed the ability to work collaboratively is a *sine qua non* of successful transnational research work, and especially so on such difficult and sensitive topics as gender power relations, violence, violation and human rights.

6.3. Socialisation and cultures

The empirical study of violence regularly encounters the issue of culture. As Sally Merry has shown in her ethnography of transnational consensus-building on human rights and gender

violence[21], UN negotiations and conventions have tended to regard culture primarily as an obstacle to change. Signatories to the CEDAW convention are specifically obligated to eliminate

harmful traditional practices, and debate often postulates that "culture" is a cause of their persistence, suggesting that culture is more present in countries that are less successful in implementing human rights. For this reason, the UN Secretary General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women[22] addresses the fallacies of conceptualizing culture as monolithic and unchanging.

Moving beyond the simplifying tendencies to attribute "culture" to the "Other", a central **paradox** emerges: Both research and practice in Europe are constantly struggling to make the dominant culture visible as a culture, and one which generates violence in collective patterns and power structures. Repeatedly, research has uncovered what can only be called "harmful (European) cultural practices" against women, children, the elderly, and vulnerable groups. At the same time, however, the strategies and practices to address violence predominantly call upon the individualist framework of personally motivated and potentially free choices, thus reinforcing the framing that makes systematically patterned violence (and the dominant culture to which it belongs) invisible.

The conceptual framework of human rights discourse can offer a way out of this dilemma if human rights are successfully translated into "local legal consciousness"[23]. An early empirical study with Dutch women in a shelter described their perspective as representing a historical shift "from misfortune to injustice"[24]; however, such transitions are quite uneven within societies. Failing to recognize this will result in problems in the process of change. For example, when Spain passed a law against gender violence in 2004, or Germany a law giving children the legal right to be raised without violence in 2000, almost over night significant numbers of citizens who had, until then, followed norms for being responsible men or parents became potential criminals. The shift in cultural norms invalidates a collective cultural pattern without necessarily building a bridge for learning to recognize, understand and apply the new norms. One of the important and difficult

learning processes within multi-agency approaches to violence has been learning to accept the fact that each agency and each representative of an agency makes progress incrementally by moving forward from the place he or she started out from. That may be a place in a cultural tradition which expects a man to express desire by pressing a wife or girlfriend to have sex and overcoming her resistance, while rape by use of physical force is "going too far".

The research question then becomes how to describe the pathway leading from the older normative systems to the new "culture" where even "mild" coercion is unacceptable. How does this process of change happen, and how can it be supported?

A focus on cultural dynamics and cultural change can accommodate findings of higher levels of violence in certain communities or segments of society without incriminating their "culture" as inherently harmful, as so often occurs in media debates. Similarly, understanding socialisation as a life-long process can avoid simplistic causal models for vulnerability and destructive behaviour in the individual life history. All cultural milieus in Europe generate and tolerate some degree of gender-related violence, and all have the potential to change. This dynamic view of culture and socialization thus offers a bridge to the theme of preventing violence.

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[21] see Merry 2006 (footnote 13)
[22] United Nations, 61st session of the General Assembly, *In-depth study on all forms of violence against women: Report of the Secretary-General*, 25 July, 2006. UN Doc. A/61/122/Add.1, 2007
[23] see Merry, 2006 (footnote 13)
[24] Bram van Stolt and Cas Wouters, *Vrouwen in tweestrijd*, Deventer, 1983

6.4. What can protect against interpersonal violence?

A recurring theme in all the working groups in CAHRV was imagining and defining social

environments that can protect from, or prevent violence. Are there some forms of social organization that give more protection than

others against violence occurring or harm increasing? Does "to protect" meant to offer safety to victims, or to create conditions under which violence will not be perpetrated? Clearly, to develop such an organization of social life, men and women must both be involved, yet the stakes are different for each. They differ as well according to other structures of social inequality.

Situations where multiple dimensions of power/disadvantage (for instance including age, gender, ethnicity/"race", religion, sexuality, disability, kinship, class) intersect may often be ones where violence is most likely to occur, even if not all the dimensions of power flow constantly in the same direction.

The concept of "protective **factors**" does not fit well into any more profound consideration of safeguarding human rights. The researchers surveying the literature thus concluded that both the concept of protective factors and the concept of risk factors regularly individualize the context in which violence occurs and incidentalize acts of violence, because they are derived by the methodology of identifying statistical correlations between isolated pieces of information in a life history. This leads to simplistic explanations that are not only theoretically inadequate, but have little or no practical value. Thus, the working group shifted the frame to ask about "**environments** to protect", and this includes two questions:

- environments to protect against violence occurring,
- environments to protect against (further or greater) harm when violence occurs.

Appropriate **services** responding to violence are protective; in this regard they should be understood as vitally important elements within environments. Data from prevalence studies as well as from agency evaluation point out, however, that the existence of services and what they can offer may not be (and often are not) known to those who need them, even when great efforts have been made to publicize them. This raises the issue of how relevant knowledge is disseminated, and the impact of technology on the spread of knowledge must be considered. A protective dimension of social environments is their capacity to make resources accessible to those who need them to be truly safe.

Environments are not static, but dynamic. The role of social environments is also a topic needing closer study when trying to develop the profiles of violence and its impact. Prevalence studies can give information on where victims turn when seeking help, or on patterns of secrecy and disclosure (Who did you tell about this?) The existence of social networks in itself does not say a great deal about their protective effects; in traditional Western social networks, protection has also implied control over women and children. Social movements seem to have an impact on the social environments, as well as on the knowledge and the skills available either to those victimized or to those around them who may then offer support. From the discussion on documented good practice and experience, it emerged that the lack of a history of social movements and of civil society organizations in the former socialist countries puts both women activists and victimized women at a severe disadvantage.

There is a strong presupposition, especially in the Northern European countries, that, since gender-based violence is the result of power imbalance and discrimination, increasing gender equality should decrease violence. Research on this is ambiguous (see Part 2 of this report). Gender equality as a characteristic of relationships in daily life may well preclude violence, but it depends on social environments that support it.

Thus, to ask whether gender equality is protective against violence raises the question of how to assess when and whether social environments support gender equality; this is by no means simple. Certainly appropriate legal frameworks are essential for establishing and securing gender equality, but because gender power structures are interwoven with personal identity, intimate relationships and interactional constructions of self and other, gender equality cannot be put into effect by decree. It, too, requires a process of cultural change and must be translated into practices of everyday life in the local context.

6.5. The potential and the pitfalls of the law

Laws can be conceptualized either as symbolic acts setting parameters for social environments and social change, or as practical deterrents and means of punishing wrong-doers (or both). It is not always clear what laws against "gender violence" or "domestic violence" or "violence against children" are understood to mean. They may be understood differently by the lobby groups that work for them, the legislators that pass them, the institutions charged with their implementation, and the general public.

Frequently, the discussion of new laws follows an imaginary scenario, e.g. defining domestic violence as a crime is described as leading to police intervention, arrest, prosecution, conviction, and freedom from violence for the woman. The reality almost never corresponds to that scenario. Is it good to have laws that follow such an ideal scenario, or should laws be pragmatic and adjusted to what is likely to be the average outcome in reality? How does the normative function of law interact with the provisions for its implementation?

Legal reforms specifically claiming to reduce gender violence (whether these be special laws on the issue, or reforms in existing criminal, civil, procedural or police law, such as giving sexually assaulted women the right to be interviewed by a female police officer, or to be informed about the status of the court case) may sound good on paper, but in fact be implemented, irregularly or not at all. In the UK, rape law was reformed, but with no increase in convictions, even though reporting has more than tripled. There is also, again, the problem of individualizing the issue; with legal proceedings, the perpetrator is defined as a criminal, not as a representative of a cultural pattern. Across Europe, governments are introducing or changing laws concerning violence against women, or concerning domestic violence (in many cases, the latter lack a gender specification), without providing for evaluation of the impact and the implementation, often without even measures to secure administrative data[25].

It does seem, however, that laws change public awareness, defining a social consensus that violence is not permissible. They also create a sense of "ownership of the issue", both among agencies, and with regard to the victims and those who advocate for them. Higher levels of reporting to the police seem to be sustained even when there is no corresponding increase in prosecution, suggesting that more women feel that they have a right to legal redress. On the whole, it seems that laws are more likely to have an impact on actual practices (both agency practices and, in the longer run, human interactions) if they are accompanied by education of relevant groups. There are clear indications of this in the assessment of laws and training for police intervention; the education of other professionals (i.e. in the health care system) has been evaluated more rarely.

There is an urgent need for regular monitoring and evaluation of all relevant legal frameworks and statutory agencies addressing violence against women, both within each member state, and across Europe. Only data-based monitoring permits realistic stocktaking of how state policies, action plans and legislation are being implemented and with what degree of success. The results of such evaluation should be publicly reported to the citizens who pay for these agencies.

It is notable that the UK and Sweden, with different legal systems and institutional structures, have both developed procedures for inspecting agencies (such as the police, the justice system, child protection agencies) as to how well they are doing their jobs. Such assessments put the responsible governments on the spot to identify the reasons behind the "trouble spots" and to take action to improve performance. The efforts to overcome violence have not yet engaged with the full range of institutions and agencies that could be called upon to ensure that effective action is taken. Research is not yet able to do any solid comparative study of the impact of different measures because basic data are lacking.

Reporting to institutions (police, shelters, social welfare agencies, etc.) does not represent the "true" prevalence of violence. It is well established through victimization surveys and other research that the vast majority of violent acts, not only minor but even those causing serious harm, are never reported to any agency, especially when they occur in the sphere of private life. Even under the best of conditions there will always be under-reporting.

Nonetheless, it is vital to have reliable data from those institutions that could, or do act in response to attacks or threats of harm. To begin with, it is important to know how many cases of what kind of violence come to the attention of institutions and what they do about them. Furthermore, publishing statistics requires agencies to keep good records, which in itself may be protective when repeat violations threaten. Finally, basic statistics are the foundation of European-level research.

Many of the recent efforts towards law reform and specific laws on domestic violence set up multiple channels for passing on information among agencies. Professionals and even ordinary citizens are expected to report domestic violence, police keep records and pass information on to intervention centers or child protection agencies, permanent, searchable files are set up on every case of gender violence, etc. These practices and regulations raise serious ethical issues of women's self-determination and about informed consent and confidentiality. Case-related data collection needs to have a concern for this.

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[25] see the regularly updated compendium "Legislation in the member states of the Council of Europe in the field of violence against women", current version January 2007: http://www.coe.int/equality

6.6. Interconnections: Gendering human rights

The issues that have emerged within and among the thematic areas of the CAHRV work program are interconnected in multiple ways. Centring the discussion of interpersonal violence within a human rights discourse necessarily challenges researchers to clarify their understanding of what constitutes "violence" and to differentiate among actions of a violent nature, considering degrees of severity and impact. Human rights call upon legal frameworks and their implementation through agency practices. Yet such formal procedures are only able to prevent, protect and punish violations when they are embedded in social environments and a process of cultural change. By approaching these different dimensions separately, while working together on cross-cutting issues, CAHRV was able to throw light on interconnections that must be considered when designing policy or assessing practice. A key insight is the importance of context, and to this end, of including diversity.

 "Gendering human rights" is situated within a process of global change; as a concept, it responds to the key role of gender in threats to human rights around the world. Indeed, the very conceptual framing of human rights as universal is today most frequently called into question by claims to legitimate restriction of women's liberty and full social participation. A crucial point of entry for gender awareness in human rights discourse has been opening up private life and informal interactions to scrutiny as potential sites of violence.

Families, peer groups and social networks all too often tolerate or even encourage the use of interpersonal violence. In doing so, they reinforce oppressive gender relations and transmit these across generations.

Overcoming fragmentation in research is an essential step towards understanding how and why this continues. Child maltreatment and elder abuse must be understood in their gender dimensions, sexualized violence needs to be framed by wider knowledge about gendered practices, links must be made between the lack of balance between work and family life and the wellsprings of seemingly private aggression.

Uncovering and transforming these connections is a major project involving legal and political strategies, practical methods of addressing problems, and development of knowledge. On all three levels, human rights must be conceptualized in universal terms, and at the same time gendered with regard to the reality of how they can be secured.

Both in the methodology and the ethics of transnational research on violence, and in offering research results as guidance for policy, attention must be given to principles of non-violence (and to the precept: "Above all, do no harm"). In theory and in practice, addressing violence calls for a holistic approach: For research, whose life-blood is specialization, this can be approximated through engagement with the process of coordination and integration.

7. Sub-network 1: Identifying and profiling victimisation

(Co-ordinators: Manuela Martinez, University of Valencia, Spain; Monika Schröttle, University of Bielefeld, Germany)

Governments and non-governmental organisations seek reliable data on the most salient forms of interpersonal violence, so that their policies may safeguard the integrity and dignity of all citizens, and especially of vulnerable groups. The past decade has seen a considerable expansion in both the methodological quality and the quantity of data collection on the prevalence of gender-based violence, with particular emphasis on violence towards women. In supporting such research, governments have been fulfilling their own and the EU policy commitments and the commitment to international conventions to address human rights violations. However, there has been no corresponding co-ordination of research to permit a realistic application of indicators across national boundaries, and most studies have been singular. This part of the CAHRV project addressed the methodological challenges of comparing the results of independent national surveys on violence. In order to progress towards a transnationally valid data base and European indicators, the problems of adapting instruments for use in different cultural contexts had to be considered in depth, as well as

possible methods of collecting indicative data when full-scale dedicated surveys are not practicable.

Researchers from ten countries and from various scientific disciplines concerned with violence against women, men, children, and the elderly worked together for three years in order to collect and share knowledge and to further develop and improve methodology and information bases on victimisation through violence, prevalence and health impact in Europe. The work was experience based, as most of the researchers involved have already conducted one or more national surveys on prevalence and/or health impact. This was the first European research network to cover a wide range of forms and contexts of interpersonal violence against women, men, children and other marginalized and/or vulnerable population groups; the work led to a broader common knowledge base, an intensified exchange on methodology, results and best practice of research, and to new perspectives in research cooperation for the future

7.1. Compiling and comparing existing national research and data sets

An overview report "State of European research on the prevalence of interpersonal violence and its impact on health and human rights"[26] found a variety of national prevalence studies in European countries. However, these are quite different in methodology, so that their results are not comparable. A number of studies on violence against women and children could be identified, but there is a serious lack of studies on violence against men, elderly people, disabled people, migrants and other marginalized groups. This impedes both inter-country data comparison and differentiation of population groups within countries. Often the most vulnerable population groups have been excluded from studies because they are not

easy to reach in general population samples. Furthermore most current studies are neither repeated regularly nor designed with a longitudinal approach. Thus developments of violence over time, including its increase or decrease, cannot be monitored in most European countries and no comparison of the contours of the problem at different points of time is possible.

In order to test the possibilities of systematic data comparison, researchers from five countries conducted a post-hoc-data analysis on the basis of data sets from violence-against-women prevalence studies[27]. Possibilities and limitations for data comparability and

comparison were identified and discussed. Based on this discussion the research group concluded that it is crucially important for research, policy and social practice to be aware that data from independently conducted studies cannot be compared adequately unless definitions, case bases and methodological frameworks are harmonized and reanalysed carefully by experts.

Variation in the social, cultural, historical and policy context in which victim surveys are carried out, as well as differences in the languages and the predominant conceptual framings for defining and discussing violence, leave the meaning of numbers and figures open to question in trans-national discussions: How far do they refer to the same phenomena, and can they describe differences between countries and population groups in a valid way? Discussing these questions in depth gave an impulse to rethink interpretations and to improve methodology in a way that fits more population groups and several country/culture-specific contexts, and to develop methodologies and research instruments that can make differences in reporting or non-reporting visible.

Post hoc comparisons of prevalence data are possible and constitute a useful contribution to the development of inter-country comparability. Such comparisons require detailed information on the methodology of the studies that are to be compared, including details on measurements, data sets and conceptual frameworks, and resulting estimates must be interpreted carefully against this methodological background. At a minimum, there is a need to harmonize time frames and age groups before quoting figures from different countries, as is frequently done in international reports. Considering this, the experience within the CAHRV project showed that appropriate reanalyses were possible only for five national prevalence studies, although a total of at least 19 such studies had been carried out in EU countries when the project started. Major obstacles are the unavailability of data for secondary analysis, the language of publication and the lack of comparable methods and questions.

Overall, CAHRV's data comparison suggests that real prevalence rates of violence against women might be higher in Finland and Lithuania and lower in Sweden, while France and Germany were placed differently in the middle range depending on the type of violence.

However, it is not possible to assess to what extent this may have been a consequence of differing social acceptability of reporting different forms of aggressive behaviour, differences in how the items were phrased and the questions were asked, or whether other factors might enter into this.

For gender-based violence and other sensitive or tabooed forms of violence (e.g. sexual violence, violence towards older women, violence in very close relationships/families) research needs to continue to think of innovative ways of questioning respondents and capturing such soft "cultural" data. Future development of prevalence research will move towards overcoming some of these problems by improving methodology. For example, it would be important to explore different levels of shame and openness to report on violent experiences to a third person as well as different perceptions of violence. Other questions about attitudes to broader social issues may give further insight. Such information could support a more culturally sensitive interpretation of the prevalence data in different countries, a vital necessity for comparative analysis.

Additionally the analyses showed variations between the countries in age-group-specific victimisation, in the overlap of forms of violence by partners, and in the interconnections of childhood violence, social factors and later victimisation of women in adulthood.

Methodological recommendations for comparative reanalysis of prevalence of violence against women and health impact in Europe.

The results of the post-hoc, secondary data analyses undertaken by this working group support the following conclusions:

1. Prevalence and health impact data of existing data sets in Europe are not comparable without taking into account the different methodologies, research instruments, samples, calculation bases and cultural backgrounds upon which the data are based.

2. A precondition for comparing prevalence data is that the studies are based on similar sampling, methodology, definitions of and

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questions about violence and health impact.

3. When studies bear a sufficient number of similarities, post-hoc reanalysis using the same age groups, calculation bases and definitions of violence is feasible and can permit some data comparison across countries.

4. A meaningful post-hoc data comparison must include the following elements as a minimum:

   a. A detailed plan for secondary data analyses with an explicit agreement about exact definitions of violence, reference and age-groups for recalculation purposes.
   b. Tables or information that document the similarities and differences between studies with respect to sampling and sample size, methodology, data collection, calculation bases and the definitions/questions on violence and health impact that are to be compared.
   c. Overview tables of recalculated data that contain information on prevalence rates, health impact (and if available, other types of impact) and calculation bases/definitions from each study and each context of violence.
   d. Background information on the direction in which methodological factors and also cultural aspects and possible differences in reporting may have influenced prevalence and health impact data.

e. Interpretation of the results and the comparability of data; this requires considerable methodological expertise and detailed knowledge of the data sets as well as an understanding of the wider cultural contexts in which surveys were conducted.

5. Although some comparability of data can thus be achieved by recalculation on the basis of uniform definitions, other dimensions that may have influenced prevalence rates and reporting have to be considered, such as cultural differences in the openness to disclose experiences of violence, differences in sampling and sample size of the studies, differences in the methodology of data collection and in the exact wording and cultural meaning of questions about violence and health impact. Post-hoc data comparison is like a puzzle with missing pieces that reveals interesting trends but will never be able to fully capture exact differences between countries, cultures and population groups.

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[26] Manuela Martinez et al., *State of European research on the prevalence of interpersonal violence and its impact on health and human rights*, Brüssel: EUR 21915, 2006, also online at http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/reddot/190.htm
[27] see Monika Schröttle et al., *Comparative reanalysis of prevalence of violence against women and health impact data in Europe – obstacles and possible solutions. Testing a comparative approach on selected studies*, 2006 http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/reddot/190.htm

7.2. Methodological standards for future prevalence research

Building on the experience of data re-analysis, it was then possible to develop minimal standards and specifications for best practice in violence prevalence and health impact research, including violence against women, men, children and against the elderly, as well on the links between immigration and violence[28].

The similarities and differences between the studies on interpersonal violence helped to define a number of important criteria to consider when conducting and comparing such surveys and their results. Priorities for further research include:

- developing methods for sensitive and culturally shaped topics;
- closer study of men's experience of gender based violence;
- more attention to specific populations, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups
- more systematic work on the measurement of the links between health and violence[29]

Further comparative research could contribute to understanding of the heterogeneity of

experiences such as comparisons between countries and regions, between specific population groups, and comparisons over time and between generations and age groups.

Standardisation for European prevalence research as a tool for national and international monitoring of violence prevalence and health impact is still an open and controversial question. A higher level of standardisation is one prerequisite for further comparative research and thus important for future research in this field. On the other hand close comparison of instruments and data made clear that standardisation of methodology and instruments has to be developed in a precise way, with a focus on the high relevance of country-, culture-, gender-, and generation-specific differences. These differences dramatically influence both the possibility of uncovering violence and also the outcome in terms of prevalence and health impact rates. Thus, the work of CAHRV expert group recommends a very careful and research-based process of standardisation of methodology and instruments. This should be conducted in the framework of international and interdisciplinary cooperation with experts in the field of gender- and culture-sensitive research. The following aspects need to be considered:

1. For more accurate data comparison on a European level it would be important to develop more similar or standardized questionnaires or modules on violence and health impact, and on broader issues related to violence and health impact assessment. It is important to stress that even if studies with identical methodologies were conducted, there would still be cultural and societal aspects that could lead to a different understanding of questions and to different reporting on violence by interviewees.[30] Thus, a standardized measurement procedure should initially investigate possible national and cultural differences that may affect reporting, specific understanding of, and reactions to violence, and the effects of policy formation and implementation.

2. Additional questions on factors that could influence the prevalence and interpretation of partner violence in the light of gender and generational norms, as well as those that may influence openness to disclose experiences of violation should be included in future surveys. Such information could permit a culturally sensitive interpretation of the prevalence data and the context in different countries - a vital requirement for comparative analysis - including questions about perceptions of violence, about the understanding of questions, and on norms or opinions about disclosing sexual or intimate partner violence.

3. Variations within country-based prevalence data have been analyzed using pre-defined groups as the basis for understanding the varied levels and experiences of violence. Care must be taken to ensure that such groups are not defined as culturally different in a fixed and permanent manner. For example, the cultural context within which immigrant women live in Europe most often consists of overlapping sets of cultural practices - those related to the migration experience, those pertaining to the values and beliefs with which they grew up, and those predominant in the society in which they have settled as immigrants. The interaction between these different practices will be influenced by the family and social networks in which individuals live out their daily lives and the types of contact they have with different levels or groups in the European society. Inter-group comparisons of victimisation must take into account the life contexts of the individuals and use a variety of indicators of social practices and gender norms.

4. The aim to produce more accurate and more comparable data about various forms of violence remains a priority and forms a central basis for policies. Such data should include information about the extent of violence, risk and protective factors, consequences of and reactions to violence, reporting to the police and justice system, help-seeking behaviour and protection by institutions. Here, further statistical data from large-scale studies enabling comparison of countries and over time is needed and should be combined with data from different sources (such as crime reports, medical care data, quality of life surveys).

5. Additional basic research concerning methodology is necessary in order to overcome some problems of data comparability and to improve and further develop methodologies on violence prevalence and health impact research. In

order to be useful at both the European as well as national levels, one important precondition for the development of accurate and more standardized methodology and instruments for future research is to involve a wide range of experts from several countries and cultures. Researchers who have conducted prevalence and health impact studies can contribute from the knowledge that has been built up by European research over the past 10-15 years. It is this combined knowledge and experience which will be of central importance in the design and implementation of future studies of this most challenging of topics, not only in order to find solutions to the problem but also to assist in the development of preventive strategies.

Although interpersonal violence includes a wide variety of different types of violence exercised in different contexts and against different groups, general minimum methodological standards are necessary to guide researchers when planning a prevalence study on any type of violence. Additionally, specific methodological standards are needed for violence perpetrated against specific groups. The group recommended the development of standardisation and of modules composed of core questions for use in other surveys, to which other questions specific to the country or population group can be added.

Different international institutions (UN, WHO) and individual researchers have published guidelines and recommendations for future prevalence research on violence against women[31]. The report from the CAHRV network offers further contributions as it a) builds on concrete experiences with prevalence research in eight western and eastern European countries (Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden, and UK), and b) is based on the knowledge about several forms and contexts of interpersonal violence: psychological, sexual and physical violence against women, men, children, elderly people and migrants, and thus experience with research on various forms of interpersonal violence is included.

The following minimum standards were formulated[32]:

1. A maximum representation of the different population groups to be included in the samples should be provided. Studies should be based on representative samples under the country-specific circumstances. Vulnerable groups should be reached as far as possible. Sample size should be sufficient to differentiate between specific groups in relation to socio-demographics or type of violence.

2. Basic ethical standards have heightened relevance in this field. Issues such as consent, confidentiality, anonymity and attention to safety measures are especially important in the study of violence. The safety of respondents and the research team is paramount and should guide all project decisions. A confidential and safe setting for the interview should be provided. All research team members should be carefully selected and receive specialized training and on-going support. The study design and methodology must include actions aimed at reducing any possible distress caused to the participants by the research. Survey and post-survey-support has to be provided for both interviewers and interviewees. Attention has to be paid to the implications of any national law or requirements regarding research methodology.

3. It is important to gather information on several forms of violence through the lifetime and in different time periods and life situations. Both the experience of victimization and the experience of perpetrating violence should be included. The context of violence and victimisation has to be investigated adequately.

4. Questionnaires about violence should use specific acts/attempts in item lists instead of, or in addition to summarizing questions on violence. All relevant forms of violence (physical, sexual, psychological and economic) should be included and distinguished. Questions should allow differentiation between different life contexts (e.g., domestic, work, public sphere), different types of perpetrators in terms of their relationship to the victim, and different levels of severity of the violence (e.g. injuries, fear). The questions need to be specific enough to determine levels and severity of different types of violence and health impacts.

5. Before designing a questionnaire, a review should be conducted of other surveys and questionnaires already developed in national

contexts or used in international research. Possible problems of re-traumatisation and unacceptably high levels of stress generated by the questions may be detected during pre-tests or pilot studies, and need to be checked with psychological experts and experts of the care system in advance of the interviews. Questionnaires should be developed in an interdisciplinary approach in order to guarantee that all relevant aspects are considered.

6. Research must be sensitive to the culture and the country: Specific cultural differences that may have an effect on the data should be taken into account when surveys and questionnaires are developed. They relate to different understandings of the questions, gender equality issues, issues of privacy, perceptions of sexuality (attitudes towards sexuality such as restrictive versus permissive) and legislation in relation to violence.

7. Demographic data need to be consistent, whilst at the same time respecting different country conventions for assessing variables such as ethnicity, age, or socio-economic

factors.

8. Specific methodological standards may apply for research with particular groups[33].

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[28] for more detail see Manuela Martinez et al., *Perspectives and standards for good practice in data collection on interpersonal violence at European level*, 2007, http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/reddot/190.htm
[29] see Martinez et.al. 2007 (footnote 28) appendix 3
[30] This is especially so for gender-based violence and very sensitive forms of violence where the "real" rates will never be known.
[31] see Mary Ellsberg and Lori Heise: *Researching violence against women: a practical guide for researchers and activists.* Washington, DC,: World Health Organization 2005, http://www.unece.org/stats/gender/publications/MultiCountry/Researching_Violence_against_Women.pdf; United Nations, 2007 (footnote 22); Sylvia Walby: Improving the statistics on violence against women. *Statistical Journal of the United Nations ECE*, 22, 2005, 193-216, and World Health Organization: Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women, WHO/FCH/GWH/01.1, Geneva 2001, http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2001/WHO_FCH_GWH_01.1.pdf
[32] Martinez et.al. 2007 (see footnote 28)
[33] see more on specific standards for research on violence against women, men, children, elderly, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities in Martinez et al. 2007 (footnote 28)

7.3. Recommendations for future research on interpersonal violence

Though substantial prevalence and health impact research, good practice and valuable research guidelines have been conducted and provided in a number of European countries over the past 15 years,[34] there still are deficits in the methodology and in the state of knowledge of interpersonal violence research. These are related to aspects such as the uneven inclusion of specific population groups, data comparison and the lack of commonly agreed measurements and descriptions of various forms and levels of victimisation through the life-course. The following recommendations for future research on prevalence of interpersonal violence are grounded on analyses and discussions of these problems by principal investigators in prevalence research and aim to contribute to the further development of research in this field[35].

1. **Regular and repeated surveys** on violence prevalence and its impact at a national level

should be conducted in order to monitor the problem and assess the effectiveness of political strategies against interpersonal violence.

2. Commonly agreed **core questions and standard survey modules** for national and international research should be developed by international and interdisciplinary expert groups/research teams in order to provide international data comparability and data comparison.

3. In future prevalence research, victimisation and **multiple victimisation** through interpersonal violence should be described and documented both in a differentiated as well as in an integrated way. Further consideration should be given to gathering information about repeated violence through the life-course and about the overlap between various forms and contexts of

violence.

4. **Measurement** of sexual violence and abuse, psychological violence, neglect, levels of severity of violence and types of violence and victimisation **needs to be improved** and should be developed further in the framework of an interdisciplinary and international research and expert group. European prevalence researchers on interpersonal violence should develop, test and agree on common definitions and item lists for the investigation of several forms of violence; they should also try to define where violence begins and why, and to improve measurement of different levels of severity of violence.

5. **More effort needs to be made to reach hidden and marginalized population groups** or those who may be at higher risk of victimisation such as ethnic minorities and migrants, women whose daily life is strictly controlled by husband or family, women, men and children living in institutions or in private care, elderly people and people with disabilities. This would mean that additional surveys with top-up samples would be needed, for example, with migrants and ethnic minorities (in the relevant language) additional interviews in institutions where victimised people may live (such as shelters, rehabilitation institutions, psychiatric institutions, prisons), with homeless people, people with disabilities and older people in private and institutional care. Furthermore, special efforts should be taken to reach individuals who cannot provide informed consent for the interview or who were restricted from participation by family members or other close relatives or /-intimate partners. A high level of family or partner control appears to be linked to a higher risk of victimisation.

6. **Cultural issues should be taken into consideration** in all prevalence surveys on interpersonal violence. Specific cultural differences that may have an effect on the data should be taken into account when surveys and questionnaires are developed. These relate to different understandings and meanings of the survey questions, gender equality issues, issues of privacy, perceptions of sexuality (attitudes towards sexuality, restrictive versus permissive views) and legislation in relation to violence.

Furthermore, these cultural differences are relevant when selecting the method of data collection.

7. **More integrated research on violence against both genders and various age groups** should be conducted. Perpetration as well as victimisation and the interconnectedness of both aspects should be included in such surveys. This would allow for comparison of experiences of violence and the different contexts of violence between genders and generations. Such comparisons would enable researchers to develop pictures of patterns of violence throughout the life-course and to explore the interconnectedness of early childhood experiences with victimisation or perpetration in adulthood for both sexes. For gender-sensitive research a set of core questions needs to be developed that is appropriate to measure victimisation, perpetration and the context of violence for men and women across different generations adequately. The meaning of conflict and power differences as well as other contextual variables should be included as appropriate here.

8. More funding for **secondary data analyses** and further **longitudinal studies** is needed in order to determine the development, dynamics, influencing factors, causes and consequences of interpersonal violence.

9. **Health impact research** needs further development for integration into prevalence studies. A core module is needed to assess health impact of violence within surveys. The core questions should contain: a) standardized questions about the direct impact of violence on physical/mental health perceived by victims of violence (physical injuries, psychological impact, other consequences on health status, etc.), and b) general questions on the current health status, which are useful for characterising the status of individuals who have experienced certain types of violence in comparison with those who have not. Furthermore, questions on social impact should be included (e.g. validated quality of life scales, economic impact/economic costs of violence).

10. There are **specific groups and specific forms of violence** about which research is

underdeveloped. More research is needed on child neglect, psychological and sexual violence against women, men, children and other vulnerable groups, violence against ethnic minorities, violence against elderly people and disabled people, especially in situations of home and institutional care, different forms of violence against homosexual and transgender men and women, homeless people and prostitutes. Furthermore, connections between childhood violence and violence in later adult life, as well as interconnections between different forms of violence through various life contexts need further study[36].

11. Policy and research development requires **longitudinal and systematic monitoring** of the extent and development of violence against specified population groups and in different life contexts. Prevalence data collected by dedicated surveys and modules should be one part of a system of collecting various indicators on the visibility of violence in institutions and state responses. Additionally, results and data from other sources, such as qualitative and institutional studies, indicators from criminological data sources and from the health system as well as from other institutions (e.g. care system) should be collected systematically and analysed together with prevalence data[37].

Conclusions

Over the three years of the project, examining the similarities and differences among studies on violence and health impact helped to define a number of important criteria to consider when conducting and comparing such surveys and their results. It became apparent that further comparative research would contribute to our understanding of the heterogeneity of experience. More systematic work is also necessary on the links between health and violence. A major outcome of the collaboration within CAHRV work is an intensified and sustained exchange on methodology and

interpretation of data between researchers from several European countries.

A number of questions remain unresolved. The discussions within this network revealed several contradictory positions on methodological aspects. It was decided to opt for neither one nor the other solution in these cases and instead to provide further discussion on the various preferred methods and their impact, and develop ways of investigating which approach is the most effective. This is planned through continued co-operation after completion of the CAHRV work program. A high-level expert group was convened to support this interchange and to further cooperation with other transnational networks. Initiatives are underway towards standardisation of survey methodology both in Europe and in the context of the UN.

One of the most important issues for future research and policy concerning interpersonal violence is a more regular and systematic monitoring of the problem at both national and international levels. Within this, prevalence research and health impact research are highly relevant, but these are only two elements of a broader systematic collection of data and information which are needed to monitor interpersonal violence, reactions of the state and other institutions and the impact of these on the increase or decrease of violence. In the long run, it is necessary to conduct continuing research with adequate funding and results made available in a way to assist and inform policy makers and practitioners on the scale and nature of the problem and of its likely impact on their work.

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[34] see Martinez et.al. 2006 (footnote 26) and Schröttle et.al. 2006 (footnote) 27

[35] see more detailed and commented version of the following recommendations: Martinez, et al. 2007 (footnote 28) chapter 2

[36] see Martinez et.al. 2007 (footnote 28)

[37] for discussion of several sources of knowledge and indicators, see Martinez et.al. (footnote 28)

8. Sub-network 2: The roots of interpersonal violence: gendered practices, social exclusion and violation

(Co-ordinators: Keith Pringle, Aalborg University, Denmark; Jeff Hearn, Swedish School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland; Irina Novikova, University of Latvia, Latvia)

Across a wide range of human rights violations, from trafficking and rape in war to everyday domestic abuse, social constructions of masculinity and men's gendered practices are major factors, even when men are the victims.

They are implicated in the causal connections when interpersonal conflicts or challenges to claims and expectations are dealt with by the use of violence, especially physical violence, and they are indirectly, but powerfully present in processes of social hierarchy and marginalisation. In the literature on aggression and violence, the gender perspective has often been lacking, and research on masculinity has only partially addressed the issues of how men come to perpetrate violations. Processes of social inclusion, exclusion, and marginalisation that mediate between social structure and the psychology of the individual have received insufficient attention in men's studies, especially in relation to the potential for violence.

8.1. Developing methodological tools

Building on a previous Thematic Network funded in EU Framework 5, this group of researchers first established a multi-country baseline of potentially relevant research by updating and expanding the European Documentation Centre on Men (http://www.cromenet.org). In addition to the ten countries already included, new national research reviews were added from the Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain and Sweden, and the existing national research reviews from other countries brought up to date. Gaining an overview of research on men in a wide range of countries was essential to designing a shared methodological framework for comparative research. It provided a foundation for considering different approaches, concepts, and understandings and differing intellectual traditions.

Thematically, the subnetwork focussed on how to study the roots of violent behaviour, social inclusion/social exclusion, and violation. The objective was to develop an approach for transnational comparative research on men's violences and men's gendered practices. Because of the complexity of the issues, it was agreed that it was necessary to develop methodological tools rather than a single tool. This was partly to be sensitive to the variability of cultural/social contexts in time and space when researching men's practices.

Conceptually, the idea of a "methodology" was sub-divided into six components interlinking one another. These six components were defined as follows:

1. Procedural frames focused on the process of how to find knowledge.
2. Epistemological frames.
3. Critical methodological re-reading of existing materials on the CROME website: to analyse and reflect upon the methodologies used in selected studies in national reports with a view to methodological development.
4. Consideration of a series of theoretical/analytical issues in relation to men's practices ⬚rganizati under the heading of "Cultural Variations, Convergences and Divergences in Time and Space". Among these issues are: understanding the data in terms of the "intersectionality" of various forms of power relations associated with, for instance, gender, ethnicity, age, disability, sexuality and class; ⬚rganizat dynamics of men's practices in the context, and critique, of mainstream comparative welfare frames.
5. Working towards the development of adequate quality assurance of research methods.
6. Examination of the implications of (1) to (5) for the development of a Research

Strategy for future trans-European research on men's violences n the context of Human Rights Violations.

The work towards a methodological framework report for further research on men's violence to women[38] was implemented as a process of constant movement between data, ideas and theories. This approach enables the 'transcending' of data; it encourages the use of multiple theoretical sources in order to make discoveries and achieve new insights. The process of developing a shared methodological framework was furthermore *interactive* in many ways, including many rounds of commenting on the draft texts and bringing in new ideas on future research methodologies on men's violence to women. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that this collective, collaborative process has been important as a way to include as many countries, researchers and disciplines as possible. The contributions from all of the project partners and individual members have been crucial in producing a collectively authored research strategy on men's violence in Europe

As a result of the coordination process, agreement was reached on the following **methodological principles** as a foundation of research strategy:

Gendered analysis and gendered power relations

Research strategy needs to attend to the centrality of gender and gendered power relations. This is not only in terms of the substantive focus of the research, but also in terms of the gender composition of the research networks. Issues of gendered content and process need to be addressed throughout research, including the production of data and the interpretation of data and gaps in data. While it is now clearly □rganizati that violence is gendered, the gendering of research on violence is discussed less often.

An adequately gendered approach would include at least the following features:

• attention to the variety of feminist approaches and literatures; these provide the methodology and theory to develop a gendered account;

• recognition of gender differences as both an analytic category and experiential reality;

• attention to sexualities and sexual dynamics in research and the research process; this includes the deconstruction of taken-for-granted heterosexuality, particularly in the study of families, communities, agencies and □rganization□;

• attention to the social construction of men and masculinities, as well as women and femininities, and including understanding masculinities in terms of relations between men, as well as relations with women and children;

• understanding of gender through its interrelations with other oppressions and other identities, including those of age, class, disability, 'race', ethnicity and religion;

• acceptance of gender conflict as permanent, and as equally as normal as its opposite, as well as examining resistance to this view;

• understanding that gender and sexuality and their relationship are historically and culturally acquired and defined; and

• understanding that the close monitoring of gender and sexuality by the state (the official biography of individuals) is not accidental, but fulfils the purposes of particular social groupings.

Research on men's violence has to be gender-present. To scientifically present violence as gender-absent or gender-neutral would require that it be random in its doing and receiving in relation to women and men, and require it to play no role in the maintenance of gendered and other social boundaries and social divisions. This does not apply to any form of violence, including same-sex violence where, for example, violence between men is far greater than violence between women.

Gender collaboration

Research on men's violences needs to bring together women and men researchers who research men and masculinities in an explicitly gendered way. Such a meeting point for women researchers and men researchers is necessary and timely in the development of good quality European research on men in Europe. Such work offers many opportunities for collaboration and learning across countries and between colleagues. Research on men that draws only

on the work of men is likely to neglect the very important research contribution that has been and is being made by women to research on men. Research and networking based only on men researchers is likely to reproduce some of the existing gender inequalities of research and policy development. This is not a comment of gender essentialism but a commentary on the need to draw on the full knowledge and expertise available. Gender-collaborative research is necessary in the pursuit of gender equality, combating gender discrimination, achievement of equality, and anti-discrimination.

Use of multiple methods, methodologies and epistemological frames

No one method is able to answer the spread of research questions. A range of methods needs to be employed. While attending to statistical and other information, qualitative and grounded methods and analyses need to be ☐rganizati and developed. Contributions are needed from all of the social sciences, demography, anthropology, as well as from the humanities. All approaches and epistemological frames to understanding knowledge can be ☐rganiza, but all should be reviewed critically. Methodology needs to attend to both material inequalities and discursive constructions.

Interconnections, and separations, between social arenas

A key principle is to see the interconnections between men's violences and the different social arenas in which it occurs, such as home, work, social exclusion/inclusion, health, care, education, to name but a few. Violence does not operate as a separate sphere of practice. There are impacts of employment on violence (including gender differences regarding work), and vice versa; impacts of domestic and family relations on violence, and vice versa; impacts of social inclusion/exclusion on violence, and vice versa; and impacts of men's health and women's health on violence, and vice versa.

Ethical and political sensitivities in collaborative work

Studying sensitive but also powerful topics, such as gendered violence, calls for addressing specific ethical issues in the research process and method(s) used. Ethical issues concern especially professional integrity and relations

with and responsibilities towards research participants, sponsors and/or funders. Possible problems, such as methodological, technical, ethical, political and legal problems, need to be taken into consideration at every stage of the research on a sensitive topic.

The importance of good collaboration and work process, and appropriate ethical practices cannot be emphasized too strongly in the development of high quality comparative, transnational research. This is an important ethical issue in its own right, all the more so when the aim is to act against violence, violation and abuse.

Experience of working on European, EU and comparative, transnational research on men and masculinities suggests a number of pointers for developing such research practice. These matters of research process cannot be separated from the content of research, and came to the fore in other areas of the Coordination Action. Thus, some main points are discussed in part one of the present report (see 6.2).

Additional positive guidelines from the working group included the following:

- Strong attention needs to be given to ethical questions in the gathering, storage and distribution of data and other information;
- Be respectful of all researchers and what they bring to the research; this extends to understanding of difference, and of others' research and national and regional locations;
- Be aware that the regional differences within Europe mean that single models cannot be assumed to apply in all parts of Europe. There are also considerable differences in legal and institutional structures, from which arise differences around openness/secrecy, financial accounting and many other matters. Mutual learning is a vital aspect of European cooperation. As is often the case within structural and uneven power relations, those with less resources often know more about those with more resources, than vice versa.
- In collective research discussions give feedback in good time, and not late in the process of production; express positive support and gratitude;
- Develop an appropriate and fair collective publishing policy, so texts and information

are not used inappropriately by others as their own;

- Be aware of internal differences within research networks, including widely differing conditions of participation, so that much work is done without pay or in "overtime". Researchers are also subject to other social divisions and differences, such as by age, class, disability, ethnicity and racialization, gender, and sexuality.
- Develop projects that are fair in terms of the distribution of resources, including between those with greater coordinating functions and other research functions, between those who are more funded and those who are less funded, and between universities and similar institutions that are better resourced (especially in Western Europe) and universities and similar institutions that are less well resourced (especially in Central and Eastern Europe); This is especially relevant given the typical under-resourcing of collaborative research.
- Develop a violation-free mode of organization and working;
- Aim to produce a working environment that people are satisfied with, that they look to working with and are pleased to be in.

Examining and problematising roots and explanations of men's violences

The examination of causes, explanations and 'roots' needs to be considered, both in broad and multiple ways, without over-simplified or deterministic interpretations. Debates on why men do violence – the 'roots' of men's violences – have been long and varied. They have moved through shifts in disciplinary and discursive constructions, and in the placing of men's violence in relation to 'men' and 'violence'. Explanations of men's violence may be developed from a wide range of academic and disciplinary traditions and these offer different conceptual, analytical and empirical building blocks.

Building on and reviewing the contribution of critical studies on men

There is a substantial international body of critical, feminist and profeminist work on men, masculinities and men's practices. Some of this is on men's violences. Some of the implications of this general research can be extended to men's violences.

[38] Jeff Hearn et al., *Methodological framework report*, 2007, http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/reddot/190.htm

8.2. Studying men and men's violences comparatively and transnationally

A shared methodological framework for a research strategy needs to adopt comparative and transnational orientation in examining men's practices, gender relations and social policy responses to them in their specific social and cultural contexts. Consequently, it seeks to understand them as both socially and culturally constructed and with real material forms, effects and outcomes for people's lives. This involves taking into account the complex intersection of gendered inequalities with other forms of social disadvantage.

One of the most convincing reasons for adopting a comparative approach is the potential offered for deconstructing the assumptions that underpin social practices and policies in different countries. This can facilitate reconstruction of more effective policies and practices. There is

growing awareness that such practices and policies increasingly interact transnationally, at European and global levels: consequently research may seek to explore the processes and outcomes of those interactions and connections.

There are well-known methodological difficulties in comparative research around the cultural equivalence of concepts/frames that are problems primarily for quantitative research. The same issues occur with qualitative research.

However, provided it is carried out with both cultural sensitivity and a critical perspective, qualitative research can thrive on the lack of cultural equivalences or differences/variations in cultural equivalences. In-depth studies can explore those differences and variations in detail

– as well as the cultural continuities and interconnections, enriching our understanding of social, cultural and political dynamics. This can be a vital precursor to broader quantitative exploration. Thus, cultural variations in concepts and conceptual frames are both a major hurdle for transnational comparative research and a significant opportunity for deeper understanding.

There are several promising avenues for framing comparisons:

• Selecting countries to represent different major welfare regimes would allow testing general welfare typologies in relation to men's practices and men's use of violence. This could suggest revisions in the ways in which social patterns and welfare responses between countries have been grouped together based on alleged historical, social and/or cultural proximity.

• These and other considerations can be framed within developing notions of what 'being European' constitutes. With the enlargement of the EU, there are and will be contested ideas of 'Europe' and being 'European'. In this context, research can offer new insights by highlighting the analysis of violence and diversity/difference.

• Inclusion of countries from Central and Eastern Europe allows exploration of how recent economic, social, cultural and political changes impact upon attitudes and practices relating to men across Europe. It seems that the most powerful nations in the EU are also powerful in the context of defining of what and how things are to be researched. The experience of 'transit countries' is too easily ignored. This is particularly unfortunate for research on gender relations since these transitions and their roots embed very difficult problematics concerning violence to women. For instance, the shift from communist rule was 'liberating' in many senses, but the socio-economic circumstances of many men and women have actually deteriorated. For many men, this has meant losing employment and at the same time, their position in society. In planning research it is crucial to include countries in Central and Eastern Europe, and to take the circumstances of women and men in the post-socialist countries into account.

Studying men transnationally

Recent research on men and masculinities has emphasized the interconnections of gender with other social divisions, such as age, class, disability, ethnicity, racialization and sexuality. Gender cannot be empirically or theoretically derived consistently from any kind of fixed, inner trait or core. There are well-established arguments that men's gendered relations of and to power are complex, even contradictory. The collective, historical power of men may be understood as maintained by the dispensability of some men, for example, as soldiers in war.

Attempts have been made to push forward the boundaries in the comparative field using (pro)feminist perspectives to consider men's practices in Asia, Southern Africa, the South, Central and North Americas, Australasia and Europe. These are attempts that seek to locate such considerations within debates on globalisation and men's practices, throwing some doubt in the process on more ambitious claims of globalisation theories. A growing academic and policy literature has begun to examine the impact of globalisation processes on men and gender relations. There is also an increasing focus on global transactions in processes of masculinity formation and transnational categories of men and masculinities, as in 'global business masculinity', 'men of the world' or the central place of men and masculinity in the collective violence of war. Nonetheless, there remains a serious deficit in critical transnational studies of men's practices and in the sources available for such study.

Men's relation to social power is closely interlinked with men's relations to social problems, that is, in both the creation and experiencing of problems, and the broader issue of the societal problematization of men and masculinities. Not only are men now increasingly recognized as gendered, but they, or rather some men, are increasingly recognized as a gendered social problem to which welfare systems may, or for a variety of reasons may not, respond. While some kind of problematization of men and masculinities seems to exist in most, perhaps all, European societies, the form that it takes is quite different from society to society. Social problems exist in terms of men's violence, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, buying of sex, accidents, driving, as well as in the denial of such problems as sexual violence. All of these have immediate and long-term negative effects on others, friends, family and strangers. In addition, some men suffer disproportionately from adversity, such as ill-health, violence, poverty, or suicide.

There is great national and societal variation in how men and masculinities interact with other major social divisions and inequalities, in particular, class, "race" xenophobia and racism, ethnicity, nationalism and religion. The intersection of "race", ethnicity, nationalism and nationality appear to be especially and increasingly important for the construction of both dominant and subordinated forms of men and masculinities. Thus, the complex interrelations between these and the socio-economic and political structures and processes need to be studied. To explore such shifting patterns of continuity and variation, as well as the complex dynamics underpinning those patterns, qualitative research is clearly of crucial importance. Partly because, in itself, it can provide the sensitivity for exploring such comparative subtleties; partly because it is an essential pre-cursor to any quantitative comparative research if the latter is to minimise the inevitable methodological problems.

Processes of cultural variation impinge directly not only on any research topic but also on the research process itself. In multiple ways, research traditions in different countries value various forms of research differently. Moreover, there are considerable cultural variations in how qualitative research is done, especially as there is no clear dividing line between qualitative and quantitative research. So, for example, in a cultural context where quantitative research is the "norm", qualitative research may be carried out along more quantitative principles than is the case in a context where qualitative research is more broadly accepted. This has implications for what is researched and how it tends to be researched in different countries and contexts. The picture is even more complex when one takes into account variability between disciplines as well. These considerations apply to theoretical and analytical understandings of men's violences, and indeed of men's gendered practices more generally. There are massive potential variations in the way in which men's practices can be understood analytically and theoretically, not least the highly political and emotive issue of men's violences.

Ethnicity and gender

When ethnicity and gender intersect, situations may arise that increase the likelihood of violence occurring and/or to increase the likelihood of violence not being prevented or halted. There are a number of types of situations that can be envisaged under this heading. Some of these include: (i) militant racism; (ii) projects of State and non-state nationalism and pan-nationalism; state and non-state terrorism; (iii) the reluctance of state and non-state agencies to intervene in gendered violence in minority ethnic group families; (iv) occasional over-eagerness of state/non-state agencies to intervene in gendered violence in minority ethnic group families (at other times avoidance); (v) relative lack of attention paid to gendered violence in majority ethnic group families compared to that in minority ethnic group families.

Multiple dimensions of Power/disadvantage

Situations where multiple dimensions of power/disadvantage (for instance including age, gender, ethnicity/"race", religion, sexuality, disability, kinship, class) intersect may often be ones where violence is most likely to occur, even if not all the dimensions of power flow constantly in the same direction. For example, the "commercial sexual exploitation of children", in one perspective, can be seen as the outcome of a complex interaction of various dimensions of oppression and violence: at least gender, age, class, ethnicity/"race", sexuality. Existing research suggests that these phenomena are linked to dominant, even taken-for-granted, ways of being men, and to heterosexuality. To throw light on these connections involves examining the specificity of intersectionalities, including:

- the likely vulnerability of both women and men in less powerful social locations
- the fewer resources of both women and men in less powerful social locations
- the greater likelihood of the prosecution of men in less powerful social locations
- gender power relations.

Violence and violations are not simply means for or structurings of *other* forms of power, domination and oppression. They are forms of power, domination and oppression in themselves, and they structure organisations. While such a perspective can mean that violence as violation may blur into power relations, a key distinction is that power relations are not necessarily violating.

8.3. Challenges in comparative and transnational research

There are many challenges around methodology in research on gender violence and in particular how to plan and accomplish such research comparatively and/or transnationally. In reviewing previous research, considerable differences were identified between the ways in which academic research and statistical sources in different countries have conceptualised social exclusion, and indeed social inclusion. These differences varied to some extent depending upon which forms of national and international data or evidence were examined, as in the contrasts between academic research and statistical sources. Theoretical issues include how different theoretical models and assumptions may be more or less consciously used by researchers in different societal contexts. There are dangers in reifying nation or society at the expense of, say, the region. Researchers' familiarity with each others' systems varies greatly.

Much comparative research has been focused on macro comparisons and the pursuit of an objectivist notion of truth. The working groups in CAHRV prefer a critical realist approach in which everyday meanings are taken seriously, located within the context of historical material change. The micro-level of individual life strategies and settings of "doing gender" must be analysed in the context of supranational institutions and organisations that exert powerful influence. The importance of attention to different historical and political contexts of different regions, countries and parts of Europe cannot be overstated.

In the light of these considerations, we present three examples of possible comparative and transnational research approaches to men's violence:

Comparative surveys on gendered violence: Accomplishing such surveys can often meet various problems based on differences in cultural and social situations in different areas. In spite of such problems, comparative survey studies of men and masculinities in the context of gender power relations may be developed. One approach combines diverse quantitative measures with more qualitative assessments of situational context and embodied dimensions, informed by poststructuralist approaches. Men's violences can be considered in the broad context of conflict and peacemaking and other aspects of gender relations.

Comparable cases of men's violences: The study of parallel cases on forms or locales of men's violences simultaneously across several or many countries, for example, men in prison (short-term, long-term, lifers), men arrested for 'domestic violence', men in men's anti-violence programmes, young men and violence in and around sport. This can draw on quantitative, qualitative and ethnographic approaches, and build on matched cases. Similarities in some parts of the procedures or basis for the organisations can offer an important common ground for comparative research, which still leaves space for embedded cultural, social differences to be taken into account.

Studies of men's transnational violences: Studies of men's transnational violences can include the sex trade, abuse of information and communication technologies for sexual exploitation or pornography 'paedophile rings', recruiting women or youth transnationally for abusive relationships, abductions, 'honour killings', human trafficking, militarism, and related violences. These questions go beyond the scope of the CAHRV project to address transnational violent phenomena and call for transnational collaboration in doing research.

Research priorities

Summing up, the researchers working together in this thematic area developed both methodological guidelines and recommendations for priorities in future research. These included the following:

1. Focus on men's violences to women, men, children, transgender people, by full attention to men's relations with men.
2. Develop quality assurance in research on men's violences in terms of it being conducted in the full knowledge of international, critical gender scholarship.

3. Link research on men's violences to social inclusion/exclusion, and intersectional approaches to cultural and other differences.
4. Include physical, sexual and other forms of violence, including the relations of men's violences and men's sexualities.
5. Develop transnational, as well as comparative and international research, including research on men's transnational violences.
6. Develop policy-oriented research on what reduces and stops men's violences.
7. Increase investment and build support for investment in research in Central and Eastern Europe, which remains the most under-funded area in Europe for research into men's violences.
8. Develop relational approaches between forms of men's violences; men's interpersonal violences and men's institutional violences; social divisions / exclusions / inclusions; violence and other social arenas.
9. Develop research that explores the dynamics of men's violences transnationally by giving a primary role (not necessarily the only primary role) to qualitative approaches.
10. When and whereever researchers are brought together to explore such issues, it is vital that research strategy creates clear "spaces" or fora – both initially and throughout the process – whereby methodological approaches as well as analytical and theoretical variations can be discussed and clarified, and frames developed to accommodate, deal with and harness such variations. This is especially so with transdisciplinary research, and is essential where research is to be transnational and transcultural.

9. Sub-network 3: Addressing gender-based human rights violations

(Co-ordinators: Jalna Hanmer, University of Sunderland, UK; Daniela Gloor, Social Insight, Zürich, Switzerland)

This subnetwork aimed to link distinct research fields and nationally based discussions to better understand the failures and successes of agencies and civil society in responding to interpersonal violence. This involved gaining a good overview of what is actually known; although many studies exist, these tend to be closely linked to the language and practice of intervention and policy. There is a need to assess and disseminate knowledge about which changes in the responses of social institutions (e.g., the justice system, the educational system) are most effective in overcoming violence and its effects, and which context variables contribute to successful changes.

Thus, the aim of the work was to produce reports and disseminate evaluation research on both law and agency good practice to current European Union states, accession and candidate countries. The first objective was to produce a review of the literature and create a research synopsis across European countries on justice systems to protect human rights for both women and children in the areas of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault.[39] The focus was on criminal law and the intersections between criminal and family law. The second European wide objective was to review the literature and report on the research and monitoring of statutory and voluntary agency good practices in responding to domestic violence, rape and sexual assault.[40]

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[39] Cathy Humphreys et al., *The justice system as an arena for the protection of human rights for women and children experiencing violence and abuse*, 2006 http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/reddot/190.htm
[40] Jalna Hanmer et al., *Agencies and evaluation of good practice: domestic violence, rape and sexual assault*, 2006, http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/reddot/190.htm

9.1. Justice systems

Given different legal systems in Europe, the challenges of comparing complex legal structures, including the impact of international treaties and conventions, was daunting. The initial group process was to find a way to approach an analysis of legal frameworks. Differences in legal systems dominated the early meetings as researchers from countries with different legal systems struggled to understand how different legal responses to domestic violence, rape and sexual assault were framed and worked in practice. Major questions dominating initial meetings were how could these different systems be analysed? Was one legal system better than another? Were legal systems consistent in their approach to domestic violence, rape and sexual assault? Were there gaps in legal processes?
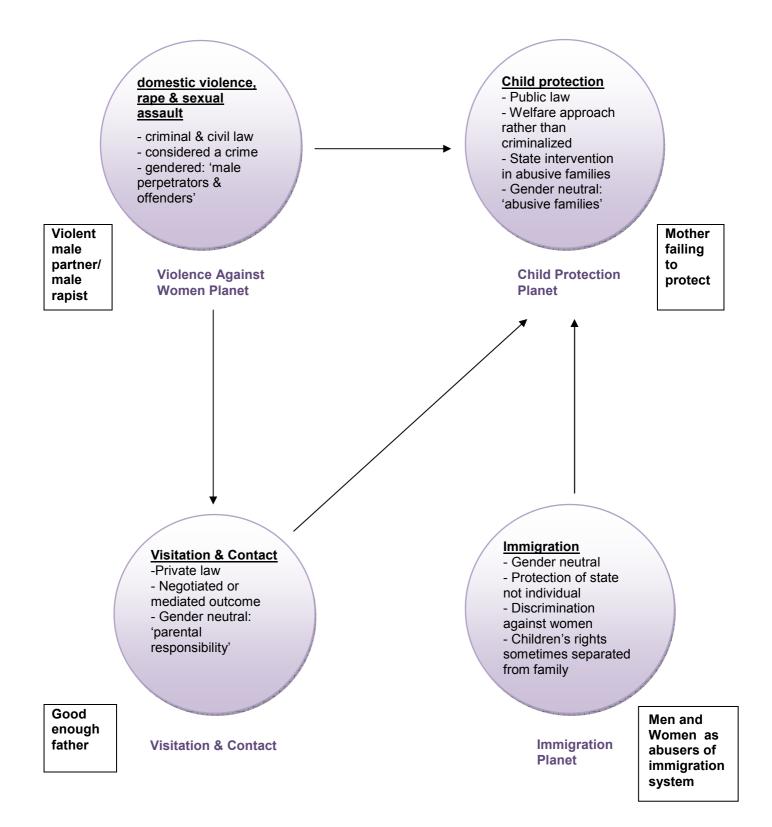
After numerous discussions at meetings and via email a method of work took shape. The decision was to examine specific barriers in accessing protection and justice for women and children and unique, progressive legal solutions to overcome them. The approach was to work from research evidence in practice on women's experiences of criminal justice and its intersections with family law by examining the legal systems of six European countries[41]. Specific barriers in accessing protection and justice exist in all six legal systems, which provided a comparative method for the investigation of specific legal systems.

The next step was a conceptual breakthrough in understanding the area to be investigated beginning with a model developed by Marianne Hester[42]. This was added to and finalised as a ''four planet' model that focussed discussion on the different areas of protection, criminal justice, child contact and immigration and how these are frequently legally separate, work in conflict or in opposition to each other. The 'four planet' model provided a basis for examining the many contradictions with legal systems between and within laws and the implementation of remedies for domestic violence, child protection, child contact and immigration.

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[41] Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom
[42] Hester, 2004, see footnote 7. The original 'three planet' model was developed to examine links between policy and practice on domestic violence, child protection and child contact.

The Four Planet Model

domestic violence, rape & sexual assault

- criminal & civil law
- considered a crime
- gendered: 'male perpetrators & offenders'

Violence Against Women Planet

Violent male partner/ male rapist

Child protection
- Public law
- Welfare approach rather than criminalized
- State intervention in abusive families
- Gender neutral: 'abusive families'

Child Protection Planet

Mother failing to protect

Visitation & Contact
-Private law
- Negotiated or mediated outcome
- Gender neutral: 'parental responsibility'

Visitation & Contact

Good enough father

Immigration
- Gender neutral
- Protection of state not individual
- Discrimination against women
- Children's rights sometimes separated from family

Immigration Planet

Men and Women as abusers of immigration system

The four 'planets' both exist independently from and intersect with each other. Currently, there are many contradictions within European legal systems between and within laws and implementation of these laws relating to domestic violence, child protection, child contact and immigration. The different 'planets' of violence against women, child protection, visitation/child contact and immigration have their own separate cultures and professionals with different laws, policies, practice and discourses. The model visually presents a framework for discussion and analysis of differing legal systems. The model highlights that across Europe, different areas of protection, criminal justice, child contact and immigration are frequently separated, working in conflict or in opposition to each other.

Using the four planets model, six country reports were prepared and discussed at a two-day work shop in Warsaw. The ensuing comparative analysis of justice systems' responses to violence explored police evictions, barring and go-orders from the home, and protection orders. While all six justice systems have some method to exclude violent men from their home and to make protection orders for women and children, there are major differences between the extent and type of protection being offered to women and children. With police evictions, barring and go-orders, there are four major variations. The first is the length of time the abuser can be excluded; secondly, whether enforcement is based on the victimised woman's insistence or the decision of attending officers; thirdly, variations in implementing legislation; and fourthly, involvement of other agencies offering counselling and advocacy.

While all six justice systems also have ways to provide protection orders for women and children, there are major legal differences. First, there are variations in the level of evidence required to secure an order; secondly, in the relationship criteria for access to an order; thirdly the cost of gaining an order; fourthly, the availability of advocacy and support for survivors; and fifthly, police action on breaches of the order. These factors affect the effectiveness of both exclusion orders and protection orders. These orders can be experienced as helpful by women, especially if violent men conform to the requirements of the order. They also can be experienced as not helpful by women as there is considerable

weakness in enforcing compliance when men violate the terms of court decisions.

All six countries have legislation and justice processes for criminal prosecution in cases of violence against women. While the specific criminal legislation varies, attrition remains a major concern. With all justice systems, the number of interpersonal violent incidents attended by police result in few prosecutions and even fewer criminal convictions. Another concern is the use of diversion measures to bypass the criminal justice system altogether. These include victim-offender mediation programmes, probation, and attendance at perpetrator programmes. Legislation defining which interpersonal actions are viewed as crime, and how violence is integrated into other offences varies between the six legal systems. Advocacy plays a very important role in assisting women to make complaints and their successful prosecution in all six legal systems, but the organisation and extent of coverage varies with state funding for voluntary and state services. Specialist domestic violence courts and fast track systems are at an early stage of development and while promising, there are significant failings. Significant procedural reforms in the prosecution of rape cases have introduced support for victims.

The concluding comparative assessment of legal systems and structures across Europe concluded that the service to women and children is often patchy and imperfect. The effectiveness of legal systems are undermined by high rates of attrition, low conviction rates, failures to link civil and criminal systems, reliance on diversionary measures, a lack of specific criminal legislation and the problems of the attitudes and the assumptions of criminal justice system staff. These issues can be:

- Links between protective legislation and criminal legislation
- The intersections and relations in relation to child protection
- Child contact and the links with domestic violence and abuse
- Immigration legislation and the position of immigrant women experiencing domestic violence in access legal support

The completed report, published on the CAHRV website in January 2006, offers clear policy recommendations for improving the ability of the justice system to protect women and children

from interpersonal violence. Progress in the future lies in bringing the planets into alignment so that attitudes, legislation and support for violence against women and children are harmonized rather than contradictory.

9.2. Evaluating agencies and good practice

For a second report, the research literature evaluating good practice in statutory and NGO services for domestic violence, rape and sexual assault was mined for knowledge that seemed promising for transfer and adaptation. European Union countries vary greatly in the availability, type and evaluation of services for men, women and children, both those who perpetrate and who are victimised by the gender based human rights violations of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault. The report reviews major evaluation research in provision and interventions in the following services: support, counselling, refuges, permanent housing for women and children, policy and criminal justice, mental and physical health, perpetrator programmes, multi-agency approaches, and professional training.

The increasing demand for and use of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault services demonstrates both need and acceptance of specialised services. Knowledge of the appropriateness of various agency interventions has grown through evaluation studies. At the same time, it was a central premise of the research coordination work in this field that there is not a single optimum model for all European countries. Furthermore, it is vital not to presume that the best practice will be found where the most research has accumulated. Specific historical and structural conditions have furthered the production of more research in some countries than in others. In particular, the older EU member states have had both more time to develop and refine their agency responses and a stronger NGO sector, but also more resources for research.

In order to arrive at recommendations that could move policy and practice forward on a European level, the work of this group thus pursued twofold objectives:

• to provide a document for the transfer of knowledge to and from Western and Central/ Eastern European member states on research and evaluation of good practice, with the aim of mutual learning,

• and to supply a report with recommendations for the European Commission that could be supported across the diverse experiences in the different parts of Europe.

In order to initiate dialogue and the interchange of knowledge and experiences in European countries on practice, a CAHRV workshop was held in Budapest in September 2006. The workshop brought together researchers and practitioners from 17 Western, Central and Eastern European counties both from the European Union and non-European Union member states[43]. Major women's organisations and research institutes in Central and Eastern European countries, responding to violence against women through both service provision and research, contributed their knowledge and experience to this report. The workshop played a fundamental role in assessing the specific needs and difficulties facing the development of civil society organisations in new European Union member states, accession and pre-accession countries[44].

Among European Union member states considerable differences exist both in understanding and definitions of good practice, the measures adopted to develop better interventions in responding to domestic violence, rape and sexual assault and in the type and function of statutory and voluntary agencies available to undertake this work. These differences are strongly interwoven and linked with the functioning, the history and understanding of statutory and voluntary agencies. Due to a successful process of interchange of knowledge, the final report is able to address experiences and needs in 15 countries[45].

Good practice parameters were adopted for the selection of research studies drawing on several

sources; national, European and global. Good practice depends upon context and can be identified as a specific approach or a strategy or a set of principles or standards. Research studies were chosen for close study and comparison when they:

- were contemporary;
- contributed to improving agency responses;
- demonstrated sensitivity towards diverse victims and held perpetrators responsible for their violence;
- had a clearly defined conceptual framework and methodology;
- and seemed to allow replication or adaptation or remodelling for use in different national contexts.

The report elaborates the concepts of monitoring, research and evaluation. It presents evaluation findings on good practice in relevant areas of agency responses provided by state, NGOs and multi-agency groups primarily in Western European member states. Against this background and based on the discussion of the findings, a further section gives insight into

developing good practice in a number of Central and Eastern states included in the EU, or striving for EU membership. Transnationally, gaps in the provision of services and in their monitoring and evaluation are discussed and recommendations presented.

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[43] Represented countries were Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.
[44] Women came from the Gender Research Foundation (Bulgaria), the Autonomous Women's House Zagreb (Croatia), Apanemi Women's Shelter (Cyprus), ROSA (Foundation (Czech Republic), NANE (Hungary), Vilnius Women's House (Lithuania), Women's Rights Centre, the University of Warsaw and the University of Lodz (Poland), Artemis Counselling Centre Against Sexual Abuse and the Babes-Bolyai University (Romania), the Autonomous Women's Centre against Sexual Violence (Serbia), Fenestra (Slovakia), SOS Helpline (Slovenia), and Morcati – Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation (Turkey).
[45] Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK.

9.2.1. Major evaluation findings in Western Europe

Support, counseling, refuges, permanent housing for women and children

NGOs have led the way to state recognition of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault and in the provision of services providing temporary and permanent housing, civil and criminal remedies, physical and mental health, income support and children's services. NGO and statutory interventions that ensure legal, social and psychological advice, support and accommodation, when combined with advocacy, encourage empowerment in victimized women.

In some European states significant harm to children is being redefined from direct physical or sexual assault to include witnessing violence to their mothers. Domestic violence is associated both with emotional damage and higher rates of all types of direct abuse to children.

Where research evaluation exists, it is often aimed at specific NGOs and rarely at statutory services, although Sweden evaluates national legislation establishing requirements for all government agencies.

Policing practices and criminal justice

Research evidence across countries points to the crucial role of identifying human rights violations in close relationships as a public interest crime. This assists in ensuring the police take action to protect those victimized from further violence, promotes investigation and evidence gathering and eliminates responses such as negotiation, mediation and no further action. Consistent, efficient and effective police action to prevent further abuse and to prosecute perpetrators requires systems and practices for systematically recording incidents. Throughout the EU attrition rates are high for domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, but improved victim care results in lower attrition rates and in increased convictions.

There is a great need for common standard crime recording criteria against which performance by different police forces can be benchmarked and an audit trail established. Good practice is furthered by professional approaches to investigations and evidence gathering, managerial actions, coordination

within and between police forces, prosecution services and the criminal justice system.

Perpetrator programs

Although programs aiming at behavioural modification of men who employ violence are still not widespread in much of Europe, in some countries they do have a longer history and have been evaluated scientifically. It has been found that court or justice system mandated participation is relatively successful in ensuring that such men actually complete the programs. A condition for their effectiveness is that public policy and guidelines be based on a gender power perspective and jointly oriented towards safety for those victimised. Pro-active responses to perpetrators, making it clear that they must change their attitudes and behavior, improve the quality and impact of such programs.

Cognitive behavioral programs for perpetrators must be firmly backed by the justice system, and place highest priority on teaching respect for women and for children. Such programs have been found to improve men's social skills, teach alternative ways to resolve conflict and reduce physical violence. These programs should be combined with accompanying safety and support for victimized women and children.

Health – physical and mental

While in Europe national policies and action plans do not exist for physical and mental health, there are tentative moves to begin routine screening and enquiry by health professionals for domestic violence and the setting up of specialized units or centers for rape and sexual assault. An expert group has been convened that is examining the potential of multi-professional training in the health sector.

Institutional accountability and commitment is facilitated through strategies and policies that establish intra-institutional responsibilities, medical, social and psychological responses and interventions, referrals and dissemination of information.

Multi-agency approaches

While not generally established practice within the EU, some states have multi-agency forums that include both NGOs and statutory agencies confronted with victims and perpetrators. The aim is to establish long term cooperation and institutionalised forms of work that provide safety and empowerment for victimised women and children. Research provides evidence that evaluation and monitoring are key elements in good practice in multi-agency projects and have a strong bearing on their effectiveness.

Professional training

Given the complexity and interdisciplinary of good practice responses to gender-based violence, professional training requires formal integration on domestic violence, rape and sexual assault in the curricula of mandated vocational courses and the further education of qualified professionals.

9.2.2. Good practice in Central and Eastern Europe

Evaluation and research on interpersonal violence and human rights violations tends to be largely absent or rare in Central and Eastern European countries, resulting in significant gaps in developing and establishing good practice. Legal frameworks aimed at curbing domestic violence, rape and sexual assault lack implementation and evaluation. While the number of state sponsored shelters differs between Central and Eastern European countries, in some cases efforts regarding violence to women and girls, including help lines and counselling centres, have ceased after accession into the European Union and funds were withdrawn from NGOs. In potential European Union member states, NGOs are concerned that events may take a similar course.

Good practice requires funding streams for women-centred NGOs and information on how European Union funds are being spent that could be directed towards responses to violence against women and children. This is a pre-condition for the development and research evaluation of good practice. Cooperation of NGOs and state agencies is missing to a much greater extent than in Western Europe.

There is a serious deficit of appropriate services, both mainstream and specialised, for migrants, ethnic minorities, the elderly, the disabled, and

those with dual problems, such as mental health and substance abuse in more recent European member states and potential accession countries. To move towards more stable and broader-based good practice, primary issues are:

Training vocational, basic and further education requires expansion from initiatives of women-centred NGOs and from the goodwill of single agencies to become part of curricula and agency structures.

National Action Plans on violence against women, their implementation and monitoring in all European states would further comparative research and evaluation of services as would agreement on a European definition of domestic violence.

The views of victims and their situations should be included in monitoring and evaluation of all services aimed at domestic violence, rape and sexual assault.

Gaps in the evaluation of services for domestic violence, rape and sexual assault are identified through the extent of services, state involvement in their provision, monitoring and external evaluations. Women-centred NGO service provision, state involvement and a developed evaluation and monitoring culture that include systematic state inspections of statutory service interventions and professional practice is the ideal, but no European Union state has reached this level of good practice.

9.3. Good practice recommendations for European policy

Indicators

To bring all member states to an equally high standard of protecting human rights and ensure that this standard is maintained, the European Union would benefit from agreement on indicators for domestic violence, rape and sexual assault in assessing good practice across national boundaries. Agreed indicators would increase the capacity for national replication or adaptation of cross-European Union projects in different national contexts.

Infrastructure

Effective monitoring and evaluation of NGO and statutory services offering support, counseling, refuges and housing for women and their children, policing and criminal justice, mental and physical health, perpetrator programs, multi-agency approaches and professional training would be assisted by infrastructural developments in the European Union. Monitoring policy implementation within

individual member states could be furthered by the submission of annual assessments on statutory-provided and NGO services, including progress on attaining and improving on minimum standards. The democratic processes on which civil society depends would be

strengthened by transparency provided by publicly available reports on policy and its implementation from member states and NGO shadow reports.

European Union Directive

The European and international conventions signed by European Union member states call for sustained and continuous efforts to secure the rights of women and children. Exerting consistent long term European Union influence on policy and good practice of member, accession and potential European Union member states would be furthered by a European Union Directive on the human rights violations of violence against women and children. This would facilitate effective intervention into the issues identified in this report. These include:

a) The need for development of women-centred services in European national contexts where few or none exist.
b) Expansion of both qualitative and quantitative research, internally and externally conducted evaluations and diversity in evaluation designs and methods.

10. Sub-network 4: Protective environmental factors securing human rights

(Co-ordinators: Ralf Puchert, Dissens e.V., Germany; Corinne May-Chahal, University of Lancaster, UK)

In charting research on protective factors, subnetwork 4 addressed a wide range of family and work related issues, including governmental family support strategies, informal social networks, intergenerational solidarity, social inclusion, changing work structures and their gender-specific impact, and approaches to conflict resolution and peace-making.

10.1. Reviewing the research on protective factors

The primary aim of this subnetwork was to develop a method of mapping research over the wide range of factors that may protect against violence in order to integrate research insights from a variety of approaches. Two working groups reviewed the research on protective factors related to work and family, and on protective factors related to households of choice and social networks. Formal social institutions and informal settings have the potential to protect or to injure. As central forms of the social and economic organization of peoples' every day lives, work, family, and social networks are keys to the attainment of human rights. They constitute significant social environments for the conflicts and tensions inherent in gendered, social and economic organization. Work, family, and social networks provide spaces to learn and practice productive conflict resolution and the kind of interpersonal solidarity that may counter violence and social exclusion.

The working groups looked in particular for innovative approaches, such as the relationship between interpersonal violence (and other human rights violations) and changing work patterns for men and women; the family as a site for resolving the conflicts inherent in social and economic organisation, conditions that foster intergenerational solidarity; and legal processes and social protection measures that are effective in countering violence and conflict resolution strategies.

To capture some of the complexity of the topic in a structured way, it was an objective to identify, document and map out research on countering human rights violations and developing security and protective factors in areas relevant to families, intergenerational relations, work and conflict resolution. We still know little about which structural and cultural conditions help to foster lives free of violence. Thus, an important question has been largely ignored by research: when and how is violence stopped?

In contrast to the lack of empirical knowledge, there is an abundance of suppositions that are, in part, theoretically grounded. These focus on the factors contributing to a situation in which individuals, groups and societies do not become violent. Within the framework of CAHRV, attempts have been undertaken to structure possible protective environmental factors in a visual map and find evidence for some of these factors in empirical studies.

There was considerable discussion among the participating researchers about the concepts, definitions and boundaries of both protective factors and violence[46]. An early review of literature on protective factors encountered difficulties, namely, the lack of a generally accepted definition, an individualistic and behavioral approach taken in much of the research and the tendency for most of the research to focus on characteristics of victims rather than perpetrators.

Reflections on protective environmental factors

As commonly defined, protective factors protect a person from becoming violent, or from becoming a victim of violence, or both. In contrast to risk factors, which usually focus on avoiding danger and the negative effects of the

experience of violence, research on protective factors in the context of human rights violations should also focus on explicitly non-violent environments.

Protective factors typically have been conceptualised as individual or environmental safeguards that enhance the ability to resist or cope with life events, risks or hazards. Protective factors are often assumed to be the opposite of risk factors and are regarded as relevant in the context of an identified risk[47]. This assumption is too short-sighted for an analysis of conditions that enable people to live without violence. On at least three levels--structural and cultural factors, situational factors and context, and socialisation--protective environments evolve out of the interaction of various factors, some of which may have no direct connection to identified risks.

Protective factors can be structural, environmental, or inter- and intra-personal; they can protect victims (potential or actual) against suffering violence or perpetrators (potential or actual) against committing violence. Protective factors have been discussed under a number of different headings including violence prevention programs, intergenerational solidarity, social protection, gender equality, changing work and family roles, cultural changes in gender identities, changes in labour markets, conflict resolution, informal responses to violence, social networks, safeguards against abuses of power, self-help, self-defense, and increasing diversity.

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[46] see Ralf Puchert, Mart Busche et al.: *Protective environmental factors securing human rights,* 2006 www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de/reddot/190.htm
[47] cf. US Department of Health and Human Services, *Youth violence. A Report of the Surgeon General*, 2000 www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/youthviolence/toc.html

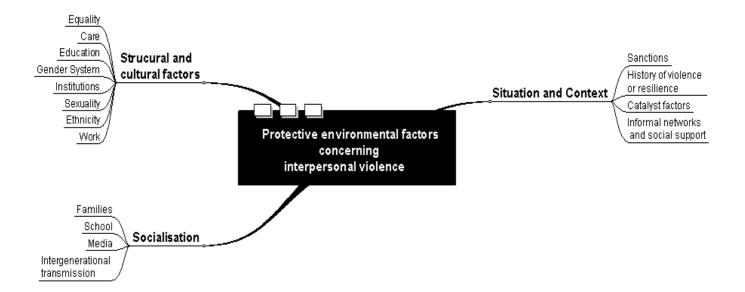## 10.2. Structured Map of Literature

For better orientation within the wide field of potentially relevant research on protective factors, a map was developed that seeks to illuminate where in the environment protective factors may occur and how they might interact. The mapping process started with thematic areas that are empirically known to have some relevance to risk and protection and where it was possible to locate surveys and literature.

The map divides protective environmental factors into three main categories: *Structural and Cultural* factors (equality, care, education,

gender system, institutions, sexuality, ethnicity, work), *Situation and Context* (sanctions, precipitating factors, informal networks and social support) and *Socialisation* (families, school, media, intergenerational transmission history of violence or resilience). These categories should be thought of as overlapping and integrated such that the factors included in them work together to either enhance or reduce protective environments. The map displays categories and concepts in a branching structure; abstracts from the literature are attached to the branches.

Equality
Care
Education
Gender System
Institutions
Sexuality
Ethnicity
Work

Strucural and cultural factors

Sanctions
History of violence or resilience
Catalyst factors
Informal networks and social support

Situation and Context

Protective environmental factors concerning interpersonal violence

Families
School
Media
Intergenerational transmission

Socialisation

Structural and cultural factors: The rules that generate group and society processes

Legislation imposes a fixed framework, while culture constitutes a rather dynamic system of rules established by groups, involving attitudes, values, beliefs, norms, and behaviours shared by groups and communicated across generations. Such rules or norms are relatively stable, but also change over time. In cross-cultural research on violence, violent acts may exist as a component of cultural traditions, as a cultural virtue, as an instrument in supporting social systems or as a product of the interplay of cultural factors. At the same time, there may also be cultural concepts that foster non-violent behaviour, such as caring, power sharing, or flat company hierarchies. Structural and cultural factors interact: legislation (like equality laws or daddy's months) can influence social trends and vice versa; both can contribute to non-violent environments.

Situation and context: The importance of intrapersonal characteristics, re-victimisation, mobility and opportunity

Any framing of types of violence is specific to culture and historical period and may thereby influence the understanding of other types. For example, work on child sexual abuse has shifted from an earlier exclusive focus on danger from strangers to a primary concern with sexual violence in the home, while sexual violence in other locations (e.g. peer sexual assault) has

received less attention. Conceptual frameworks need to reflect the complexity of and connections among situational factors relevant for prevention.

Situational factors constitute the context of a violent act in the violent situation. They include:

- Internalised situation-specific factors such as a history of violence or resilience;

- Precipitating factors such as an upsetting phone call, alcohol consumption or a bad day at work;

- The extent to which sanctions are in place;

- Situation-specific effects of wider structural factors like poverty, racism or patriarchy. Situations where multiple dimensions of power and disadvantage intersect may create particular challenges to prevention. Victimization may be more likely in situations where ethnicity and gender combine to increase vulnerability of victims or impunity for perpetrators.

- Processes such as separation or divorce that put women (and children in the household) at particular risk of men's violence.

Socialisation: its importance as a life-long process

Over the life-span, individuals find themselves in different relationships of power and dependency. Children and adolescents depend

on adults; old people often depend on younger ones. Identifying protective factors across age groups is important for decreasing violence in childhood and youth and against the elderly. Studies analysing the connection between violence in gender or generational relations generally find correlations between corporal punishment, violence between the parents and later violence in adulthood. For boys, victimisation in childhood seems more likely to lead to the active use of violence, whereas for girls, victimization in childhood seems to increase the risk of becoming a victim of violence in adulthood.

Important socialisation environments are families, schools, workplaces, and the media. Because socialization, and the learning of cultural and interpersonal rules, do not end at a certain age, the intergenerational transmission of practices and their influence on protection and prevention need to be better understood

10.3. Literature review: exploring connections to social change

Parallel to the research map, the contribution of European research to understanding protective environments was explored in a literature review. The review paid particular attention to a gendered analysis of work life, including the current restructuring of European labour markets. This was linked to recent research on the cultural changes in the images and social realities of men. While situated within a wider conceptual framework of protective factors, the literature review emphasises theoretical work on masculinities and focuses on protective factors related to the work place and to changes in work and labour markets over the past years.[48]

On a theoretical level, three central concepts guide the selection and discussion of the protective factor literature and make connections to work on men and masculinities.

All three concepts – that of habitus[49], masculine socialisation[50] and differentiation of masculinities in hetero- and homo-social contexts[51] – emphasise moments of change: change from traditional to non-traditional forms of masculinities; changes in the labour market towards flexibilisation, work distribution, ways to reconcile work and family, and increased awareness of work place violence; and changes towards more equality, empathy and care in family life and relationships. This focus on change is plausible because the factors and processes addressed in the literature should suggest changes necessary to move from violence to peace, and how this may play out for victims and perpetrators. The studies discussed in the literature review indeed show that the moment of change plays a crucial part in such developments. Still, change is rarely straightforward: on one hand, new masculinities can provide men with a larger scope of action that could be used in the service of prevention; on the other hand, merely reconfiguring traditional masculinities under new labels may lead to no profound change at all.

Masculinity types encompass traditional ideals — man as omnipotent, heroic, breadwinner, violent — as well as alternative forms of masculine existence, and a small number of empirical studies have found the latter to show decreasing endorsement of violence. Nevertheless, alternative masculinities must be looked at carefully: one cannot simply assume that the emergence of modern masculinities such as "new fathers" implies an increase in actual care-giving practice (for oneself, for children). In addition, such "new" masculinities possess the danger of restructuring traditional masculinity, enabling it to perpetuate itself in the guise of what is popular or trendy. Change seems slow in the kinds of images of men and masculinities that could provide guidance towards protective practices.

With a focus on protective factors, the field of non-violence is relatively barren, compared to the wealth of theoretical and empirical work on violence. Thinking about environments and structures conducive to non-violent behaviour might lead in the right direction and appropriate language and concepts will surely develop. By reshaping the concept of protective factors to include processes of structural and personal change, this literature review sought to frame a new approach to researching non-violence: Current ideas on health promotion reflect the kind of process-orientated thinking that emphasises pro-active strategies towards a

desired goal (i.e., health, non-violence), thus moving beyond strategies to avoid undesirable outcomes (i.e., illness, disease, violence). Rather than focusing on how to prevent illnesses, health promotion focuses on developing "positive" structures in which illness and disease no longer have a place, sense or purpose.

For the field of health, this idea has been developed in the concept of "salutogenesis" by medical sociologist Aaron Antonovsky[52]. Criticising biomedical sciences and pathological approaches that usually look for causes of diseases and risk factors, he asked why people stay healthy. The concept of salutogenesis refuses to reproduce the binarism of being healthy and being ill. Instead it suggests a health ease/disease continuum, taking into account that everybody has sick parts as well as healthy parts, and nobody is completely healthy or completely ill: Health is seen as a process. Central to this concept is the sense of coherence, which functions as a global orientation based on trust that allows a person to cope successfully with life's adversities.

With some caution this thinking might be put to good use for understanding why people are not violent. For instance, one could ask how a workplace or an organisation should be structured so that mobbing would not find "favourable conditions" in which to take root? Informed by research on risk and protective factors, workplaces and other social structures ought to be designed such that they are incompatible with violence.

Thinking in terms of "promotive context" can be more than merely a semantic change, but can itself push protective factors research forward, for example by developing a better understanding of how, mindful of Bourdieu's habitus theory, social contexts and individual agency can mesh happily to promote non-violence. The opportunity should be taken to establish distinct and progressive models of violence prevention. This requires a clear alternative to violent practices in all areas of society. It can be created by encouraging active gender equality movements together with allied factors, such as caring, social security, participation, diversification, equality with regard to sexual orientation and other democratic reforms. Improvements in working life are very important given the links between masculinities, gender discrimination and work[53]. Gender equality and learning to change violent patterns will most likely be among the key factors that promise success for the global community in the future[54]. The extent of interpersonal violence cannot be reduced without an analysis of structural conditions, life-long processes and cultural contexts.

Therefore the connections between violence and masculinities require deeper investigation, especially concerning structures that build masculinities and do not exclude violence. These include military structures present in socialization and institutions, homophobia, the dichotomy of helpless and weak femininity and protective, omnipotent masculinity, as well as other mechanisms of "doing difference" in a system of gender binarity. Ways of effecting more change must be researched, e.g., individuals' means of reflecting on their experiences of traditional masculinity and violence, socialization processes and experiences of personal crisis. Apart from that, strategies used to legitimize violence are also of interest, because they foster the existence of violent cultures and shed light on the images of masculinities that men seek to realize or maintain.

[48] see also" Work Changes Gender", 5th Framework programme, see footnote 53.
[49] Pierre Bourdieu: Zur Genese der Begriffe Habitus und Feld, in Bourdieu, *Der Tote packt den Lebenden*, Hamburg, 1997
[50] Michael Kaufmann, Lothar Böhnisch, Rainer Winter: *Männliche Sozialisation. Bewältigungsprobleme männlicher Geschlechtsidentität im Lebenslauf*, 2. Aufl., Weinheim, 1993
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[53] Ralf Puchert, Marc Gärtner, Stephan Höyng, eds., *Work Changes Gender. Men and Equality in the Transition of Labour Forms*, Opladen: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2005
[54] Ingeborg Breines, R. W. Connell, Ingrid Eide, eds., *Male Roles, Masculinities and Violence. A Culture of Peace Perspective*, Paris 2000

10.4. Case studies

In addition to research on work and on masculinities a working group reviewed the literature for potentially protective environmental factors in the context of families and households of choice. A large proportion of violence to women, men, boys and girls occurs in households and the domestic sphere. It is of vital importance to focus on the domestic environment and to consider factors within this sphere that might protect against human rights violations.

Following the mapping exercise on the roots of violence and given the broad range of literature relating to violence and households of choice, a case study approach was chosen to explore specific issues in relation to protective factors.

Case Study 1: Structural and Cultural Factors: Equality, gender-based violence, and human rights[55]

There is some evidence that in societies with little or no gender-based violence women and men are relatively equal[56]. Such observations tend to refer to small, non-industrial societies; the actual cultural practices that sustain gender equality and non-violence are often intricate and complex and tied to specific societal circumstances. Yet, despite its culturally circumscribed origins the notion that gender equality may protect against gender-based violence has gained almost global appeal.

There are conceptual and definitional difficulties with the two categories of gender-based violence and equality. Gender-based violence can be broken down into many specific acts that may relate to gender equality in different ways; similarly, gender equality can be broken down into many different indicators some of which may be more relevant to gender-based violence than others.

A review of the relevant literature found that:

(1) There are dozens of equality indicators and multiple forms of violence. What protects against one form of violence may not protect

against another. From this research emerge three interconnected sets of protective factors:

- Women's interpersonal & social autonomy (acknowledged adulthood, ability to build supportive alliances/coalitions, political influence on multiple levels of decision-making),
- Women's economic autonomy (control of the means of their livelihood; income; having a say in how resources are used),
- Men's willingness to disrupt male hierarchies and resist pressure to achieve high status at the expense of women.

(2) Equality indicators don't always correlate positively with each other. Equality in one area of life does not automatically mean equality in another. This also means that 'trickle down' cannot be taken for granted: more women in parliament do not automatically mean more gender equality in the home. Moreover, some aspects of equality may be desirable for the sake of equality but irrelevant in terms of protection against violence[57].

(3) There may be an inverse relationship between gender equality and violence. In some cases, non-violence would be a protective factor for gender equality.

(4) Intersectionality is also important. Some protective factors seem not so much about the relationship (whether interpersonal, social, or cultural) between women and men, but about nurturing supportive relationships among women and rethinking relationships among men (e.g., moving away from competition for status in male hierarchies, addressing homophobia).

(5) There is the possibility that the same factor promotes both gender equality and gender-based violence. Using 24 indicators of the status of U.S. women relative to men in politics, economics, and legal rights Baron[58] found that gender equality was higher in states with higher circulation rates of soft porn and interpreted this to mean that both gender equality and porn circulation reflect politically tolerant societies.

Implications for protective environments and human rights in households

The evidence reviewed strongly suggests that significant cultural change is necessary to end violence against women, children and men. Some of these changes may be akin to more

gender equality. The evidence is partial for violence against women and almost non-existent for violence against men, girls and boys.

Actions arising from a human rights/gender equality discourse may work to foster protective environments. One strategy is the ability of women and their allies to form coalitions that can lobby on behalf of women in ways that benefit real women 'on the ground' in both the public and private sphere. Another, related, strategy is the ability to disrupt the sort of male hierarchies that breed violence, misogyny, and other hate ideologies. The human rights apparatus has the potential to support both strategies but this potential needs to be realized.

Without shared political influence and supporting cultural practices from the level of personal relationships all the way up to heads of government and high courts, discourses on human rights, as much as some gender equality indicators, will promise more than they can keep.

Case Study 2: Situational and Context Factors: Alcohol and violence in Poland[59]

Alcohol has been described as a situational catalyst factor for violence but there is little empirical evidence to support this claim for either youth violence[60] or adult violence[61]. Studies on special populations such as emergency room patients do find a correlation between alcohol and violence[62]. Research demonstrates that the link is not straightforward[63] and that episodes of violence in households may not necessarily be caused by alcohol but that when they are alcohol-related they may be more severe[64].

From a European perspective it was of interest to explore the evidence for links between alcohol and violence in a European country where research is less accessible, either because of the development of research capacity or because of linguistic/translation issues. There are three main discourses on writing about alcohol and violence in Poland: practitioner-related, statistical/empirical and theoretical. The practitioner literature is the largest. Much of this is based on foreign (mainly American) sources; however, the practical issues are based on the Polish reality.

There is a widespread perception in Polish society that there is a close (even causal) relationship between alcohol and violence. However, available empirical studies do not support this view. On the basis of Polish empirical research it can be claimed that: (1) alcohol may be just one of the risk factors indirectly and under certain conditions enabling violent behaviors and (2) alcohol abuse and violence as a style of life may be socialized in childhood, and (3) in some circumstances alcohol abuse and violence have a tendency of transmitting as a negative pattern to future generations.

Generally, Polish public opinion is quite dominated by various harmful myths on alcohol and (domestic) violence, that both make the society aware of the fact these phenomena exist, and also make them quite indifferent (in terms of undertaking action) should any cases occur in the proximal environment. It is as if the status quo was that '*alcohol causes violence and that's how it is – nothing can be done about it*'.

Acceptance of the need for prevention and therapy is well supported. There are many such programs available, directed to youth, perpetrators and victims. There is quite a lot written about these and it seems finding proper information would be quite easy. However, it is also maintained that the effectiveness of preventive measures is not as great as could be expected. The problem may be in the societal awareness of the problem and the society's approach to it which appears as a collective 'learned helplessness'.

This case study therefore concludes that in order to promote environments that protect from violence, there is a pressing need for more empirical studies on alcohol, interpersonal violence and the relationship between them. High profile dissemination of results from such studies among the wider public (conferences, seminars, publications, social campaigns) is needed in order to debunk harmful myths concerning the issues in question. Also the re-evaluation of preventive measures and possible adjustment to the current need is necessary, as well as a review of accessibility and awareness by target groups (especially boys and girls). It is likely that these recommendations apply in other European countries as well.

Case Study 3: Socialisation – Resilience as a Protective Environmental Factor[65]

This case study moves from considering protective environments for *acts* of violence towards protective environments relating to the *consequences* of violence. The concept of resilience was identified as a vehicle through which to explore the concept of 'protective factors'. For some, to talk of factors that protect against violence doing harm seems to deny the meaning and intent of violence in the first place. However, resilience is about both and provides a clear example about how both are connected: aspects of resilience (attachment, security, respect, social support) provide a cushion against harm and at the same time may act against an intent to commit violence in the future (inter-generational transmission).

Resilience is a psychological concept that focuses on processes of recovery or adjustment after trauma or hardships in childhood or later life; it refers to the capacity to overcome or reduce the negative consequences of trauma in the short and longer term. The resilience model is a dynamic model of growth and development of talents, strengths and qualities.

Over the last three decades several authors have addressed the issue: for example, Herman[66] discussed vulnerability and resilience comparatively for combat veterans and rape victims, drawing on research on children in adverse circumstances, and Rutter[67] analyses resilience in terms of concepts such as 'developmental pathways', 'creating opportunities' and 'turning points'. Garmezy and Cicchetti[68] draw on ecological models that link the interconnections between individuals (families), the direct environment and a larger social-cultural context; they remind us that resilience should be studied on more than one level.

Resilience can be an interesting and empowering framework to interpret different types of violence and developmental pathways in overcoming violence to a certain extent. It would be helpful to further explore the connection with agency and identity construction, as resilience requires taking an active stand and coping pattern towards a threatening situation. Within the context of agency, resilience has the potential to become a transformational process in regaining human

rights and values such as freedom, trust, dignity and self-respect. Agency also has a strong connection to gender but a clear omission in the literature is any attempt to address resilience structurally and in a gendered way.

Importantly for CAHRV purposes, the concept of resilience provides an opportunity to explore an ecological approach to human rights violations that ranges from the personal to the structural. For example, the work of Perry in relation to schools highlights as core strengths: attachments, self-regulation, affiliation, awareness, tolerance and respect[69]. In this work it is possible to find a connection to human values such as respect for differences, empathy, self-control (regulation) that impact and are strongly influenced by interpersonal and societal relationships, values and structures.

Case Study 4: Research on violence in Norway[70]

The objective of this country report was to provide an overview of Norwegian research on intimate partner violence and Norwegian research on occupational violence – violence at the workplace – with particular focus on what this research reveals about the need for further intervention and preventive measures. The special aspects of Norwegian development include an emphasis on gender equality in a broad sense of the term, involving men as well as women. This has led to new methods and empirical trends in Norwegian violence research, highlighted in the report.

Attempts to create new meeting points in research can be found, which highlight the need to look at both women and men, power and powerlessness, in order to understand and prevent intimate partner violence. They show that violence is a tendency that partly crosses the gender line. The genders are not like two classes, opposed to each other. Especially, 'sporadic' partner/family violence concerns both genders, while most of the heavy violence remains men's responsibility. These tendencies call for more nuanced and advanced understanding of power.

Endeavours to achieve greater gender equality are generally seen as synonymous with preventing violence in intimate relationships and at the workplace[71]. The need to make such efforts between women and men to prevent

violence is discussed in several of the texts that were reviewed. Gender equality is largely understood as equalising power differences between men and women. Emphasizing the necessity of new equality policy measures on violence the case study looks particularly at the need for efforts to change attitudes with the inherent purpose of changing male projects and the ultimate objective of remodeling the patriarchal social contract. Power differences between women and men must be equalised by gearing gender policy measures also towards boys and men.

The subject of violence and threats at the workplace appears to receive less political and ideological disagreement than violence in intimate relationships. The studies reviewed focus on both gender and gender power but also emphasise the importance of examining the more personal and individual circumstances on which the violence is based. The working environment and work cultures are presented as important for the extent to which violence, harassment and threats are allowed to develop within an organisation. In addition, priority is given to leaders' competence, role and manner as significant for ensuring that the organisation represents a good workplace.

Norwegian research on violence at the workplace maintains that violence is to a large extent due to problems in the working environment, which in turn can have many causes, such as personal aspects or aspects involving management and union representatives. Studies of the relationship between the genders and factors related to gender can be relevant. Preventing violence at the workplace entails viewing the situation in the light of gender issues, particularly with regard to men's use of power over other men. The workplace is also characterised by superior/subordinate relationships – men's power over other men and women is therefore an important subject to address.

One main conclusion emerges from the review of Norwegian research on violence in intimate relationships and Norwegian research on violence at the workplace: physical and psychological violence arise and develop as the result of a number of interacting factors between those involved, the culture in which they live, and society. This recognition poses a great challenge to future research in the field of violence.

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