

Analysis of the legal and policy framework for domestic violence perpetrator programmes in Armenia in light of the Istanbul Convention

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Executive summary

This assessment examines Armenia’s national framework for domestic violence perpetrator programmes in light of international and European standards, particularly Article 16 of the [Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#) (Istanbul Convention). It recognises Armenia’s important legislative progress, including the 2024 amendments to the Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and the adoption of Government Decree No. 35-N on Approving the rehabilitation programme for individuals who committed family and domestic violence in 2025, which establishes perpetrator programmes as part of a broader response to domestic violence. These reforms clarify institutional responsibilities, embed rehabilitation at both preventive and judicial stages, and introduce sanctions for non-compliance with mandated measures.

Despite these advances, the assessment finds that implementation remains at an early stage and faces several structural and operational challenges. The legal provisions are not yet fully translated into coherent and standardised practice. Institutional roles and responsibilities, while defined in law, often lack detailed operational guidance, entailing the risk of resulting in fragmented practice and ad hoc arrangements. Referral pathways remain unclear, particularly between the Police, courts, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and service providers, which undermines the ability to effectively engage perpetrators. The current framework does not explicitly include programmes for perpetrators under remand or for sexual violence offenders, leaving significant gaps in coverage.

The rehabilitation programme introduced by Government Decree No. 35-N outlines a structured, modular approach designed to respond to each perpetrator’s individual assessment while prioritising victims’ safety. However, some programme modules are poorly aligned with the specific dynamics of domestic violence. Additionally, no standardised risk assessment tools, supervision plan templates, or module-specific training materials have yet been developed, raising concerns about consistency, quality, and effectiveness in delivery. Stakeholder consultations highlighted capacity constraints

among key actors. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in particular stressed the need for adequate funding, clear mandates, and training to ensure they can deliver effective, victim-centred perpetrator programmes without compromising services for survivors. While the Interagency Working Group established to promote the operational response to domestic violence cases has emerged as a promising platform for dialogue, its role needs to be formalised and strengthened to enable meaningful coordination, monitoring, and problem-solving.

The report concludes that Armenia has laid a strong legislative foundation for a perpetrator rehabilitation programme but must now focus on building the institutional capacity, operational clarity, and inter-agency co-operation required to effectively deliver this programme. Key recommendations include developing detailed operational guidelines, standardising tools and procedures across institutions, ensuring appropriate and relevant programme content, enhancing judicial and police engagement, improving referral and monitoring mechanisms, and ensuring close collaboration with victim support services to guarantee survivors' rights and safety. These steps are crucial to transforming the current framework into a fully functioning, survivor-oriented system aimed at holding perpetrators accountable, preventing reoffending, and contributing to the broader goal of eliminating domestic violence in Armenia.

Introduction

Violence against women is a form of discrimination against women and a violation of women's human rights. Over the years, research consistently shows that a third of women in the European Union (EU) have experienced such violence at home, at work or in public, and that perpetrators are primarily boys and men (FRA 2014; FRA, EIGE, Eurostat, 2024)¹. Domestic violence, in particular, is acknowledged as a form of gender-based violence affecting women disproportionately, as highlighted in the Council of Europe [Convention](#) on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

“Prevention” is one of the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention and, among the provisions detailed under Chapter III, Article 16 requires state parties to set up and support the development of victim-oriented perpetrator programmes, with a gender perspective and in close co-operation with women support services. According to the convention's [Explanatory Report](#), interventions should be aimed at holding perpetrators accountable, leading them to change their attitudes and beliefs towards women, and ultimately avoiding re-offending. Whether targeting perpetrators of domestic violence or sex offenders, perpetrator programmes are meant to enhance the safety and well-being of victims and to ensure the respect of their human rights. In recent years, a growing body of scientific literature and a wide variety of reports have contributed to inform the development of specific international standards and to identify promising practices, which can now support states' efforts in the conception and practical implementation of adequate and effective perpetrator programmes.

By signing the Istanbul Convention on 18 January 2018, Armenia demonstrated its political will to address violence against women and domestic violence in line with European standards. However, as of now, the convention has not yet been ratified. Despite this, Armenia has continued to reform its national legislation and policies to align with the Council of Europe principles, particularly in areas such as prevention of domestic violence, victim protection, and programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence. Although the Istanbul

1. FRA (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights), 2014, *Violence against Women – An EU-wide survey. Main results report*, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union; FRA, EIGE, EUROSTAT, 2024, *EU gender-based violence survey – Key results. Experiences of women in the EU-27*, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union.

Convention is not yet legally binding for Armenia, its provisions and spirit have influenced national policy development, and discussions about ratification remain ongoing. The Council of Europe project “Ending Violence against Women and Promoting Gender Equality in Armenia – Phase II” focuses on developing and implementing perpetrator programmes as part of a comprehensive response to domestic violence, by supporting legislative alignment with international standards, building institutional capacities, and fostering inter-agency co-operation to ensure that rehabilitation interventions for perpetrators are safe, effective, and victim-centred.

The purpose of this study is to assess Armenia’s national legal and policy framework for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and its compliance with the standards established by the Istanbul Convention, with particular attention to Article 16. Programmes for sex offenders fall out of the scope of this study since the national legal and policy framework in Armenia does not yet regulate or mandate rehabilitation interventions specifically for this category of offenders, leaving a significant gap in compliance with Article 16(2) of the Istanbul Convention. The report seeks to evaluate whether the relevant national laws, including the Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Subjected to Family and Domestic Violence (Law on Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) and Government Decree No. 35-N of 16 January 2025 on Approving the Rehabilitation Programme for Individuals Who Committed Family and Domestic Violence (Government Decree No. 35-N), provide for structured and effective rehabilitation interventions for perpetrators of domestic violence, based on a victim-centred and gender-sensitive approach and in line with Council of Europe guidance and recognised promising practices.

The scope of the assessment covers both legal, policy and practical dimensions. It involves a detailed review of national legislation, policy documents, and institutional arrangements, as well as an exploration of how these are implemented in practice. The report examines the coherence, feasibility, and operational suitability of the current framework, identifies strengths and gaps, and formulates targeted recommendations for harmonisation with international standards. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of prioritising victims’ safety, establishing inter-agency coordination, and implementing monitoring mechanisms to ensure that perpetrator programmes meaningfully contribute to prevent new and more severe acts of violence, and thus strengthen victims’ protection.

This study was conducted through a combination of desk research, stakeholder interviews, and comparative analysis. The desk review included an

in-depth analysis of the Law on Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, Government Decree No. 35-N, and other relevant legal and policy documents. Reports and studies published by international organisations, civil society, and umbrella networks such as [the Work with Perpetrators European Network \(WWP EN\)](#) were also thoroughly examined. This review assessed compliance with Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention, as well as relevant recommendations and guidance provided by the [Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence \(GREVIO\)](#). GREVIO's reports offer significant insight on the development of perpetrator programmes in other Council of Europe member states, highlight promising practices in defining a legal and policy framework, institutional arrangements and referral pathways, programmes' design and content, and coordination with victim support services. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders², with a view to identify existing practices, gaps and challenges, and stakeholders' perspectives on standards compliance and expected results. Stakeholders were also asked about mechanisms of co-operation and risk management between perpetrator programmes, victim support services, law enforcement agencies, and the judiciary. The report was submitted for discussion to the working group of national stakeholders on 28 July 2025 to review the analysis and recommendations thus ensure sustainability and national ownership.

2. List of Interviewed Stakeholders and Institutions, available in Appendix II

I. International and European Standards on Perpetrator Programmes

1.1. Working with perpetrators to prevent violence against women

Since the 1970s, rapidly after the foundation of support centres for victims of domestic violence, the need to work with perpetrators emerged as a relevant issue. Practitioners observed that, although women repeatedly turned to such specialised services, abusers' behaviours would hardly reflect any changes. In the United States, the forerunners, the Duluth Model and the Emerge programme, conceived interventions towards perpetrators as a coordinated community response to domestic violence, in collaboration with women's support services³. The growing criminalisation of domestic violence over the 1990s showed the limits of a solely punitive approach and highlighted the importance of prevention measures and rehabilitation initiatives targeting perpetrators. In 1995, the final document of the Beijing United Nations (UN) World Conference on Women made first reference to "the need to rehabilitate perpetrators of domestic violence", putting the topic on the agenda of international human rights organisations.

As of the 2000s, several perpetrator programmes were implemented across Europe, although not consistently and without a standardised approach. During this decade, the Council of Europe launched several initiatives aimed at mapping existing practices across the continent, until the adoption of the Council of Europe Recommendation Rec 2002(5)⁴. [The Committee of Ministers Recommendation on the Protection of Women against Violence](#) establishes a clear definition of "perpetrators", offers specific indications on the implementation of perpetrator programmes and clearly acknowledges the gendered dimension of domestic violence, by underlining the link between violence and the social construction of masculinities.

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3. COE, Cristina Oddone and Donjeta Morina (2021). Setting up Treatment Programmes for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/research-on-perpetrator-treatment-programmes-kosovo-eng/1680a24362>
 4. COE, Recommendation Rec 2002 (5) The protection of Women against Violence (Council of Europe 2002).

The first systematic review of minimum standards for services, published by the Council of Europe in 2008, includes a section on actions targeting perpetrators of domestic violence, stressing on the need to establish such programmes in close co-operation with women’s support services, with the aim of reinforcing women’s protection and ensuring their safety. For its part, the 2010 UN Handbook for Legislation on Violence against Women, which also foresees “Intervention programmes for perpetrators and alternative sentencing”, underlines the importance of conducting a thorough risk assessment before resorting to alternative sentences.

These initiatives prepared the ground for a specific article to be included in the Istanbul Convention, as indicated in the documents on the preliminary works by the Ad Hoc Committee for Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (CAHVIO). Since its first meeting, the Committee stated the importance of “the role of men as role models in adopting non-violent behaviours and promoting gender equality”⁵ and subsequently agreed on “emphasis[ing] the importance of these programmes for the prevention of further violence and promote their implementation”⁶.

1.2. Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention

The Istanbul Convention, entered into force in 2014 and is based on four pillars: preventing violence against women, protecting victims, prosecuting perpetrators, as well as implementing comprehensive and co-ordinated policies. The work with perpetrators is considered part of a wide-ranging strategy for the prevention of violence against women (Chapter III). Under Article 16 parties to the convention are required to systematically set up “preventive intervention and treatment programmes”, with a gendered approach and in close co-operation with women support services, with the aim of “help[ing] perpetrators change their attitudes and behaviours in order to prevent further acts of domestic violence and sexual violence”⁷. The article refers specifically to two types of perpetrators: perpetrators of domestic violence and sex offenders.

Article 16 - Preventive intervention and treatment programmes

1 Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence

5. CAHVIO, Report of the First Meeting CAHVIO (2009) 5.
6. CAHVIO, Report of the Second Meeting CAHVIO (2009) 31.
7. Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence Istanbul (2011), para 102.

to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.

2 Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.

3 Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.

According to the Explanatory Report, these provisions reflect the need for programmes that are evidence-based, encourage perpetrators to take responsibility, and critically address harmful attitudes, especially towards women. Programmes must be delivered by trained facilitators, culturally and linguistically adapted, and developed in co-operation with victim support services, law enforcement, the judiciary, and other relevant actors to ensure victims' safety. Regarding sex offender programmes, the Explanatory Report highlights their role in preventing recidivism and supporting reintegration. Although state parties have a margin of appreciation and can design specific programmes, victims' safety and their human rights should remain of paramount importance in all approaches.⁸

Since the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention, the specific obligations outlined in Article 16 and in its Explanatory Report have been gradually completed and made more accurate, thanks to two parallel processes: on one side, through to the elaboration of European standards for perpetrators programmes, realised by the umbrella network organisation WWP EN; on the other side, through the monitoring work conducted by the GREVIO, in the context of the country evaluation procedures on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention (baseline evaluation and thematic evaluation rounds).

1.3. Steps towards European Standards

Against the significant multiplication of programmes targeting perpetrators, the EU supported Daphne Programme II (2006–2008), "Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Europe – WWP", identified 192 programmes in 19 European countries, set the basis for an exchange of best practices among

8. Explanatory report to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680a48903>.

practitioners and eventually opened the discussion around the need for harmonised standards in the work with perpetrators of domestic violence. In 2014, the umbrella network organisation WWP EN, initially gathering 18 members from 13 different countries, was founded in Berlin with the aim of developing accreditation criteria for programmes as well as standards in line with the Istanbul Convention. The emphasis on the importance of standards responded to the need to counter the main risks associated with the improper implementation of programmes for perpetrator and eventually led to the first *Guidelines to develop standards for programmes working with perpetrators of Domestic Violence* (2018).

In 2023, a more accomplished and comprehensive document was finally published, reflecting the expertise of specialised civil society organisations. The *European Standards for Perpetrator Programmes: Standards for Survivor-Safety-Oriented Intimate Partner Violence Perpetrator Programmes Working document*⁹ set out principles and minimum requirements to make perpetrator programmes safe, effective, and survivor-oriented, with a gender perspective. Standards are structured around five key areas: (1) ensuring survivor safety and well-being through collaboration with support services and clear information-sharing procedures; (2) conducting ongoing risk assessment and management, coordinated with external agencies if needed; (3) designing structured, goal-focused programmes, targeting male perpetrators of domestic violence, aimed at stopping violent behaviours and fostering accountability; (4) guaranteeing quality assurance through staff training and regular evaluation of programme effectiveness; (5) providing strong organisational management, with adequate human and financial resources and partnerships. These standards are aimed at preventing further violence and protect victims' rights and well-being, and serve as the reference for new and existing programmes across Europe.

The WWP EN expertise informed another fundamental resource document, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention*, published by the Council of Europe in 2024. According to this study, programmes for perpetrators can operate in prison, probation settings, and other non-custodial settings; they can be delivered by both state-run agencies and NGOs. On the one hand, perpetrators' participation in these preventive intervention and treatment programmes may be ordered by courts or other mandatory referral routes. On the other hand, their attendance may be voluntary, either upon recommendation from other

9. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention* (2024), pp 13-14 available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>.

agencies (e.g. child-protection services, health services) or through self-referral. It is crucial for these programmes to be accessible in various settings, as they cater to different groups of perpetrators – those identified by the criminal justice system, civil justice, other stakeholders (e.g. child protection agencies) and those not identified by any agency who may seek help voluntarily.¹⁰

To conclude, standards on perpetrator programmes converge around a few core principles: perpetrator programmes should aim to change violent behaviour and prevent recidivism by encouraging accountability and critical reflection on attitudes, particularly towards women; they should never substitute for legal proceedings nor engage in family mediation; comprehensive risk assessments must be carried out to prioritise victims' safety, including informing victims of any concerns arising during the perpetrator's participation; programmes should be accessible both voluntarily and through mandatory referrals, in custodial and non-custodial settings; and they should operate independently but in close co-operation with victim support services, justice and child protection systems. Furthermore, staff delivering these programmes must be skilled and trained not only in psychology and the dynamics of domestic violence, but also in cultural and linguistic competencies to effectively engage diverse participants.¹¹

1.4. GREVIO's findings and recommendations

Since the first monitoring cycle, GREVIO explored several specific aspects related to programmes for domestic violence perpetrators and for sex offenders. Based on information provided by national authorities and civil society organisations, or gathered during country visits, both the baseline evaluation reports and the thematic evaluation reports elucidate GREVIO's understanding of Article

10. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024), pp 13-14 available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>.
11. OSCE, UNFPA, Mapping of Programmes for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Central Asia (2024), available at: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/8/576324.pdf>. COE, Cristina Oddone and Donjeta Morina (2021). Setting up Treatment Programmes for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/research-on-perpetrator-treatment-programmes-kosovo-eng/1680a24362>

16 and its practical implementation in order to comply with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention¹².

GREVIO's findings and recommendations are here presented according to four specific sections, identified in the Council of Europe's *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes*¹³: (1) Legal and policy frameworks for perpetrators of domestic violence; (2) Providers of programme; (3) Safety and well-being of victims, particularly women and children; (4) Design of quality programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence.

1.4.1. Legal and policy frameworks for perpetrators of domestic violence

GREVIO has identified the need to provide an adequate legislative and policy framework for the development of perpetrator programmes in each country and to ensure sufficient coverage throughout its territory, as in the case of Italy, France, Serbia and Finland¹⁴. It also underlined the importance of making programmes available for minorities¹⁵, while making sure to avoid stigmatisation of migrant communities¹⁶.

Interinstitutional co-operation is considered of paramount importance for the recognition of the work with perpetrators as part of a comprehensive and co-ordinated response to domestic violence. In this regard, GREVIO often encouraged involving all relevant statutory agencies and administrative entities – including municipality and social service workers, law enforcement agents, prosecutors and judges – with a view to inform the perpetrator about the existence of the programmes and the opportunity to attend them. The first thematic evaluation reports reiterated the need to put in place such programmes, in particular in those countries where they do not exist yet, as in the case of Monaco¹⁷, or where they exclusively focus on medical treatment,

12. At the time of drafting this report, all parties to the Convention have undergone the baseline evaluation procedure, while only nine countries have been the object of the first thematic evaluation "Building trust by delivering support, protection and justice" (Albania, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Monaco, Montenegro, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden). This study only refers to reports published until 5 September 2025.

13. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024)*, pp. 14-28.

14. See GREVIO's baseline evaluation reports on Italy, paragraphs 108-110, on France, paragraph 117, on Serbia, paragraph 83, and GREVIO's first thematic evaluation on Finland, paragraph 85.

15. GREVIO's first thematic evaluation on Finland, paragraph 87.

16. GREVIO's first thematic evaluation on Sweden, p. 5.

17. See GREVIO's first thematic evaluation report on Monaco, paragraph 80.

as in the case of Montenegro¹⁸. In those countries where perpetrator programmes exist and appear to work effectively, GREVIO emphasised the need for wider levels of attendance by calling for more pathways for referrals. GREVIO noted that, even where referral pathways exist, attendance is not always mandatory and referrals to programmes are not consistently enforced¹⁹. As noted in the *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes*, “this discrepancy is attributed to factors like low conviction rates, as observed in Austria, the necessity for enhanced capacity-building among referring entities, as seen in France, or the lack of programmes for perpetrators and decreased funding, as observed in Croatia”²⁰.

On several occasions, GREVIO specified that State parties should not only increase the number of programmes (as for Albania, Denmark, Italy, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, and Türkiye), but also expand their range, highlighting the need to provide both voluntary and mandatory programmes in each country. On one hand, GREVIO noted that preventive intervention and treatment programmes should also be available on the basis of self-referral, as flagged in numerous reports, both in the baseline and thematic evaluation reports²¹. On the other hand, where perpetrator programmes are available only on a voluntary basis, as in the case of Italy, GREVIO strongly encouraged national authorities to consider the possibility of “impos[ing] upon the perpetrator an obligation to attend such programmes”²². In the first thematic evaluation report on Albania, GREVIO noted with satisfaction that, while programmes used to be available only on a voluntary basis, “courts can now order perpetrators to attend rehabilitation programmes as part of the procedure for a protection order”²³.

In those countries where participation can be ordered in the context of alternative sentencing and restorative justice initiatives, GREVIO encouraged State parties

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18. See GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation report on Montenegro, paragraphs 77-81. Programmes focus on medical treatment for substance abuse or mental health issues and are mostly provided in psychiatric hospitals.
 19. See GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation reports on Austria, paragraph 75, on Albania, paragraph 72, and on Denmark, paragraphs 76-77.
 20. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024)*, p. 14.
 21. See for example GREVIO’s baseline evaluation reports on Austria, paragraphs 82–87, Türkiye, paragraphs 123–131, Monaco, paragraphs 55-58, Portugal, paragraphs 101-106. In its first thematic evaluation report on Portugal, GREVIO reiterated the importance of providing pathways to voluntary attendance (paragraphs 70 and 75) and encouraged national authorities to envisage sanctions in case of non-attendance or non-completion of the programmes (paragraph 74).
 22. See GREVIO’s baseline report on Italy, paragraph 117.
 23. See GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation on Albania, paragraph 73.

to accurately define the conditions under which perpetrators are allowed to enrol in a programme since programmes should not be used as an alternative to punitive sanctions nor replace prosecution, conviction or sentencing²⁴, in order to safeguard the principle of victims' access to fair and just legal processes²⁵. In support of this argument, GREVIO has emphasised that perpetrator programmes have to be conceived as a preventive measure *in addition to* criminal proceedings²⁶.

GREVIO has also underlined the importance of supporting the programmes with adequate funding, while considering the need for diversified financial sources, with a view to ensure programmes' sustainability. In particular, in the case of Spain, GREVIO pointed to the need for ensuring adequate funding for programmes for perpetrators "who have not been reported been reported to the law-enforcement authorities or have not been convicted"²⁷. To this regard, it is important to note that the WWP EN recommends separating the budget dedicated to programmes for perpetrators from the one allocated to support services for victims of domestic violence, to avoid competition between specialised support services for victims and programmes for perpetrators²⁸.

GREVIO consistently welcomed the development of national networks and guidelines (as in the case of Italy, Germany, Serbia and the United Kingdom)²⁹, as well as the initiatives launched in Finland and Austria aimed at establishing quality standards and coherent guidelines for perpetrator programmes nationwide³⁰. Procedures for accreditation have also been praised, as in the case of Germany. GREVIO has often encouraged national institutions to endorse this harmonisation process across the country³¹, together with the need to ensure adequate training of professionals, systematic data collection and constant evaluation of the programmes.

24. As in the following baseline evaluation reports: Albania, paragraph 71; Portugal, paragraph 105; Türkiye, paragraph 128.

25. GREVIO's baseline report on Portugal, paragraph 105a, reiterated in its first thematic evaluation report, paragraphs 69-71: "it is the duty of the authorities to ensure that the interplay between perpetrator programmes and criminal proceedings does not work against the principle of victims' access to fair and just legal processes". See also GREVIO's Mid-term Horizontal Review of GREVIO baseline evaluation reports (2022), paragraph 195.

26. GREVIO's baseline report on Denmark, paragraph 92.

27. GREVIO's first thematic report on Spain, paragraph 80.

28. GREVIO (2023). 4th General Report on GREVIO'S activities. Available at <https://rm.coe.int/4th-general-report-on-grevio-s-activities/1680aca199> (see paragraph 104).

29. GREVIO baseline evaluation reports on Italy, Germany, United Kingdom.

30. GREVIO baseline evaluation reports on Austria, paragraphs 82-86, and on Finland, paragraphs 74-79.

31. As in the baseline evaluation reports on Portugal, France and Sweden.

1.4.2. Providers of programme

The convention and Explanatory report do not offer any specific indication with regard to the programmes' provision and leave it up to Parties to identify the entities responsible. GREVIO's reports reveal a wide range of practices across member states, with perpetrator programmes being delivered by several entities as, for instance, private organisations, NGOs, municipal authorities, health sector, prison and probation services, etc. Nevertheless, the institutional settings of perpetrator programmes, the professional profiles delivering the intervention and the training of practitioners involved "are among the crucial factors influencing the quality and result of these programmes"³². GREVIO noted that in some countries, where perpetrator programmes have been integrated into existing social or health services, this choice created additional workload for professionals operating these services while it entailed the risk of jeopardising the quality of the work with perpetrators of domestic violence, with additional risks for the victims' safety³³.

In accordance with article 15 of the Istanbul Convention, "Training of professionals", GREVIO has stressed on the importance of ensuring initial and in-service training to possibly count on qualified staff. In the case of Austria, GREVIO considers important to raise awareness of and disseminate knowledge on perpetrator work among different professionals, including judges and prosecutors, "who should be encouraged to systematically make use of perpetrator programmes", and other professional directly involved in delivering the programmes, such as psychologists and social workers³⁴. In the first thematic evaluation on Spain, it noted with concern that "not all the professionals in charge of delivering treatment programmes [...] are specifically trained on gender-based violence against women"³⁵. In particular, the Council of Europe has pointed to "a negative trend of integrating these interventions into existing services without equipping them with additional resources and training"³⁶, entailing significant risks to the safety of victims and their children. Training should cover a number of topics, including gender-based violence

32. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024), p. 18.

33. See GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on: Türkiye, paragraph 124.

34. GREVIO's first thematic report on Austria, paragraph 75.

35. GREVIO's first thematic report on Spain, paragraph 79.

36. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024), p. 19.

and domestic violence, risk assessment and management, co-operation with partner support services, the process of change and motivating perpetrators to change, managing group dynamics, and implementing the adopted curriculum.

1.4.3. Safety and well-being of victims, particularly women and children

As a cross-cutting issue, in its reports, GREVIO repeatedly underlined that perpetrator programmes should be based on a gendered understanding of violence and that an effective and systematic co-operation with women's support services is pivotal in the work with domestic abusers. For instance, in the report on the Netherlands, it raised criticism toward the adoption of a gender-neutral approach³⁷ and encouraged authorities to evaluate the impact of the gender-neutral approach on rates of violence and recidivism³⁸. In countries like Croatia, a gender-neutral approach to perpetrator programmes resulted in female victims of violence being ordered to attend treatment programmes in the same groups as their male abusers³⁹.

In addition, GREVIO considers that agreements with specialist support services can reduce the risk of secondary victimisation and guarantee the protection of victims' human rights⁴⁰. GREVIO commended protocols adopted in Austria between the national network of women support service and the probation service, as well as the practice of including a "partner-contact person" in charge of communicating and cooperating with the victim, as adopted by the Swedish prison and probation services' programmes⁴¹. It has also noted that this collaboration on the one hand enhances opportunities to propose treatment to abusive partners⁴², while on the other, it secures women to be regularly notified of the level of co-operation of their partner attending a programme⁴³ – knowing that changes in perpetrators' behaviours can include progress, increasing risk of recidivism and dropouts. As noted by the Council of Europe, perpetrator programmes cannot operate without a link to a partner contact service in countries like Germany, Italy, and Serbia, where

37. See GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on the Netherlands, paragraph 105. To this regard, see also the report on Belgium, paragraph 95.

38. GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on Netherlands, paragraph 107, ii.

39. GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on Croatia, paragraph 105.

40. As in the case of the following reports: on Austria, paragraph 84; on Portugal, paragraph 103; on Denmark, paragraph 90; on Italy, paragraph 116; on Sweden, paragraph 103.

41. GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on Sweden, paragraph 98.

42. GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on Denmark, paragraph 90.

43. GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on Austria, paragraph 84.

national network included this provision in their standards⁴⁴. In some cases, GREVIO has observed a lack of trust between perpetrator programmes and women’s support services, which constitute an additional challenge for co-operation and can entail additional risks for victims of domestic violence, as in the case of Spain⁴⁵. In its first thematic evaluation, GREVIO consistently reaffirmed the need to adhere to victim-centred work with perpetrator and to closely co-operate with women’s counselling NGOs, as noted in the reports on Austria and on Spain⁴⁶. Protocols and agreements are particularly needed for the establishment of joint risk-assessment and safety management plans. As noted in the *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes*, the risk assessment should include “both static (e.g. criminal history, previous acts of violence) and dynamic factors (e.g. employment status, substance abuse, pregnancy)” and consider “perpetrators’ risk factors, the vulnerability of the victims, and service-generated risks (e.g. risks inherent to possibly manipulative use of attendance in programme or a false sense of safety following the enrolment of the abuser in the programme)”⁴⁷.

1.4.4. Design of quality programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence

On several occasions, GREVIO recalled the importance of implementing uniform minimum standards aimed at prioritising women and children’s safety⁴⁸. In particular, GREVIO had commended Andorra for introducing a programme based on promoting non-violent relationships as an essential aspect of an integrated response to violence against women, “taking into account the relationship between victims, perpetrators, children, and their wider social environment”⁴⁹. Elsewhere, as in the Albanian baseline evaluation report,

44. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024)*, p.20.

45. GREVIO’s baseline evaluation report on Spain.

46. See GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation reports on Austria, paragraphs 71-80, and on Spain, paragraph 78.

47. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024)*, p 27 available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>.

48. See for example GREVIO’s baseline evaluation report on Serbia and on Albania.

49. GREVIO, *Mid-term Horizontal Review of GREVIO Baseline Evaluation Reports*, paragraph 193.

GREVIO expressed concern about practices including family therapy, mediation and reconciliation in the context of perpetrator programmes⁵⁰.

In the case of other countries, while affirming the need for a gendered understanding of domestic violence, GREVIO stated that programmes focusing exclusively on anger management, on mental issues and on addiction treatments, are not considered in compliance with the convention. In the report on Montenegro, in the baseline evaluation report GREVIO already encouraged national authorities “to move away from perpetrator programmes based exclusively on medical treatment for substance abuse and mental health problems”⁵¹, and strongly reiterated this point in the context of the first thematic evaluation, “urg[ing] the Montenegrin authorities to set up mandatory psycho-social treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence [...] in line with the core elements as set out for Article 16 in the Explanatory Report to the Istanbul Convention”⁵². On the same line, in the Turkish baseline evaluation report, GREVIO pointed to the fact that both courts and health-care institutions “tend to equate [perpetrator programmes] to medical treatment for psychological disorders or problems of addiction”⁵³. The lack of a gendered understanding of violence against women has raised concern also in the case of Sweden, with regard to certain programmes in particular, since they “focus solely on how to manage emotions and conflicts”⁵⁴. GREVIO made clear that although some perpetrators can have several overlapping problems, these issues need to be addressed separately and by different categories of professionals. According to the Group of Experts, adequate programmes should primarily “encourage perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions and examine their attitudes and beliefs towards women”⁵⁵.

The Council of Europe also stressed on the importance of adopting an ecological approach⁵⁶ to domestic violence and invited to make sure that the programmes cover a few essential topics: focusing on all the forms of domestic violence that perpetrators may use, deconstructing harmful gender stereotypes, and

50. GREVIO’s baseline evaluation report on Albania, paragraph 70.

51. GREVIO’s baseline evaluation report on Montenegro, paragraph 91, and reiterated in the first thematic report, paragraph 77.

52. GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation report on Montenegro, paragraph 81.

53. GREVIO’s baseline evaluation report on Türkiye, paragraph 124.

54. GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation on Sweden, paragraph 58.

55. GREVIO’s baseline evaluation report on Montenegro, paragraph 91.

56. According to the ecological approach, violence in intimate relationships is a multifaceted phenomenon resulting from a dynamic interaction between individual, relational, community and societal factors. HEISE Lori L., 1998, “Violence Against Women: An Integrated, Ecological Framework”, *Violence Against Women*, n.4, vol. 262, p. 262-290.

integrating the topic of online and technology-facilitated violence, which was also addressed by GREVIO's [General Recommendation No. 1](#).

In the first thematic evaluation reports published so far, GREVIO put particular emphasis on the importance of collecting reliable data on programme attendance and completion⁵⁷ as well as on the need to ensure an independent evaluation of the programmes “to assess the effectiveness of current services and address identified shortcomings accordingly”, as carried out in Finland by the University of Helsinki⁵⁸. In the case of Portugal, GREVIO strongly encouraged national authorities to “ensure that perpetrator programmes are assessed on an ongoing basis as to their impact and build in sanctions when programmes are not completed by the perpetrator”⁵⁹. The Group of Experts has also encouraged to measure “the impact of short and long-term programmes and related recidivism rates, both in custodial settings and walk-in programmes”⁶⁰ as in the case of Austria, while underlining the importance of including the victims’ perspective in any and all evaluations, as mentioned in first thematic evaluation report on Spain⁶¹. In this regard, the IMPACT Outcome Monitoring Toolkit developed by the WWP EN can serve as a model to assess change in perpetrators’ behaviours and attitudes, in victims’ safety and well-being, and in changes in children’s lives, pre- and post- completion of the programme⁶².

By establishing Article 16, the Istanbul Convention reaffirms an understanding of domestic violence and sexual violence as gender-based, as well as the need for a cultural understanding of these forms of violence to ensure broad accessibility of the programmes. It also makes clear that perpetrators of these specific forms of abuse must not only undergo adequate criminal proceeding but, in addition to their penalty, be offered adequate treatment, in order to adopt non-violent behaviours and to change their attitudes towards women. Both in the case of domestic violence and sexual violence, the prevention of recidivism should be supported by multi-agency interventions, not limited to the criminal justice system and in close co-operation with women’s support services. As a conclusive remark, it is important to note that the Council of Europe *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes* also provides a final checklist to support policymakers, governments, international

57. GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation on Albania, paragraph 71.

58. GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation on Finland, paragraph 83.

59. GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation on Portugal, paragraph 77.

60. GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation on Austria, paragraph 77.

61. GREVIO’s first thematic evaluation on Spain, paragraph 79.

62. Berta Vall Castelló, Alessandra Pauncz, Anna McKenzie, *The WWP EN IMPACT Outcome Monitoring Toolkit*, 2021, available at https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/www/What_you_can_do/Ensure_the_quality_of_your_perpetrator_programme/IMPACT_Outcome_evaluation_toolkit/WWP_ImpactToolkit_A5_publication_web.pdf.

organisations and service providers in setting up effective, victim-centred and safety-oriented programmes for perpetrators. The checklist can serve as a practical tool to assess existing programmes for perpetrators and their alignment with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention.

II. National Context: Armenia's Legal and Policy Framework

In recent years Armenia has taken notable steps to strengthen its legal and policy response to domestic violence, with a shift from purely punitive measures to approaches that prioritise prevention, accountability, and rehabilitation. A cornerstone of this development is the recognition of the importance of holding perpetrators accountable for their acts, with a view to preventing them from re-offending. Effective perpetrator programmes can enhance the safety and well-being of victims and should be an integral part of the co-ordinated community response to violence against women and domestic violence. This is reflected in both Armenia's national legal framework and its political commitment to align with the standards of the Istanbul Convention.

2.1. Policy Foundations of Response to Domestic Violence and Perpetrator Rehabilitation

A well-established legal and policy framework is essential for perpetrator programmes to function effectively. These programmes must be embedded within a coordinated community response to violence against women and domestic violence, involving structured co-operation with women's support services, law enforcement, judiciary, probation services, and, where relevant, child protection authorities.⁶³ When operated in isolation, perpetrator programmes fail to ensure victim safety and reduce violence. A strong legal or policy basis is thus necessary to guarantee collaboration, accountability, and consistency across all involved actors.⁶⁴ This ensures consistency, accountability, and integration of the programmes into the broader coordinated response to violence. In April 2025, the Government of Armenia adopted Decree N 482-L approving the *Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Action Plan*

63. Council of Europe. (2023a). 4th General Report on GREVIO'S activities, paragraph 104, available at <https://rm.coe.int/4th-general-report-on-grevio-s-activities/1680aca199>.

64. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024), p 14 available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>.

*of the Republic of Armenia for 2025–2028.*⁶⁵ This strategy reinforces the state's commitment to combating gender-based violence and supporting both victims and perpetrators through targeted, coordinated measures. Under Priority Area 5, *Prevention and Combating of Gender-Based Violence and Discrimination, and Protection and Support of Victims of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence*, the action plan specifically foresees the development and implementation of rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators. In particular, it mandates (a) *designing targeted violence-reduction programmes for convicted offenders in the penitentiary and probation systems*, and (b) *developing and implementing rehabilitation programmes for individuals who have committed domestic or intimate partner violence*. The expected outcome is an improved system for the rehabilitation of perpetrators of domestic and intimate partner violence.

The Ministry of Justice is designated as the lead implementing body, together with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, civil society organisations, and international partners contributing as co-implementers. Activities are to be financed from the state budget and other lawful sources, for example, funding provided by international organisations or NGOs. Notably, the strategy also provides a clear budget breakdown for these activities under Priority 5. For the period 2026–2028, a total of 56 million AMD (approximately 130,000 EUR) is allocated: 14 million AMD (approximately 32,000 EUR) in 2026, 21 million AMD (approximately 49,000 EUR) in 2027, and 21 million AMD (approximately 49,000 EUR) in 2028. This budgetary provision demonstrates the government's intent to move beyond policy declarations towards concrete, adequately funded actions aimed at reducing reoffending and supporting change in perpetrators' attitudes and behaviours.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy are coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which oversees the process through a dedicated division (Department of Trafficking and Women's Issues). Responsible and co-executing bodies (e.g., the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, communities, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure) are required to submit regular and final reports on their respective actions, ensuring accountability and transparency. Annual progress reports are compiled by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and reviewed by the Council on Women's Issues, while the final comprehensive report is published once a year on the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' official website and

65. Government of the Republic of Armenia Decree N 482-L "On Approving the Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Action Plan of the Republic of Armenia for 2025–2028", adopted on 23 April 2025, available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/206364/latest>.

may include independent expert assessments. Civil society, international organisations, and other stakeholders are also encouraged to submit observations and reports, which are taken into account by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in assessing implementation and shaping future actions.

2.2. National Legal Framework on Domestic Violence and Perpetrator Programmes

A robust legislative foundation is crucial for the effective implementation of programmes for perpetrators. Legislation provides the necessary authority, defines the responsibilities of the involved institutions, and establishes enforceable standards for programme delivery. Defining clear legal provisions, supporting the programmes' alignment with human rights principles, ensuring victims' safety: all these tasks are integrated into the coordinated response to domestic violence and violence against women. Moreover, regulations enable consistent practices across regions and service providers, ensuring accountability, quality, and sustainability of interventions.

In the Armenian context, the Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, adopted in 2017 and substantially amended by Law HO-169-N of 12 April 2024, provides the foundational legal basis for rehabilitating perpetrators as part of the state's response to domestic violence.⁶⁶ Article 4(1)(8) defines a rehabilitation programme as a *"comprehensive set of measures aimed at providing the perpetrator of violence with psychological and social support, restoring their health, and overcoming harmful addictions such as alcoholism, drug addiction, substance abuse, or gambling, with the goal of preventing further acts of violence."* This broad definition signals the Law's preventive and supportive, rather than punitive intent when it comes to such programmes. However, it does not provide a gendered understanding of domestic violence and reductively acknowledges that violent behaviour may stem from psychological, social, or dependency issues only, which suggests that these are the causes of violent behaviour and thus leaves an important lacuna when it comes to the conception of perpetrator programmes and to the recognition of the unequal positions of women and men in the society at the origins of violence against women.

Article 6 authorises the Police of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Police), as the specialised body responsible for issuing a warning, in cases of a first to classify

66. Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Subjected to Family and Domestic Violence, available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/208514>.

domestic violence offence not constituting a crime or requiring immediate intervention. The warning informs the perpetrator of the consequences of continued violence. Following the criticism of the women's support NGOs⁶⁷ and further reflected in the 2024 amendment (Article 6(4)), a copy of the warning must now be sent to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which is responsible for offering rehabilitation services "as soon as possible", rather than to a support centre⁶⁸ as was the case previously. This change formally assigns institutional responsibility for rehabilitation to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and positively removes support centres from the process, since they did not have the human, material, and financial capacity to implement perpetrator programmes. At this stage, perpetrators' participation in the programme remains voluntary.

For more serious cases of domestic violence, judicial protection orders under Article 8 may mandate participation in a rehabilitation programme. Article 8(5) (8) explicitly allows courts to impose rehabilitation as a compulsory measure where the risk to the victim is considered high. However, it is important to note that, as of now, there are no specific risk assessment procedures for perpetrators of domestic violence: the only existing tools are in the Penitentiary Service and the Probation Service, which only make a general assessment. Thus, rehabilitation is embedded at two stages: voluntary participation after a warning, and mandatory participation following a court order (if applied).

As per the comprehensive amendment in 2024, the legal framework also provides sanctions for non-compliance with such orders. Article 508 of the Criminal Code sanctions failure to implement emergency barring orders or protection orders,⁶⁹ while Article 206.16 of the Code of Administrative Offences imposes fines where perpetrators intentionally violate requirements under emergency barring orders or protection orders.⁷⁰ These regulations do not cover the warning, and if a perpetrator fails to attend a rehabilitation programme, sanctions can only be applied in the case where participation is explicitly mandated by a protection order issued by the court. The interpretation of

67. UNFPA, UN WOMEN, Regional guidance on working with perpetrators of domestic violence and early intervention Eastern partnership region, 2022. See in particular the section on Recommendation for Armenia (p 47), available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/01/regional-guidance-on-working-with-perpetrators-of-domestic-violence>.

68. **Support centres** are organisations providing social assistance to persons who have been subjected to or are allegedly subjected to family and domestic violence, and, where necessary, to members of their families, certified by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

69. Criminal Code, Article 508, available at: <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/153080/latest>.

70. Code of Administrative Offences, Article 206.16, available at: <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/20/latest>.

these regulations makes clear that participation in a rehabilitation programme cannot be enforced when it is voluntarily offered through a police warning, as sanctions only apply when participation has been explicitly mandated by a court protection order.

The amended Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence also assigns Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs the task of developing and overseeing rehabilitation programmes (Article 14(1)(14)), in collaboration with service providers, public entities, and NGOs. This formalises the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs' role as the leading authority and aligns with the shift of operational responsibility away from support centres.

Hence, the recent amendments to legislation represent a significant and welcome development in strengthening Armenia's legal framework for addressing domestic violence. The Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence now provides clearer institutional responsibilities, embeds rehabilitation at both preventive and judicial stages, and introduces specific sanctions for non-compliance with court-mandated measures. However, while the legal framework establishes an important foundation, the current challenge lies in its effective implementation. The lack of gender perspective in programme design and execution, including limited reflection of power imbalances and patterns of control, risks weakening their impact. Meaningful participation in rehabilitation, safeguarding victims throughout the process, and building institutional and inter-agency capacity are all critical to translating legal commitments into transformative change.

Moreover, the current legislation leaves a significant gap in meeting the requirements of Article 16(2) of the Istanbul Convention, which obliges States Parties to set up also treatment programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence, with a view to preventing reoffending. Addressing this gap would require expanding the legal and institutional framework to cover the rehabilitation of perpetrators of sexual violence.

2.3. Government Decree No. 35-N and its Role in Programme Implementation

Following the 2024 amendments, a significant legislative development in Armenia's response to domestic violence was also the adoption of Government Decree No. 35-N of 16 January 2025, which formally approved the *Rehabilitation Programme for Individuals Who Have Committed Family and Domestic Violence*, in line with Article 13(3) of the Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic

Violence.⁷¹ This Decree established a structured, multi-component rehabilitation programme and detailed its organisational, substantive, and procedural aspects.

The programme, set out in the Annex to the Decree, defines a set of measures aimed at preventing new and more severe acts of violence (Annex, paragraph 1). However, instead of focusing on power and control dynamics and on perpetrators' choice, it merely offers psychological and social support, restoring health, and overcoming harmful addictions (alcoholism, drug addiction, substance abuse, and gambling), implicitly making the assumption that male violence directly stems from these issues. Importantly, the programme is implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs through a selected NGO, rather than by support centres as was the case under earlier arrangements (Annex, para.2). This marks a significant shift, addressing earlier concerns about victim support structures bearing the burden of perpetrators' rehabilitation (based *inter alia* on the 2018 Ministerial Order No. 119-N), without adequate human and financial resources and with an emphasis on reconciliation rather than accountability⁷².

To adequately ensure programmes' quality standards, the implementing organisation should employ at least a trained social worker, a psychologist, and a lawyer with expertise in working with "different groups of perpetrators" (Annex, paragraph 3). However, as for other clauses, the document does not explicitly clarify the meaning of "different groups". This ambiguity is particularly problematic in light of international standards, which emphasise the importance of tailoring perpetrator programmes to the specific profiles and risks associated with different categories of offenders. In particular, placing male and female perpetrators in the same programme may undermine both effectiveness and victim safety, given the distinct gender dynamics, motivations, and patterns of violence often present in such cases. The lack of guidance on this point may result in a one-size-fits-all approach that disregards key differences and weakens programme outcomes. The programme is delivered

71. Government of the Republic of Armenia Decree N 35-N "On Approving the Rehabilitation Program for Persons Committed Family and Domestic Violence", adopted on 16 January 2025, available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=202222>.

72. Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia order N 119-N "On Approving the Rehabilitation Program and Organisation Procedure for Persons who have Committed Domestic Violence", adopted on 13 November 2018. Available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=126674>.

Discrepancies between legislation and implementation have also been underlined in the report UN WOMEN, Regional guidance on working with perpetrators of domestic violence and early intervention Eastern partnership region, pp. 88-90, available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/01/regional-guidance-on-working-with-perpetrators-of-domestic-violence>.

through a grant-based arrangement in accordance with Armenian legislation (Annex, paragraph 4) and, in the case of offenders serving sentences or under probation, the programme is integrated into the penitentiary or probation resocialisation frameworks (Annex, paragraph 5).

The content of the rehabilitation programme is based on an individualised approach, tailored to the needs of every single perpetrator. It begins with an individual's assessment and the development of a personal supervision plan for each participant, which takes into account their age, gender, health and social conditions, psychological characteristics, family composition, the type and duration of violence, and contributing risk factors (Annex, paragraph 6–11). The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is also in charge of organising regular training for facilitators delivering the programme (Annex, paragraph 8) and of coordinating with other specialised services if needed (e.g., medical treatment, addiction rehabilitation) (Annex, paragraph 9).

The programme emphasises several core principles, including prioritising victims' safety, applying a gender-sensitive and person-centred approach, ensuring accountability, fostering inclusivity and inter-professional co-operation, and maintaining a culturally appropriate and trauma-informed practice (Annex, paragraph 7). In itself, it consists of distinct modules that can be combined or individually applied, according to each perpetrator's individual assessment. The modules are delivered through individual or group sessions, with clear parameters on session length, frequency, and confidentiality (Annex, paragraph 16–27).

The programme also sets out monitoring, evaluation, and reporting mechanisms. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is meant to conduct regular monitoring (Annex, paragraph 19), while the implementing organisation is expected to evaluate and adjust the programme at least every six months (Annex, paragraph 20), and to make a final assessment on effectiveness, efficiency, and adjustment needs (Annex, paragraph 21–22). However, the framework does not prescribe clear indicators or methodologies for measuring actual behavioural change in perpetrators. There is no requirement for gathering structured feedback from either the professionals implementing the programme or the perpetrators themselves. This lack of concrete outcome-oriented evaluation tools makes it difficult to assess whether the programme is achieving its rehabilitative aims in practice. Specific reports are submitted to the Ministry on both individual modules and the overall outcomes (Annex, paragraph 22 and 30), although no indication of the time frame is provided.

It is recommended that effective interventions consist of at least 51 hours of group sessions or 27 hours of individual sessions, typically delivered over

a minimum period of six months. This timeframe is considered necessary to foster meaningful behavioural change and support perpetrators' long-term accountability.⁷³ By contrast, Government Decree No. 35-N does not explicitly guarantee such a minimum duration. Instead, it provides that the content and duration of each programme are determined individually, based on a risk and needs assessment of the perpetrator (Annex, paragraph 11). Furthermore, while the Decree stipulates minimum lengths for each session—not less than 80 minutes for group work and 40 minutes for individual work (Annex, paragraph 26)—there is no requirement on the number of sessions or cumulative programme duration. This flexible, case-by-case approach risks falling short of international benchmarks if the overall programme remains too short or superficial. Without a clear standard, the quality and depth of interventions may vary, limiting their capacity to achieve sustained behavioural transformation and prevent reoffending.

International standards stress that perpetrator programmes should be geographically accessible across the country, ensuring that perpetrators in all regions have the opportunity to participate in such interventions.⁷⁴ However, Government Decree No. 35-N does not contain any provision on the geographic distribution or decentralisation of perpetrator programmes. According to stakeholder interviews, it is currently envisaged that programmes will be operational only in Yerevan and Gyumri. This limited geographic scope risks excluding a large portion of potential beneficiaries and undermines the principle of equal access to rehabilitation services throughout Armenia.

National perpetrator programmes should be guided by a standardised curriculum and supported by a clear accreditation mechanism to ensure quality, consistency, and accountability across implementing organisations.⁷⁵ While Armenia's perpetrator programme has been adopted by Government Decree No. 35-N, there is no accompanying accreditation system in place to certify implementing organisations or trainers based on defined professional criteria. Furthermore, no transparent or standardised procedure exists for the development, approval, or revision of individual programme modules, which raises concerns about content quality and uniformity. The absence of such a

73. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention* (2024), p 24 available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>.

74. *Ibid.* p18.

75. *Ibid.* p 18.

framework may hinder the ability to evaluate whether the programme meets the required standards for rehabilitation and victim safety.

Governments also need to ensure that adequate and dedicated funding is allocated to programmes for perpetrators. The allocation of additional funding devoted to such programmes should not lead to a decrease in the financial and human resources granted to support services for women victims of domestic violence and their children.⁷⁶ While the Government Decree does not contain an explicit provision on dedicated funding for perpetrator programmes, it does not exclude such considerations in practice. According to interviews, this issue has been raised by women's support organisations, who stressed the risk that new funding for perpetrator interventions might come at the expense of support services for victims. In response, the Ministry reportedly acknowledged this concern and committed to ensuring a balanced approach. Nonetheless, the decree itself formally lacks safeguards to prevent the diversion of financial and human resources away from victim services.

The Government Decree does not contain any provisions to ensure that professionals involved in perpetrator programmes are not simultaneously engaged in activities that could compromise the prioritisation of victim safety, e.g. professional advising family courts in child custody proceedings, or serving as the individual psychologist of the perpetrator or the victim.⁷⁷ This omission poses a potential risk to impartiality and may hinder the trust and safety of victims. Aligning with international standards would require clear regulations prohibiting dual roles, especially in small communities or institutions where staff overlap may be common. Similarly, the decree does not require perpetrator programmes to be physically separated from specialist support services for victims, such as shelters or counselling centres. The lack of such safeguards may result in unintended overlap or proximity, which could undermine the safety, confidentiality, and emotional well-being of victim-survivors.

The study of relevant legal regulations, together with the analysis of interviews with stakeholders, particularly with NGOs, revealed that by formalising this comprehensive rehabilitation programme, Government Decree No. 35-N represents a decisive step forward compared to previous provisions, such as the 2018 Ministerial Order No. 119-N, which inadequately assigned responsibility for perpetrator rehabilitation to support centres and prioritised reconciliation over accountability. The Decree clarifies institutional responsibilities, embeds victims' safety and accountability into the programme design, and addresses previous concerns about the lack of specialised expertise and resources.

76. Ibid. p 18.

77. Ibid. p. 19.

Despite the adoption of Government Decree No. 35-N as a regulatory step forward in structuring rehabilitation programmes, several critical gaps remain. In particular, diversified referral pathways to perpetrators programmes – including mandatory and voluntary referrals – are still not available.⁷⁸ The absence of a clear and coherent referral mechanism undermines the institutional ability to identify, refer, and systematically and consistently engage perpetrators.

Furthermore, the decree fails to address perpetrators under remand or other restraining measures, leaving an important category of offenders without access to rehabilitation and preventing service providers from operating in closed settings. Meanwhile, according to the Council of Europe standards, these programmes should be run in various settings, including custodial and non-custodial settings, allowing for pathways to referral to be diversified and consistently enforced.⁷⁹

In addition to the gaps identified above, several other shortcomings in the Government Decree No. 35-N were observed. Although the decree formally states the importance of co-operation with victim support organisations, the need to ensure victims' safety and security, as well as the significance of gender-sensitive and human rights-based approaches, operational details on programme implementation, as well as the co-operation format remain largely undefined. This lack of accuracy may be due to the absence of practical experience in the implementation of those clauses. Without such practice, it is hard to predict and interpret the effectiveness of given regulations.

Furthermore, the Government Decree does not include any provisions requiring the establishment of partner contact services as part of perpetrator programmes. This is a notable gap when compared with international standards, which emphasise the need for such services to ensure the safety and support of victims, facilitate risk assessment, and allow for appropriate information sharing. According to these standards, partner contact should ideally be provided by specialised victim support services in co-operation with the perpetrator programme, or directly integrated through well-defined procedures.⁸⁰ This concern was also raised by women's support organisations during interviews,

78. Hester, M. & Lilley, S. J. (2014), op. cit. (note 5), available at: https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/34955886/Article_12_English.pdf.

79. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024), p. 14 available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>.

80. Ibid. 22.

who highlighted the risks posed by the absence of structured partner contact mechanisms.

2.4. Role of Key State and Non-State Stakeholders and Overview of Current Initiatives

According to international standards, perpetrator programmes should not be run in isolation and need to be part of a coordinated community response to domestic violence.⁸¹ The effective prevention of domestic violence and rehabilitation of perpetrators in Armenia relies on the coordinated engagement of several state and non-state actors. Each of these stakeholders plays a distinct and complementary role, both within the framework of the Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and the broader policy and institutional context. This section of the report describes the roles of each institution involved and reflects its current or expected responsibilities, challenges, and potential for further development.

In recent years, particularly after the adoption of the new Penitentiary Code and reforms in the legislation on prevention of domestic violence, a number of initiatives by state and non-state actors have been accomplished in Armenia, laying the groundwork for more structured interventions although not yet amounting to a fully institutionalised and coherent framework for perpetrator programmes. Notably, the Probation Service, the Penitentiary Service, and the “Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Rehabilitation Programmes” State non-commercial organisation under the Ministry of Justice have developed and piloted various models of offender rehabilitation that could inform domestic violence perpetrator programmes.

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is the central government authority tasked with coordinating the development, implementation, and oversight of rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators, in co-operation with public agencies, NGOs, and service providers. Following the 2024 amendments to the Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and further adoption of the Government Decree No. 35-N, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs became responsible for offering rehabilitation services as soon as possible after a warning by the Police and for ensuring mandatory participation, where ordered by a court. Its leading role also includes setting standards for service delivery, selecting and supporting implementing partners, and monitoring

81. UNFPA, UN WOMEN, Regional guidance on working with perpetrators of domestic violence and early intervention Eastern partnership region (2022), p. 15, available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/01/regional-guidance-on-working-with-perpetrators-of-domestic-violence>.

outcomes. However, interviews revealed that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs remains at an early stage in operationalising these responsibilities. Concrete steps to align programmes with international standards and to ensure coordination with victim support services and other stakeholders have yet to be taken and further developed. It also has a crucial role in ensuring victims' safety during programme implementation, which requires close collaboration with the Police, courts, and specialised women's NGOs.

On the policy and institutional side, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has convened inter-agency meetings and working groups, and, with the support of the Council of Europe, in 2025 facilitated a study visit to Germany, where Armenian officials examined European models of perpetrator accountability programmes. These experiences have informed the reform.

Courts are key actors in mandatory referral to perpetrator programmes. They can impose participation in a rehabilitation programme as a condition of a protection order, which significantly contributes to ensuring accountability and fostering change in attitudes and behaviours, when voluntary engagement has failed or when the risk of continued perpetration of violence is high. However, as noted during the interviews, to date, courts rarely make use of this option. This can be justified by the reason that the system is newly amended, there was a lack of state-guaranteed perpetrator programmes, and the previous one was not fully operational. This under-utilisation may reflect limited awareness among legal professionals/among the judiciary of the rehabilitative measures available, lack of trust in their effectiveness, or the absence of clear procedural guidance and adequate programmes. Greater judicial engagement, awareness of available resources and in-service training on the role of rehabilitation and its benefits to foster victims' safety and perpetrators' accountability could enhance the impact of this legal tool.

NGOs are expected to play a vital role in delivering rehabilitation programmes, particularly under the delegation envisaged by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Organisations such as *Arevamanuk NGO* and *Social Justice NGO* have already expressed initial readiness to cooperate in developing and implementing programmes, drawing on their experience in psychological support, offender rehabilitation, and human rights. Nonetheless, NGOs face significant challenges, including the lack of clear standards and operational guidelines for programmes, potential insufficient funding, and a shortage of qualified professionals.

NGOs such as Arevamanuk NGO⁸² and Social Justice NGO⁸³ have piloted or proposed rehabilitation modules, drawing on international best practices. Arevamanuk NGO, in particular, has advocated for comprehensive, evidence-based interventions combining individual CBT-focused therapy and group sessions addressing the psychological, social, and gendered dimensions of violence. These NGOs have highlighted the need to ensure privacy, victims' safety, and proper referral pathways, and have voiced concerns about insufficient adaptation of existing programme content to the Armenian context.

Victim support NGOs, such as *Women's Support Centre* and *Women's Support House*, play a complementary and crucial role. Although they do not work directly with perpetrators, their insights into victims' experiences and needs make them essential partners in guaranteeing that perpetrator programmes' primary focus is to ensure the safety and support of victims, as well as to prevent the risk of new acts of violence. These NGOs advocate for systematic communication and information sharing between victim and perpetrator services, joint risk assessments, and inclusion of victim-focused interventions in perpetrator programmes. Victim support NGOs also play a role in cautioning against compromising victims' privacy and in making sure that resources for victim support services are not diverted to perpetrator rehabilitation at the expense of victims' protection and support.

Police officers remain the first respondents in domestic violence cases and play a pivotal role in facilitating referral and thus initiating the rehabilitation pathway. They are authorised to issue warnings in appropriate cases and must notify the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to offer rehabilitation services. Currently, their involvement is limited to issuing warnings and informing perpetrators about available programmes; they lack the authority to mandate participation at this stage. According to the interviews, Police also lack standardised referral protocols, consistent initial and in-service training on the objectives and structure of rehabilitation programmes, as well as on how such interventions can contribute to victims' safety. This gap is particularly concerning, as law enforcement plays a frontline role not only in identifying

82. **Arevamanuk NGO** provides psychological and rehabilitative support to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, with experience in individual counselling and readiness to join the state perpetrator programme. It advocates for mandatory participation, privacy safeguards, context-specific design, and highlights the need for sustainable funding, training, and coordination.

83. **Social Justice NGO**, founded in 2004, is an Armenian human rights organisation engaged in criminal justice, juvenile justice, probation, prison reform, and domestic violence response. It has contributed to national justice reforms, supports resocialisation of offenders, and promotes restorative justice approaches through research, advocacy, and multidisciplinary co-operation.

perpetrators but also in safeguarding victims throughout the rehabilitation process. Ensuring that police officers understand how perpetrator programmes are meant to enhance, not endanger, victims' safety is essential for building trust and coherence across the system. Improving police understanding of their role in facilitating rehabilitation and its preventive value would strengthen the overall system.

In the case of perpetrators being already in the criminal justice system, as sentenced prisoners or probation beneficiaries, three institutional actors play crucial roles: the Penitentiary Service, the Probation Service and the "Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Resocialisation Programmes".

The **Penitentiary Service** is responsible for implementing rehabilitation programmes for sentenced prisoners, following the risk and needs assessment. It currently lacks specific programmes on the rehabilitation of perpetrators, since it only offers general anger management and parenting sessions, not specifically tailored to domestic violence offenders. Notably, the Penitentiary Service does not adequately address the needs of remand prisoners, as the current framework does not cover their case. It also faces significant challenges in terms of human and financial resources, staff training, and victims' safety measures within detention facilities. Penitentiary Service has incorporated general psychological and social activities into the rehabilitation of incarcerated persons, including group sessions on anger management and positive parenting. These have been delivered sporadically and without a formalised curriculum.

The **Probation Service** manages perpetrators who are serving sentences in open custody, through its own risk and needs assessment tool. Since the adoption of the new Penitentiary Code and reforms in the legislation on prevention of domestic violence, it has piloted several initiatives targeting probation beneficiaries who have demonstrated aggressive or abusive behaviour, partly drawing on cognitive-behavioural therapy principles and on the Duluth model. These pilots included group and individual sessions on anger management and accountability, developed in collaboration with NGOs and supported by international organisations. Such efforts demonstrated recognition of the need for psycho-social, behavioural change interventions. However, programmes are not yet standardised, referral mechanisms remain weak, and court orders rarely impose mandatory participation. Content has been broad, not always gender-sensitive, and not specifically tailored to domestic violence perpetrators. Greater clarity, more robust procedures, and dedicated resources are required to strengthen its role.

Finally, the **“Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Resocialisation Programmes”** State non-commercial organisation of the Ministry of Justice⁸⁴ supports the development and delivery of rehabilitation programmes within both the penitentiary and probation contexts for sentenced prisoners and probation beneficiaries. Although the Centre has the institutional expertise, infrastructure, and qualified staff needed to expand its activities, it currently plays only a limited role in addressing domestic violence since its potential is constrained by a lack of formal assignments, clear mandates, and sufficient resources. The “Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Rehabilitation Programmes” State non-commercial organisation has contributed expertise and institutional capacity in the development and delivery of rehabilitation programmes, particularly in relation to probation beneficiaries and sentenced prisoners. It employs qualified psychologists and social workers, and has experience developing modules such as positive parenting and group psycho-education. The Centre has also developed a specialised rehabilitation programme for child victims of violence in partnership with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), showcasing its capacity to design and deliver targeted, structured interventions in sensitive areas. Although at this stage statistical data and evaluation of the programme outcomes are not available, this experience underscores the potential to develop comparable, coherent programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Discussed initiatives reflect an evolving understanding among Armenian stakeholders of the importance of structured, accountable, and victim-oriented rehabilitation of perpetrators as a preventive measure. However, they also reveal critical gaps: the absence of formalised programmes for remand prisoners, the inconsistent relevance of programme modules, lack of clear referral mechanisms, limited monitoring and evaluation, and insufficient coordination with victim support services. In sum, while each stakeholder brings valuable expertise and legitimacy to the system, the current landscape remains fragmented. Strengthening inter-agency co-operation through specific protocols and agreements, clarifying roles and procedures, and building capacities of all stakeholders involved (particularly in adopting a gender perspective,

84. The «Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Resocialisation Programmes» is a state non-commercial organisation under the Ministry of Justice of Armenia, specialised in developing and delivering legal education, professional training, and rehabilitation programmes. It was originally established by the Government of Armenia on 18 October 1990 through Government Decision No. 681, as the *Institute for Advanced Training of Legal Personnel* under the Ministry of Justice. In 2003, it was reorganised into a state non-commercial organisation by Government Decision No. 224-N and named the *Legal Institute of the Ministry of Justice*. Later, in 2016, by Government Decision No. 1253-N, the *Centre for Rehabilitation of Offenders* was merged into this institute, and it was renamed the current *Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Resocialisation Programmes*.

safeguarding victims, ensuring programme quality, and fostering accountability) are crucial initiatives to advancing a comprehensive, rights-based response to domestic violence and perpetrators' rehabilitation. While the legislative and policy framework has advanced, the practical implementation of these initiatives remains a key challenge. Although fragmented, the experiences of probation, penitentiary, and NGO pilots, as well as child-focused programming, still offer valuable lessons that can inform the design of robust, evidence-based, and tailored perpetrator programmes fully aligned with international standards.

III. Practical Implementation of Perpetrator Programmes in Armenia

In parallel with its evolving legal and policy framework, and following the adoption of the new Penitentiary Code and reforms in the legislation on prevention of domestic violence, Armenia has begun translating its commitments into practice by introducing and piloting perpetrator rehabilitation programmes. These initiatives reflect a growing understanding that addressing the underlying behaviours and attitudes of perpetrators is critical for breaking the cycle of violence and protecting victims in the short, mid and long term. Implementation efforts have involved multiple institutions and actors working to operationalise the legal framework and develop coherent, needs-based interventions. While these early steps demonstrate significant progress, they also highlight the complexity of translating normative standards into effective practice, underscoring the importance of institutional co-operation, adequate resources, and sustained monitoring to ensure meaningful impact. This section explores the state of inter-agency coordination mechanisms, provides an in-depth look at Armenia's first perpetrator rehabilitation programme as established by Government Decree No. 35-N, and offers an assessment of the main gaps, challenges, and areas for improvement in its design and implementation.

3.1. Inter-Agency Coordination and Referral Pathways

Effective perpetrator programmes cannot operate in isolation; their success depends on clear institutional roles and strong co-operation with a range of stakeholders. As emphasised in the *European Standards for Survivor-Safety-Oriented Intimate Partner Violence Perpetrator Programmes* (Standard 2.2), programmes must implement risk assessment procedures aimed at prioritising victims' safety and wellbeing, either internally or in collaboration with external agencies. In particular, concrete actions have to be taken to ensure effective co-operation with other actors, including women's support services, police,

courts, prosecutors, child protection, and health services, and to be an integral part of the coordinated community response (Standard 2.2.5).⁸⁵

Based on stakeholders' consultations and on the review of relevant existing programmes, our mapping revealed that, despite progress in policies and legislation, key actors' operational and procedural practices remain fragmented and underdeveloped. Many institutions rely on *ad hoc* and informal arrangements rather than on formalised guidelines and protocols to fulfil each one's role in perpetrator treatment and rehabilitation. For example, while the Probation Service incorporates perpetrator rehabilitation in individual plans based on risk and needs assessments, there are no uniform internal guidelines nor clear protocols regulating referrals, data sharing, evaluation or follow-up with implementing NGOs.

Similarly, the Penitentiary Service offers broad-spectrum resocialisation activities such as anger management or parenting sessions, although they are not systematically connected to domestic violence-specific risks nor in line with the specific modules foreseen in the legal framework. This gap between mandate and practice is further compounded by the absence of specific and unified tools to assess and triage eligible participants, particularly for remand prisoners who currently fall outside any formal intervention mechanisms.

The lack of operational accuracy also hinders coordination and case management across agencies. For example, no comprehensive system exists for data collection and information sharing between the Probation Service, Penitentiary Service, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, NGOs, and courts, in case of a perpetrator moving through different stages of the judicial system.⁸⁶ Likewise, the Police issue warnings and inform perpetrators about the availability of programmes, yet they lack any mandate or mechanism to enforce participation or monitor compliance. NGOs face their own operational challenges, which include vague delegation criteria, financial uncertainty, and a lack of

85. European Network for Work with Perpetrators (WWP EN), European Standards for Perpetrator Programmes: Standards for Survivor-Safety-Oriented Intimate Partner Violence Perpetrator Programmes Working document (2023), p. 17, available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/www/What_you_can_do/Ensure_the_quality_of_your_perpetrator_programme/European_Standards_for_Perpetrator_Programmes/European_Standards_for_Perpetrator_Programmes_website.pdf.

86. Report on the Needs assessment on the introduction of pilot rehabilitation programs for persons deprived of liberty under the "Strengthening the Protection of the Rights of Persons in Detention" project, pages 35-36.

Report on the Needs of the probation service in the development and implementation of resocialisation programmes, and identifying and building networks with the state agencies, community bodies and civil society organisations active in the field under the "Strengthening the Probation Service in Armenia" project, page 18.

clear referral pathways from state institutions. These procedural shortcomings leave frontline staff without adequate guidance and create inconsistencies in practice, undermining the programmes' potential of fostering accountability, change in attitudes and behaviours, and victims' safety in a systematic way.

Armenia has established an Interagency Working Group (Order No. 247-A of the Minister of Internal Affairs dated 17 January 2025) to promote the operational response to domestic violence cases, composed of the General Prosecutor's Office, Police, Investigative Committee, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and field NGOs. The Working Group is intended to act as a consultative body and ensure continuous communication between state authorities and NGOs engaged in the prevention of domestic violence. It also formulates recommendations aimed at addressing sectoral challenges in a more effective way, and presents them to the competent state bodies. According to the information provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Working Group also actively participates in the Gender Thematic Group and the Gender-based violence Sub-Working Group, which gather representatives of UN agencies, international organisations, state entities, and civil society to enhance policy coherence and improve sectoral responses. Local self-government bodies are engaged primarily through co-operation frameworks, while NGOs play an important role both in service provision and in monitoring. These bodies and avenues of co-operation and coordination can serve as robust platforms to discuss issues related to policy development, practical implementation and effectiveness of perpetrator programmes.

Hence, while there are important strides in establishing institutional roles and fostering inter-agency dialogue through bodies such as the Interagency Working Group, significant gaps remain in translating mandates into coordinated, effective practice. To fulfil international standards, including the *European Standards for Survivor-Safety-Oriented Perpetrator Programmes*, it is essential to move beyond *ad hoc* arrangements and move toward formalised procedures, clear coordination and co-operation mechanisms, and consistent operational protocols across all relevant institutions. Strengthening inter-agency coordination, backed by unified tools and sustained capacity-building, will enable perpetrator programmes to function as an integral part of the coordinated community response, enhancing their ability to reduce risk, promote accountability, and safeguard survivors.

Turning to the referral pathways, as already discussed in the section on legislation, the Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence sets out two formal entry points to perpetrator programmes: voluntary participation after a warning issued by the Police and mandatory participation ordered by a court as part of a protection order. Article 6(4) assigns the Ministry of

Labour and Social Affairs responsibility for offering rehabilitation services “as soon as possible”, right after a warning, while Article 8(5)(8) enables courts to impose rehabilitation as a compulsory measure. However, although these provisions clearly identify *when* perpetrators may enter programmes, the current legislative framework does not include clear and explicit procedures establishing *how* perpetrators, once warned by the Police or mandated by the court, are referred to and engaged in appropriate rehabilitation services. The Government Decree No. 35-N stipulates that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs coordinates with other bodies when specialised services (e.g., medical treatment, addiction rehabilitation) are needed (Annex, paragraph 9). However, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs’ referral to the implementing organisation is not explicitly regulated, nor is the court referral to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in case of a court-issued protection order. Another referral pathway in case of criminal justice involvement is also lacking. This regulatory gap weakens coordination and risks undermining the effectiveness of the rehabilitation process.

Furthermore, as noted, programmes for perpetrators should be an integral part of the coordinated community response to violence against women and domestic violence. This involves close collaboration with various entities such as women’s support services, law enforcement agencies, judicial services, probation services, and, when applicable, child protection agencies.⁸⁷ This misalignment risks creating disparities and inconsistent practices between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs-led programmes and those implemented by the Penitentiary and Probation Services, particularly in terms of available interventions, risk and needs assessments, and overall approach.

3.2. Scope, structure, and content of the perpetrator programme

The perpetrator programme adopted by the Government Decree No. 35-N, provides a comprehensive and structured framework designed to systematically conduct an individual assessment of each perpetrator. It consists of five main components: (1) assessing risk factors and perpetrator’s specific needs (mental health problems, addictions, etc.); (2) developing a supervision plan; (3) delivering interventions through group and individual work with appropriate

87. European Network for Work with Perpetrators (WWP EN), European Standards for Perpetrator Programmes: Standards for Survivor-Safety-Oriented Intimate Partner Violence Perpetrator Programmes Working document (2023), p. 17, available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/wwp/What_you_can_do/Ensure_the_quality_of_your_perpetrator_programme/European_Standards_for

modules; (4) ongoing monitoring and support (with adjustments as needed); (5) and final evaluation of the results. Risk assessment is carried out in three directions: personal risks related to the perpetrator's violent behaviours, organisational risks related to programme implementation, and the vulnerability risks of the victim, which must be considered in coordination with victim support services. The emphasis on both individualised planning and survivors' safety reflects the programme's aim of ensuring survivor-oriented support for perpetrators.

The programme includes a flexible modular structure, comprehensive of 17 thematic modules that can be delivered individually or in combination, depending on the perpetrator's specific needs and on the expected rehabilitation outcomes. The modules cover a wide spectrum of topics, such as awareness of violence, emotional regulation, gender equality, understanding the nature and cycle of violence, anger management, communication and conflict resolution, positive parenting, social responsibility, healthy relationships, and overcoming harmful behaviours including addictions and gambling. Additional modules address practical life skills such as Armenian language, financial literacy, and household management, alongside accountability and moral reasoning.

The list of modules is explicitly non-exhaustive, allowing service providers to propose new modules to enhance effectiveness. The content, frequency, duration, and delivery of modules are subject to Ministry approval and monitoring, ensuring consistency and quality control. This detailed and adaptive framework aims to provide perpetrators with tools to change their attitudes and violent behaviours, reduce risks, and take responsibility, ultimately contributing to the prevention of further violence.

Meanwhile, topics are not always closely related to the prevention of gender-based violence and several programme modules are not relevant to the needs of perpetrators of domestic violence (e.g., financial literacy, Armenian language classes), which diminishes their effectiveness. Instead, the programme's curriculum should focus on priority issues such as addressing all forms of violence (including physical, sexual, and psychological violence, coercive control, and technology-facilitated abuse), promoting a critical understanding of gender stereotypes, acknowledging perpetrators' parental responsibility towards children's safety and well-being. Including these topics in specific sessions or

modules could foster a deep understanding of the dynamics of gender-based violence and ensure a standardised approach.⁸⁸

Furthermore, the report drafted by the Women's Support Centre, *Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programs: A Review of Existing Programs and Recommendations for Armenia*, provides a comprehensive roadmap for designing and implementing effective perpetrator programmes in the country. The report emphasises that such programmes must be grounded in clear guiding principles, minimum standards, and strong collaboration with women's support services and other stakeholders. It also highlights the critical need for properly trained and supervised staff, structured referral and risk assessment procedures, evidence-based treatment approaches, ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and adequate funding, all within a coordinated, victim-centred response to domestic violence.⁸⁹

3.3. Possible Gaps and Challenges in Implementation of perpetrator programmes in Armenia

While the adoption of Government Decree No. 35-N marks an important step in defining the scope, structure, and components of Armenia's perpetrator rehabilitation programme, its practical implementation remains untested. Based on the current design and feedback from stakeholders, several potential gaps and risks have already been identified, which should be addressed to ensure the programme's effectiveness and compliance with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention.

Meanwhile, certain steps to ensure effective implementation are foreseen. The scope of the perpetrator programme adopted by the Government Decree No. 35-N includes a number of essential features. While welcoming the incorporation of those aspects, additional effort is expected for their practical implementation. For instance, although the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is responsible for organising the training of professionals delivering the rehabilitation programme (Annex, paragraph 8), there is currently no

88 [_Perpetrator_Programmes/European_Standards_for_Perpetrator_Programmes_website.pdf](#).

Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention (2024)*, p. 26 available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>.

89. Women's Support Centre NGO, *Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programs: A Review of Existing Programs and Recommendations for Armenia (2019)*, available at: <https://www.womensupportcenter.org/assets/PDF%20publications/pdfresizer.com-pdf-resize%20engl.pdf>.

standardised set of training materials specifically tailored to the modules and procedures outlined in the decree. This absence may entail inconsistencies in the way practitioners understand and implement the programme, potentially undermining its quality and effectiveness. Developing comprehensive, module-specific training resources is essential to equip staff with the necessary knowledge and skills.

While the regulations require an individual evaluation of each perpetrator as the basis for the programme development (Annex, paras. 12(1), 13), no standardised risk and needs assessment tool has been conceived nor approved. This gap leaves service providers stranded, compelled to rely on their own potentially inconsistent methods of assessment, which can compromise the interventions' objectivity, comparability, and appropriateness. A unified, evidence-based assessment tool is therefore necessary to ensure coherent and effective practical implementation of the programmes.

Finally, although the regulations clearly stipulate that a supervision plan must be prepared for each perpetrator, documenting their personal data, risk factors, progress, and other relevant information (Annex, paragraph 12(2), paragraph 15), no official standardised form or template has been developed to guide practitioners so far. Without such tools, the content and quality of supervision plans may vary significantly between cases and providers, undermining accountability and consistency. Creating and disseminating an approved supervision plan template would facilitate harmonising practice and strengthening the overall effectiveness of the programme.

Conclusions

With the adoption of the Law on the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence in 2017 (substantially amended in 2024 with Law HO-169-N) and of the Government Decree No. 35-N in 2025, Armenia has taken significant steps towards the establishment of a legal and policy framework for the development of perpetrator programmes in the country, as required by the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

The recent amendments to the legislation strengthen Armenia's response towards domestic violence: they provide clear institutional responsibilities by formally making the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs the coordinating body in charge of the programmes; they embed rehabilitation at both preventive and judicial stages; they introduce specific sanctions for non-compliance with court-mandated measures. The Government Decree No. 35-N entailed further significant steps, making the necessary adjustments to the previous Ministerial Order No. 119-N (2018), which inadequately assigned responsibility for perpetrator rehabilitation to support centres and encouraged reconciliation over accountability. The Decree additionally clarifies institutional responsibilities, prioritises victims' safety and perpetrators' accountability in the programme design, and addresses previous concerns about the lack of specialised expertise and resources. It also includes a clearly articulated conception of a perpetrator programme, defining its scope, structure, content and duration.

Despite this undeniable progress, Armenia is still facing important challenges both in the programmes' alignment with international standards and in their effective implementation. To date, perpetrator programmes lack a clear gendered understanding of domestic violence. The current conception frames violence against women as a health issue, related to substance addiction or to psychological and social factors, rather than acknowledging it as a violation of women's human rights. In addition, ensuring meaningful participation in rehabilitation programmes, safeguarding victims' safety throughout the process, and building sufficient institutional capacity and inter-agency co-operation

are critical next steps to translate these legal provisions into practice and thus achieve significant change in perpetrators' attitudes and behaviours. Results stemming from this study show the need for diversified referral pathways for perpetrators, through clear and coherent referral mechanisms, as well as for an expanded programme range, reaching out to perpetrators under remand or under other restraining measures.

The effective prevention of domestic violence and rehabilitation of perpetrators in Armenia relies on the coordinated engagement of several state and non-state actors. However, concrete steps to align programmes with international standards and to ensure coordination with victim support services and other stakeholders have yet to be taken and further developed. Institutions and service providers need to develop a practical expertise in the field and regularly evaluate their progressive outcomes, in order to make interventions more accurate and respectful of the standards of the Istanbul Convention. Interinstitutional protocols and agreements between the Police, courts, and specialised women's NGOs have to be developed, while the training of different professionals involved has to be improved. The current absence of training modules and materials, as well as the lack of clear risk assessment procedures, may entail inconsistencies in the way practitioners understand and implement the programmes, potentially undermining their quality and effectiveness and ultimately jeopardising victims' safety and well-being.

Recommendations

Final recommendations are here presented according to four specific sections, identified in the Council of Europe's *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes*⁹⁰: (1) Legal and policy frameworks for perpetrators of domestic violence; (2) Providers of programme; (3) Safety and well-being of victims, particularly women and children; (4) Design of quality programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Legal and policy frameworks

1. Amend Government Decree No. 35-N and its accompanying guidance to explicitly include perpetrators under remand and other restraint measures, and develop tailored tools, procedures, and modules that can be applied in both custodial and non-custodial settings.
2. Amend the national legislation to explicitly establish rehabilitation and treatment programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence, including (1) perpetrators against adults, especially against women, (2) perpetrators against children, and (3) children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour, in compliance with Article 16(2) of the Istanbul Convention, and clearly define institutional responsibilities, programme content, and referral procedures.
3. Draft and disseminate explanatory guidelines and standard operating procedures to help interpret and implement the principles and still undefined provisions of Government Decree No. 35-N, ensuring that staff understand the intent and application of its clauses.
4. Develop and implement detailed operational procedures and internal guidelines for all relevant institutions, accompanied by mandatory initial and in-service training for staff, to effectively operationalise the amended legislation and ensure consistent practice focused on victims' safety and perpetrators' accountability.

90. Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for safe and effective perpetrator programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention* (2024), pp. 14-28.

5. Make sure that perpetrator programmes are available nationwide and supported by adequate funding, without diverting resources from women's support centres.
6. Establish and fund clear minimum standards, operational guidelines, and sustainable funding streams for NGOs delivering perpetrator programmes, alongside structured training and certification processes to ensure sufficient numbers of qualified professionals.
7. Establish a secure inter-agency information-sharing platform and case management system that enables seamless coordination between the Police, courts, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Probation Service, Penitentiary Service, NGOs, the "Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Resocialisation Programmes" SNCO under the Ministry of Justice, and victims' support services as perpetrators move through the justice and support systems.
8. Develop clear and explicit procedures and referral pathways for each entry point into the rehabilitation programme — including Police warnings, court mandates, and criminal justice referrals — supported by written protocols, timelines, and clear responsibilities for the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Police, courts, and service providers to ensure seamless engagement of perpetrators in appropriate services.
9. Formalise and strengthen the Interagency Working Group as a permanent, authoritative forum for coordination, with clear mandates, regular meetings, capacity to draft and monitor recommendations, resolve inter-agency challenges, and track progress on implementation of perpetrator programmes.

Providers of programmes

10. Provide the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs with targeted technical assistance, capacity-building, and dedicated resources to strengthen its leadership role in coordinating programmes, aligning them with international standards, and working closely with victim support services, Police, courts, and NGOs.
11. Develop and disseminate standardised, module-specific training materials tailored to the structure, modules, and procedures of Government Decree No. 35-N to ensure consistent, high-quality delivery of the programme and equip professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to work effectively with perpetrators.
12. Deliver ongoing, multi-agency training and capacity-building for all relevant stakeholders, develop a shared understanding of institutional roles and

responsibilities, and create unified standards, tools, and monitoring mechanisms to embed perpetrator programmes firmly into the coordinated community response and ensure their contribution to prevention and victim safety.

13. Develop and deliver training and awareness-raising for judges and court staff on the rehabilitative purpose of perpetrator programmes, their benefits for victim safety and accountability, and practical guidance for ordering participation as part of protection measures or probation conditions.

14. Strengthen the Probation Service by standardising tools and procedures to integrate perpetrator rehabilitation consistently into individual probation plans and providing resources and training to improve effectiveness.

15. Assign a formal mandate and allocate resources to the “Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Resocialisation Programmes” SNCO, enabling it to develop and deliver structured, specialised perpetrator programmes and contribute its expertise more fully in both custodial and community settings.

Safety and well-being of victims, particularly women and children

16. Ensure that perpetrator programmes reflect a gendered understanding of domestic violence.

17. Ensure that professionals delivering perpetrator programmes are not involved in the work with victims nor in other activities that could compromise their safety, while guaranteeing that programmes for victims and perpetrators are located in separate venues.

18. Revise the list of programme modules in Government Decree No. 35-N to remove or adapt modules not directly relevant to domestic violence perpetrators, such as financial literacy and Armenian language, and instead include modules addressing coercive control, sexual violence, digital abuse, gender stereotypes, impact of violence on children, and responsible parenting, ensuring relevance and effectiveness.

19. Develop and roll out joint standardised risk assessment tools, including both static and dynamic risk factors. Establish systematic communication protocols to facilitate safe, coordinated information sharing between perpetrator services, victim support organisations, and other relevant stakeholders, while safeguarding confidentiality and prioritising victims’ safety.

Design of quality programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence

20. Harmonise the approaches and tools used by the MoLSA-led system, Penitentiary Service, and Probation Service by aligning programme content, risk and needs assessment tools, and reporting practices across custodial and community settings to avoid disparities and ensure a unified standard of practice.
21. Develop and implement unified national guidelines, standardised operating procedures, and templates, such as for risk assessments, supervision plans, and monitoring reports, across all institutions, replacing *ad hoc* practices with consistent, quality-controlled processes. Risk assessment mechanism should be an evidence-based tool for assessing and categorising perpetrators' risks and needs specific to domestic violence, applicable to all settings, including remand prisoners, to guide tailored interventions.
22. Ensure that programmes have a minimum duration of six months, that they systematically provide partner contact services in line with international standards, and that they avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to different groups of perpetrators, as for instance female perpetrators.
23. Develop an accreditation system for perpetrator programmes, with a view to establishing a national network of accredited programmes, once they are available nationwide.
24. Provide the Police with clear referral protocols, tailored training on the aims, structure, and benefits of perpetrator programmes, and tools for tracking and monitoring participation and ensuring their interventions enhance prevention and victim safety.
25. Develop and implement domestic violence-specific modules and curricula in penitentiary institutions, explicitly tailored to perpetrators of domestic violence rather than generic anger management, and extend programme access to remand prisoners, supported by improved staff training, resources, and victim safeguards.
26. Ensure adequate and systematic data collection and independent evaluations on programme's levels of attendance and completion, as well as on perpetrators' reintegration and recidivism, taking in due consideration the perspective of the victim, her safety and that of her children, on the model of the IMPACT Outcome Monitoring Toolkit developed by the WWP EN.

Annex I: Key National Legislation and Policy Documents

■ Law of the Republic of Armenia *On the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Subjected to Family and Domestic Violence*, available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/208514>

■ Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia, available at: <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/153080/latest>

■ Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Armenia, available at: <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/20/latest>

■ Government of the Republic of Armenia, *Decree N 482-L “On Approving the Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Action Plan of the Republic of Armenia for 2025–2028”*, adopted on 23 April 2025, available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/206364/latest>

■ Government of the Republic of Armenia, *Decree N 35-N “On Approving the Rehabilitation Programme for Persons Who Have Committed Family and Domestic Violence”*, adopted on 16 January 2025, available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=202222>

■ Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, *Order No. 247-A*, dated 17 January 2025

■ Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, *Order N 119-N “On Approving the Rehabilitation Programme and Organisation Procedure for Persons Who Have Committed Domestic Violence”*, adopted on 13 November 2018, available at (Armenian): <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=126674>

Annex II: List of Interviewed Stakeholders and Institutions

1. Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia

■ Probation Service, Resocialisation and Rehabilitation Division

■ Date of interview: 24 June 2025, 16:30–17:30

2. Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia

■ Penitentiary Service, Social, Psychological and Legal Work Division

■ Date of interview: 24 June 2025, 15:00–16:00

3. “Center for Implementation of Legal Education and Resocialisation Programmes” SNCO

■ Resocialisation and Rehabilitation Programmes for Juvenile Offenders Division

■ Date of interview: 24 June 2025, 14:15–15:00

4. Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia – Police

■ Methodical Support Department for Prevention of Domestic Violence

■ Date of interview: 2 July 2025, 12:00–13:00

5. Unified Social Service

■ Social Services Organisation Division

■ Date of interview: 26 June 2025, 15:00–16:00

6. “Women’s Rights House” NGO

■ President

■ Date of interview: 30 June 2025, 14:00–15:00

7. “Women’s Support Centre” NGO

■ *Representative*

■ Date of interview: 24 June 2025, 13:30–14:15

8. “Arevamanuk Foundation” NGO

■ *President*

■ Date of interview: 26 June 2025, 16:00–17:00

9. “Social Justice” NGO

■ *President*

■ Date of interview: 1 July 2025, 16:00–17:00

List of References

■ Council of Europe, *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)*, available at: <https://rm.coe.int/168008482e>

■ Council of Europe, *Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)*, available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680a48903>

■ Council of Europe, Sandra Jovanović Belotić and Berta Vall from the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, and Kieran McCartan, University of West England, Bristol, *Guidance for Safe and Effective Perpetrator Programmes: Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention* (2024), available at: <https://rm.coe.int/guidance-for-safe-and-effective-perpetrator-programmes-article-16-of-t/1680b00524>

■ Council of Europe, *Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Protection of Women against Violence*, available at: <https://search.coe.int/cm?i=09000016805e2612>

■ European Network for Work with Perpetrators (WWP EN), *European Standards for Perpetrator Programmes: Standards for Survivor-Safety-Oriented Intimate Partner Violence Perpetrator Programmes Working Document* (2023), available at: https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/fileadmin/wwp/What_you_can_do/Ensure_the_quality_of_your_perpetrator_programme/European_Standards_for_Perpetrator_Programmes/European_Standards_for_Perpetrator_Programmes_website.pdf

■ Hester, M., & Lilley, S. J., *Preventing Violence against Women: Article 12 of the Istanbul Convention — A Rapid Review of Evidence and Measures* (2014), available at: https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/34955886/Article_12_English.pdf

■ OSCE & UNFPA, *Mapping of Programmes for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Central Asia* (2024), available at: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/8/576324.pdf>

■ Sarah-Jane Lilley-Walker, Marianne Hester, William Turner, *Evaluation of European Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes: Toward a Model for Designing and Reporting Evaluations Related to Perpetrator Treatment Interventions*, *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Volume 62, Issue 4, 2016, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X16673853>

■ UNFPA & UN Women, *Regional Guidance on Working with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence and Early Intervention: Eastern Partnership Region* (2022), available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/01/regional-guidance-on-working-with-perpetrators-of-domestic-violence>

■ Vall, B., López-Martín, X., Grané-Morcillo, J., & Hester, M., *A Systematic Review of the Quality of Perpetrator Programmes' Outcome Studies: Towards a New Model of Outcome Measurement*, *Trauma, Violence & Abuse* (2023), pp. 1–15, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380231203718>.

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