

Toward effective perpetrator programmes in line with European standards

Bridging policy, practice, and co-operation for impactful
programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence

Budapest, 2–3 June 2026
European Youth Centre

Dear Participants,

As this conference brings together a large number of speakers and more than 100 participants, we have prepared short biographies with photos to help you easily identify and learn more about each speaker.

This overview is intended to support your participation and facilitate direct exchanges with the experts during the event, making it easier to recognise and connect with those you may wish to engage with.



Introducing the speakers

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Elena Jovanovska Brezoska, Head of Cooperation Unit, Gender Equality Division, Council of Europe



Elena Jovanovska Brezoska holds a PhD in criminal law and human rights and is currently the Head of the Cooperation Unit within the Gender Equality Division at the Council of Europe. She has more than 15 years of experience working in the fields of human rights, gender equality, criminal and constitutional justice and preventing and combating violence against women.

Throughout her career, Elena has managed and overseen numerous co-operation projects with Council of Europe member states aimed at strengthening legal and institutional responses in these areas. Before that, she worked as a lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights and with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, where she focused on human rights and strategic litigation at national and international levels.

Alessandra Pauncz, Phd, Executive Director, European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence



Alessandra has been working in the field of domestic violence for 20 years and in many areas of expertise. She advocated and worked for victims of domestic violence as a shelter worker, psychologist, researcher, manager, trainer, and fundraiser at local, provincial, regional, national and European levels. She founded and ran the first perpetrator programme in Italy (CAM – Centre for abusive men) and set up the national Italian network for perpetrator work (Relive). Additionally, Alessandra has published articles and books for the

general public (Shifting power: Romano, 2012; Da uomo a uomo: Erickson, 2015; Dire di no alla violenza domestica: Angeli, 2016).

Cristina Oddone, Researcher, Centre Max Weber, France, Council of Europe consultant



Cristina Oddone holds a PhD in sociology and is an associate researcher at the Max Weber Centre, Université de Lyon 2, France. Her research examines male violence against women through a gender lens, drawing on the experiences of both perpetrators and victims of domestic violence, and using ethnographic fieldwork. She is also interested in the institutionalisation of the fight against domestic violence and works as an international expert on these issues for the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

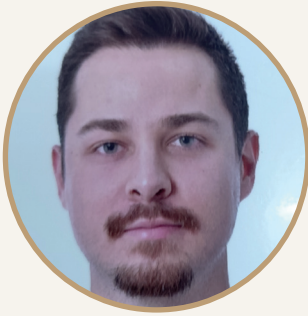
Helmut Tichy, member of Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) on behalf of Austria



Helmut Tichy has been a member of GREVIO, the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, since 2023, and previously served as Legal Adviser of the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs.

Born in Vienna in 1958, Helmut studied law at the Universities of Vienna and Cambridge and began his academic career as a research assistant at the University of Vienna. From 1983 to 2023, he worked for the Austrian Foreign Ministry, including postings in Belgrade, Geneva and Brussels, as well as at the Vienna Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). From 2010 to 2023, he served as Legal Adviser of the Ministry. He was also Professor at the University of Graz from 2014 to 2025.

**Raúl Robles Marín, psychologist,
General Secretariat of Penitentiary
Institutions, Ministry of the Interior, Spain**



Raúl Robles Marín is a prison psychologist currently working in Almería prison in Spain. He completed his degree at Rovira i Virgili University and a master's degree in social intervention at the University of Granada. Following his studies, he began working in correctional settings, where he has gained experience with cases involving gender-based violence (in both Spanish and English), domestic violence (including women who use force), sexual offending, violent crime, white-collar crime, road safety offences, and other areas.

**Berta Vall, Phd, Research and Development
Manager, European Network for the Work
with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence**



Berta Vall Castelló, PhD in Psychology, is Research and Development Manager at the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN) and Professor at FPCEE Blanquerna, Ramon Llull University.

She is an expert in developing and evaluating interventions for perpetrators of gender-based violence, supporting European governments and institutions in designing evidence-based programmes that enhance victim safety. She also leads capacity-building and training on outcome evaluation.

Dr. Vall has contributed to over 10 European projects and has informed policy and practice through work with EIGE, UN Women, UNFPA, and GREVIO. She has authored 30+ publications and delivered 40+ international presentations, bridging research, policy, and practice in violence prevention.

Sara Kirkpatrick, Vice-President of the Women Against Violence Europe Network (WAVE), and the Chief Executive of Welsh Women's Aid



Sara Kirkpatrick is the CEO of Welsh Women's Aid where she has led the team since early 2020, supporting specialist services all across Wales as they experienced the unprecedented challenges of a global pandemic, and national lockdowns in addition to the ongoing scourge of VAWG. Her vision is for a world where exploitation is not valorised, victimisation not responsibilised and marginalisation not criminalised.

Always using an intersectional feminist approach to challenge violence against women and girls,

Sara has worked across community and criminal justice settings and for over 30 years. Starting her career providing support in a women's refuge, she has worked with a range of client groups including male victims, children impacted by domestic abuse, women remaining in abusive relationships and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Sara's personal area of specialism is work with perpetrators; recognising that if abusive behaviour is a choice, then change is also a choice. She has contributed to several frontline, innovative projects with perpetrators of IPV. She believes that early intervention and prevention are key to ending violence against women and girls and we will only achieve change when we all work together.

In addition to her CEO role, Sara is also Vice President of Women Against Violence Europe and a Trustee of the Faith and VAWG coalition.

Adelina Toplica-Badivuku, expert in perpetrator programmes, Council of Europe consultant



Adalina Toplica-Badivuku is a systemic practitioner and international consultant with over 20 years of experience in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls and domestic abuse. Adelina holds an MA in Refugee Psychosocial Care and has worked extensively with victims, survivors, and their children, delivering trauma-informed and survivor-centred interventions across statutory and community settings. In recent years, her work has focused on developing perpetrator programmes, grounded in the understanding that effective violence prevention requires both perpetrator accountability and sustained behavioural change.

Adelina authored the National Programme for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence and the Curriculum for Training Professionals on Perpetrator Programmes in Kosovo*, developed under the Council of Europe framework and aligned with the Istanbul Convention. She also authored the national curriculum and the perpetrator intervention programme for the Government of Armenia, contributing to establishing structured, evidence-based approaches to perpetrator work within national systems.

Her work includes supporting governments and institutions in strengthening multi-sectoral responses to gender-based violence, focusing particularly on policy development, capacity building, and standardising professional practice. Her approach integrates feminist analysis, cognitive-behavioural methodologies, and systemic practice to address the underlying drivers of violence and enhance the effectiveness of institutional responses.

* All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Sandra Jovanović Belotić, Training and Capacity Building Manager, European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence



Sandra is a psychologist with more than 15 years of experience in the field of domestic violence, ranging from providing direct support to women and children victims of violence to working within domestic violence perpetrator programmes in Serbia.

At WWP EN, Sandra's work focuses on supporting professionals, perpetrator programmes, policymakers, and international organisations in setting up, implementing, and improving interventions for domestic violence perpetrators. She coordinates the network's training and capacity-building activities, bringing together and engaging an extensive pool of experts in the field.

Furthermore, Sandra has led the development of the European standards for perpetrator programmes and is responsible for their monitoring and upscaling. In line with this, she is also in charge of the European Accreditation for Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes, the only quality assurance mechanism for such programmes at the European level.

Uroš Gradišar, MSc in social work, Head of Programme Social Skills Training for Perpetrators, Association for Nonviolent Communication, Slovenia



Uroš Gradišar, Master of Science in Social Work (MSc, Social Worker), has 25 years of experience in social work, including work with terminally ill individuals, people with mental health issues, and people with intellectual disabilities.

For the past 12 years, he has been employed at the Association for Nonviolent Communication in Slovenia, working in a programme for perpetrators of violence. His roles include providing individual counselling, facilitating group work, and leading the programme for work with perpetrators of violence.

Artë Ademi Bajrami, Head, Office of the National Coordinator for Protection from Domestic Violence, Violence against Women, and Gender-Based Violence, Ministry of Justice



Artë Ademi Bajrami is the Head of the Office of the National Coordinator for Protection from Domestic Violence, Violence against Women and Gender-based Violence at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kosovo*. In this role, Artë leads the development and coordination of national policies and institutional mechanisms to strengthen access to justice, enhance victim protection, and prevent and combat domestic violence, violence against women, and gender-based violence.

Artë has extensive experience in public policy development, institutional coordination, and human rights, with a particular focus on inter-institutional cooperation and the implementation of national programmes addressing gender-based violence and treatment programmes for perpetrators.

Previously, she worked on the coordination of processes related to the Kosovo* Specialist Chambers and contributed to policy development initiatives within the Office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo* through the SIDA-supported “Project to Support Policy Development”.

Her professional engagement is centred on advancing gender equality, strengthening institutional responses to violence, and promoting effective protection mechanisms for victims.

Stephanie Futter-Orel, Executive Director, Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE)



Stephanie Futter-Orel has been working for over 16 years towards ending gender-based violence - first in frontline women's specialist services in London, and since 2017 as Executive Director of WAVE. WAVE works across 46 European countries to prevent and end violence against women and girls. Its 190 members represent over 1,800 women's specialist services - shelters, centres, helplines and national networks. In her executive role, Stephanie has shaped WAVE's strategic direction, grown its resource base, and strengthened the network's capacity to support members across Europe. Much

of her work focuses on securing recognition, policy backing and sustainable funding for women's specialist services. She has a background in Political Science and Development Management and speaks five languages.

Heinrich Geldschläger, Director of Research and International Projects, Conexus Association, Spain



Heinrich Geldschläger is a psychologist and psychotherapist with over 25 years of experience in the prevention and treatment of gender-based violence. Currently the Director of Research and International Projects at CONEXUS Association in Barcelona, he has dedicated his career to addressing men's violence against women and children through direct clinical intervention, service coordination, and large-scale international research.

Heinrich has served on the board of the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators (WWP EN) and the steering committee of MenEngage Europe, contributing to national and international training and policy development.

Marianne Hester, Professor Emeritus, Centre for Gender and Violence Research, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, United Kingdom



Professor Dr Marianne Hester is a leading researcher of gender-based violence in the UK and internationally and has written about many aspects of violence and abuse including domestic and sexual violence. Much of her current work is on perpetrators of domestic abuse, on wider notions of justice for victim-survivors of gender-based violence, and on measuring coercive control. She works closely with NGOs tackling gender-based violence, frequently acts as advisor to government

departments. She is on the board of the European Network of Work With Perpetrators (WWP) and Trustee of Devon Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Services.

Rory Macrae, Chair of the Board, European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence



Rory has worked in domestic abuse interventions for thirty five years, developing, delivering and managing both court mandated and non court mandated behaviour change programmes for abusing men with integrated women's and children's services.

Rory was one of the authors of the original practice manuals for the Caledonian integrated domestic abuse system and took the lead role in rolling out the intervention across Scotland. He retired from his role as national lead for the Caledonian in 2023 but continues to do consultancy and mentoring work. He is currently Chair of the Board of WWP-EN.

Larissa Kireeva, Project manager, Cooperation Unit, Gender Equality Division, Council of Europe



Larissa Kireeva has been working at the Council of Europe since 2006 across several thematic areas of the Organisation's human rights work. For the past 8 years, she has been working in the Gender Equality Division, focusing on advancing gender equality and preventing and combating violence against women. In this capacity, she has contributed to the drafting and implementation of numerous projects in member states of the Council of Europe aimed at strengthening national responses to gender-based violence.

Currently, Larissa is responsible for a multi-country programme on ending violence against women, as well as a related project in Armenia, with a focus on legal reforms, capacity-building, awareness-raising, the development of effective responses in this field. She also serves as a focal point for co-operation with civil society organisations working in the area of women's rights.

Arezo Banafsheh, Project Manager, Cooperation Unit, Gender Equality Division, Council of Europe



Arezo Banafsheh has been working at the Council of Europe since 2019, initially as Regional Gender Mainstreaming Advisor in the Council of Europe Office in Pristina and since 2022 as Project Manager in the Gender Equality Division in Strasbourg. Arezo has more than 15 years of experience in gender equality, project management and human rights, working across South-East Europe, Türkiye, Ukraine, Colombia and Norway. She holds a master's degree in Gender and Diversity Studies from Uppsala University.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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