



# Treatment of GBV offenders in Europe: practices, challenges and standards

28th Council of Europe Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation services

Management of Prison and Probation: new Challenges and Innovative responses  
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Funded by the  
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**OAK**  
FOUNDATION



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# 1. European Network for the Work With Perpetrators - WWP EN



## **We are the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence**

Founded in 2014, we now unite 64 members active throughout 32 European countries. Our members include perpetrator programmes, researchers, as well as victim support services.

[www.work-with-perpetrators.eu](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu)



# European Network for the Work With Perpetrators (WWP EN)

- Informal founding: 2009 – 18 members, 13 countries
- Formal founding: 2014
- Membership now: 65 members from 32 countries
- Funding: European Commission, Oak Foundation, Membership Contributions, Provision of expert consultancy services



# European Network for the Work With Perpetrators (WWP EN)

- Address violence in close relationships as a **gender-based** phenomenon
- Foster gender equality
- Improve safety of women and their children/others at risk from violence

**Through:** Promoting effective work with perpetrators



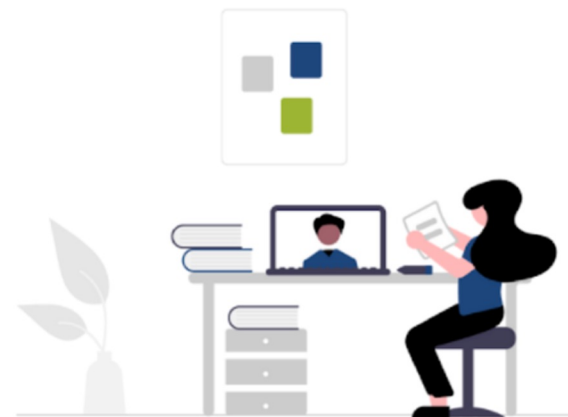
child protection,  
Covid-19,  
Expert papers,  
Support for shadow reports to Grevio...

Show your IMPACT

IMPACT   
**Outcome**  
Monitoring Toolkit

## WWP EN Training

Only well-educated professionals can provide safe, effective and accountable perpetrator work.



### Upcoming Training

- 25 & 26 October: [Child-Centred Perpetrator Work](#) (SOLD OUT)
- 27 & 28 October: [Working on fathering with men who use violence](#) (SOLD OUT)



# WWP EN

European Network  
for the Work with  
Perpetrators of  
Domestic Violence

Organisational Chart 2019



WWP | EUROPEAN NETWORK

[www.work-with-perpetrators.eu](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu)

## MEMBERSHIP (FULL/AFFILIATE)

Individuals/organisations offering perpetrator work or victim/survivor support;  
Individuals/organisations doing or managing research on intimate partner violence

## BOARD

5-11 board members including min. 2 women's support services; elected by representatives of full members at the general meeting

## CURRENT COMMITTEES

Election Committee  
Equality Sub-Committee

## CURRENT WORKING GROUPS

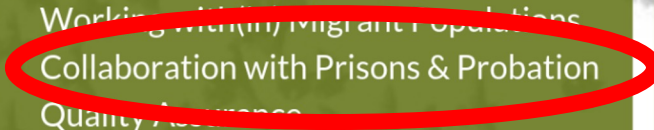
Working with/in Migrant Populations  
Collaboration with Prisons & Probation  
Quality Assurance  
IMPACT Toolkit

## COOPERATION WITH WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES

Min. 2 board members  
Joint webinars  
Participation in working groups  
Expert papers

## STAFF

Staff members coordinating the network activities; office based in Berlin, Germany







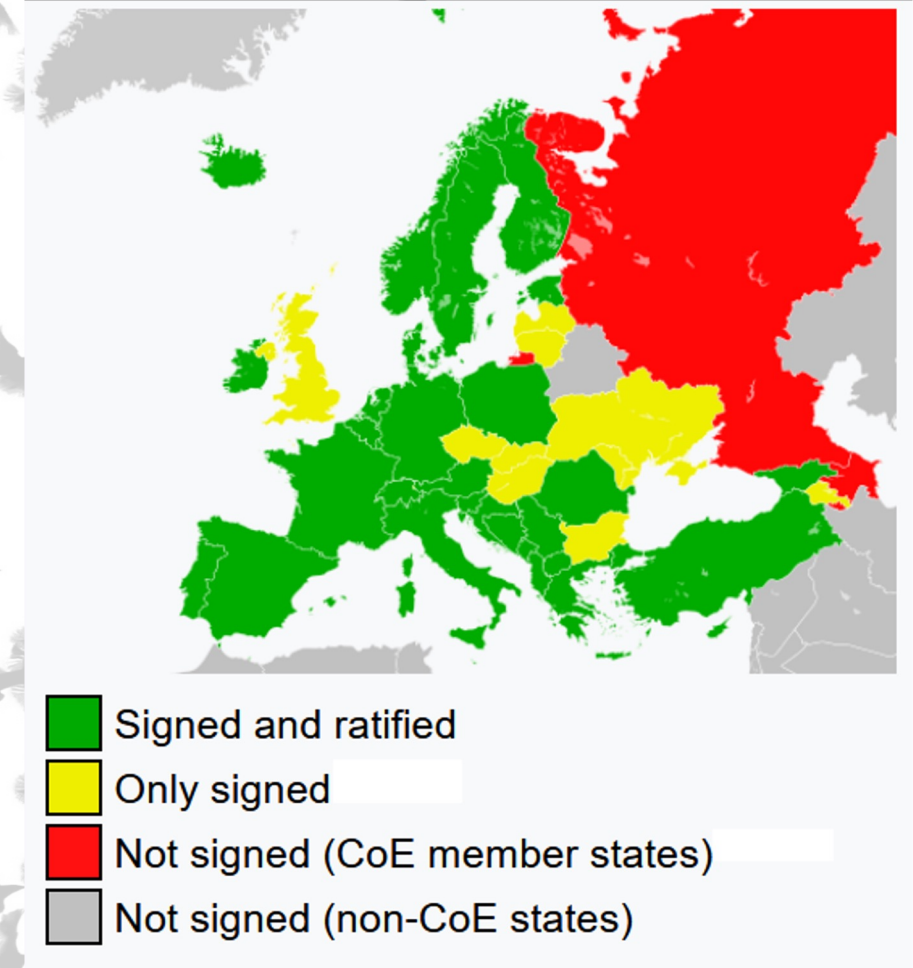
## 2. Perpetrator programmes in short



# Article 16 of Istanbul convention (Part 1)

Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support:

1. **Programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.**
2. Treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending.
3. In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, 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.**



An iceberg floating in the ocean. The small tip above the water is labeled 'VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR'. The much larger, submerged part of the iceberg is labeled with a list of underlying factors: 'GENDER INEQUALITY', 'GENDER ROLE BELIEFS - "BEING A MAN"...', 'COMMUNICATION SKILLS', 'MANAGING EMOTIONS', 'UNHELPFUL THINKING', and 'etc.'. The background of the slide features a blue sky with white birds flying.

**VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR**

• **GENDER INEQUALITY**  
• **GENDER ROLE BELIEFS**  
- **"BEING A MAN"...**  
• **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**  
• **MANAGING EMOTIONS**  
• **UNHELPFUL THINKING**  
• **etc.**

## Added value of perpetrator interventions

What “part of the iceberg” are we having an influence on:

- With ‘disruptive activities’ (restrictive and repressive measures)?
- With activities aimed at behaviour and attitude change (a key part of perpetrator programmes)?



# Perpetrator programmes

1. Because they interrupt violence?
2. Because they break the intergenerational cycle of violence?
3. Because women ask for somebody to stop their partner's violence?



**BUT ALSO BECAUSE**

Domestic violence is about men's accountability to the system, their (ex-) partners, the support services and the society



# Service providers of perpetrator programmes



**Statutory agencies – social welfare services, family centres, health services, probation, prisons, universities**



**Civil society agencies - specialized perpetrator services victim services with attached perpetrator programme**



# What works?

**Coordinated community response** – social response

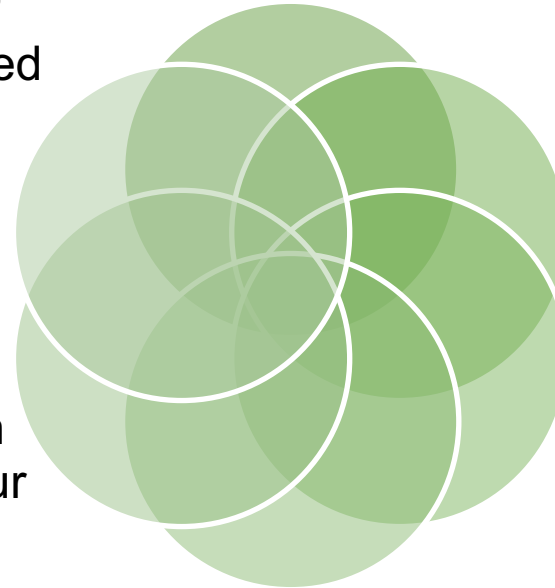
**Strong link with WSS**  
(standardized, case based cooperation, survivors' perspective informs all actions)

**Tailored interventions**  
(high/low risk, court mandated, voluntary, prison or probation or community)

**Ecological approach**  
(not limited to behaviour change)

**Victim centred/gender informed**

**Risk assessment and management** (standardized and ongoing)





## Enrollment in perpetrator programme, any risks there?

*“This time it will be different, Milan actually started a perpetrator program, I feel much safer now.”*

Survivor

*“You triggered me! You need to stop triggering me, that’s what I’m learning on my program.”*

Perpetrator



# 3. Mapping of Perpetrator Programmes





# Mapping Perpetrator Programmes



To map perpetrator programmes quality and implementation



To assess the alignment of programmes with international standards

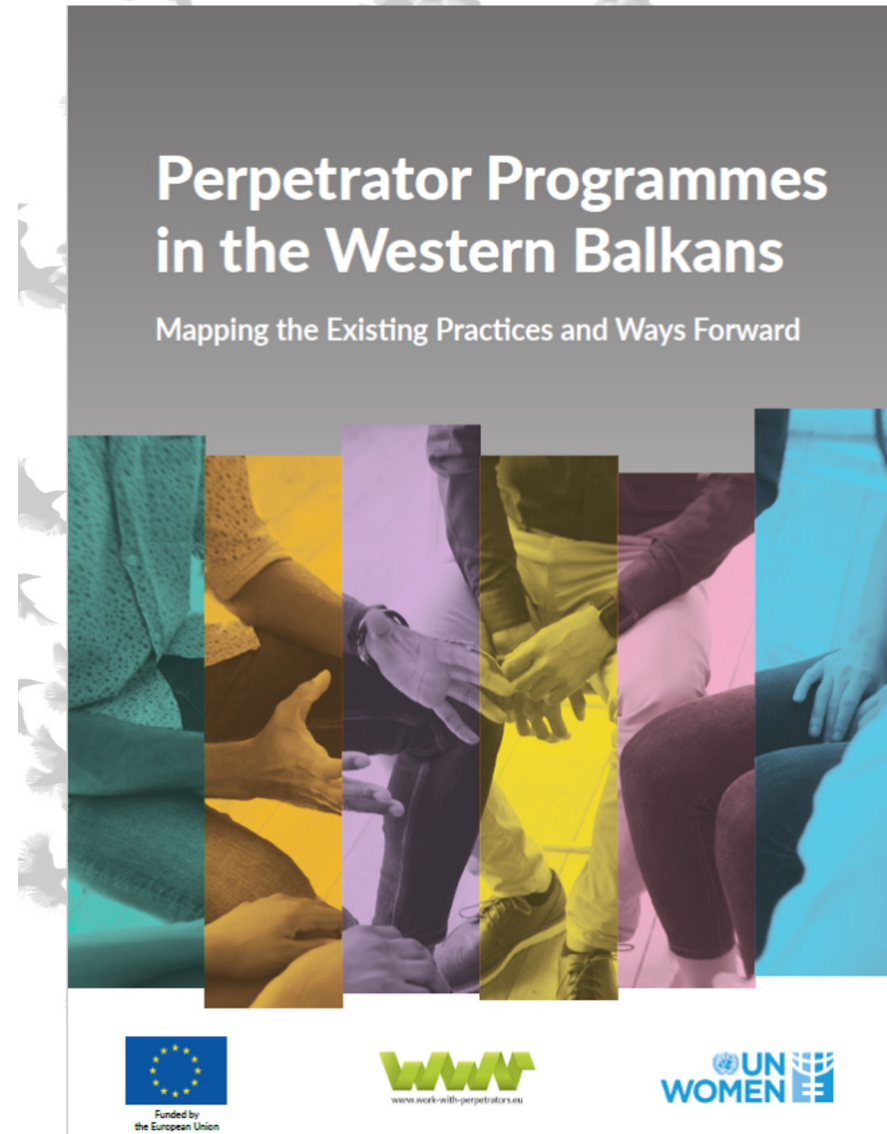


To develop recommendations



# Mapping Perpetrator Programmes

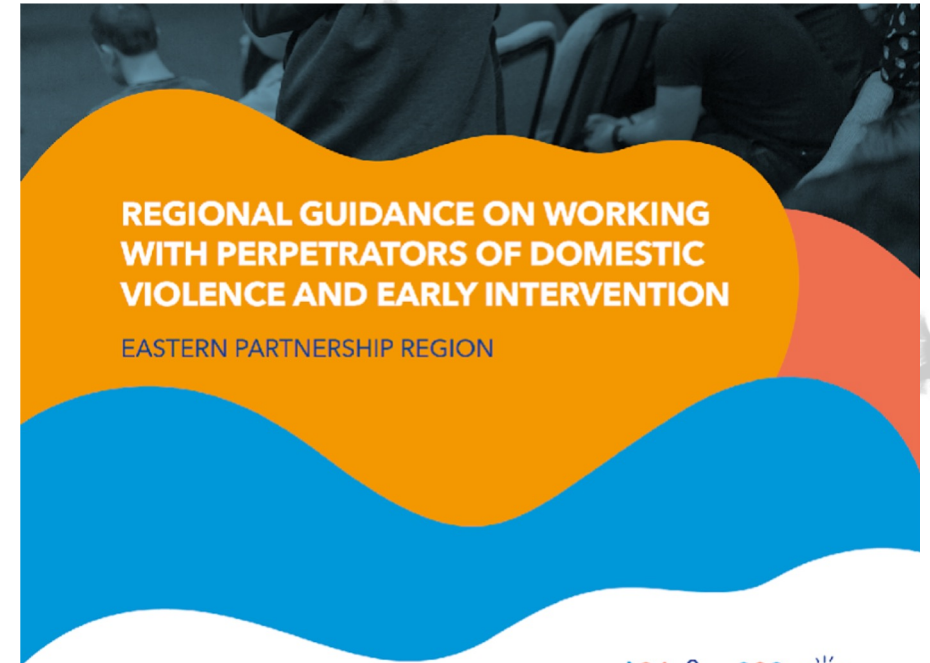
- **STOPP**-Supporting the implementation of programmes for perpetrators of violence against women and domestic violence in Turkey and the Western Balkans (first regional research)
- Countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.





# Mapping Perpetrator Programmes

- The first regional research of perpetrator programmes in **EAP countries**
- Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine



TOGETHER AGAINST  
GENDER STEREOTYPES AND  
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE  
#eu4genderequality



# Mapping Perpetrator Programmes

- Current mappings (ongoing):

1. Mapping of perpetrator programmes in **Ireland** (final phases)
2. Mapping of perpetrator programmes in **Europe** (WWP EN members) ongoing
3. Mapping programs for CoE on existing models and approaches in CoE countries on going
4. Mapping programs on child sexual offenders in CoE countries ongoing
5. Mapping programs Catalan Prison and Probation system ongoing

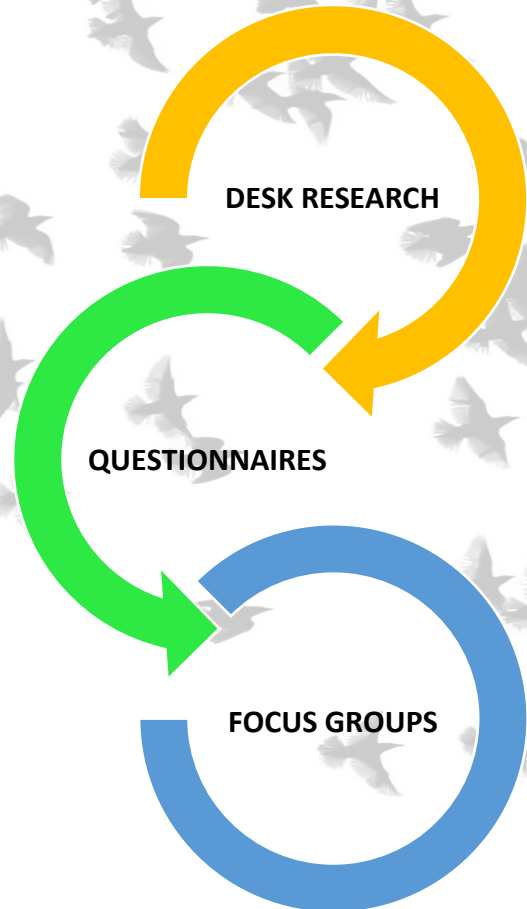


# Methodology

Target groups:

- Perpetrator programmes (123) from 32 countries
- Survivor support services (58)
- Stakeholders (21)
- Survivors (7)

Data collection: July 2021 – December 2022





# Mapping Perpetrator Programmes: main results

Lack of survivor safety-oriented interventions

Lack of specialized interventions for different target groups

Weak gender-informed perspectives

Lack of quality assurance and evaluation of programmes

Lack of accountability of perpetrators



# Lack of survivor-safety oriented interventions

*Council of Europe, 2014*

- Integrates or is directly linked to a women's support service;
- Includes the perspective of children;
- Follows specific procedures for carrying out a systematic risk assessment and management;



- Many programmes **don't have survivor contact** and support, or just contact at the beginning.
- Not all programmes **inform survivors** about the limitations of the programme or its content.
- Few programmes collect information from survivors to **assess risk**.
- There are no specific **protocols for cooperation** with VSS and the contact is **not structured**.
- Not all programmes have a **standardized procedure to assess risk** (often conceptualized as static) .
- Most organizations are focused exclusively on the **perpetrator and behaviour change**, and don't have structures that keep survivors safe.



# Weak gender informed perspectives

Council of Europe, 2014

- Ensures qualification and training for staff (including an understanding of the dynamics of violent relationships and a commitment to violence-free relationships and to gender equality).
- Uses an ecological model to understand the different paths to violence (societal, institutional, community and individual levels)




- Most organisations say they incorporate the gender perspective but this is **not structured** (no specific sessions on gender stereotypes or protocols that would ensure the facilitators work within this framework).
- **Anger management** / clinical approach.
- Staff needs to be **trained in gender** approach.
- Add on to other services **without specialization** (health centres, etc.)





# Lack of quality assurance and evaluation

Council of Europe, 2014

- Monitors, documents and evaluates both processes and outcomes.
  - Works with a wider definition of “success” to include positive outcomes for women partners other than an end to the violent behaviour of the perpetrator
- 
- Evaluation usually doesn't include the **perspective of survivors**
  - **Psychological inventories** for outcomes measurement (not beyond behaviour change)



# 4. Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe: challenges and good practices



# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- Variety of practices, models, service providers, and territorial coverage
- Service providers
  1. State agencies, mostly prison and probation (Sweden, Scotland)
  2. NGOs (Austria, Ireland, Denmark)
  3. State institutions and NGOs (Spain)

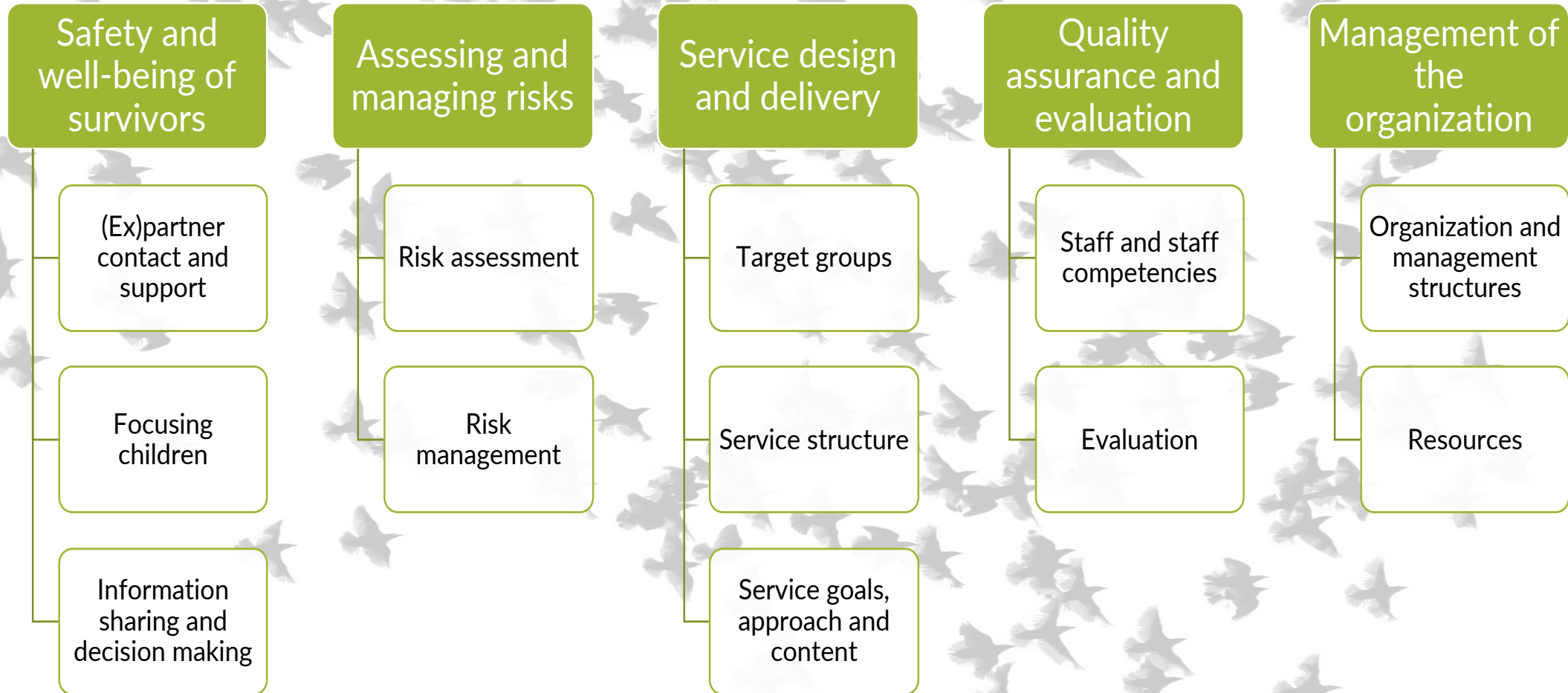


# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

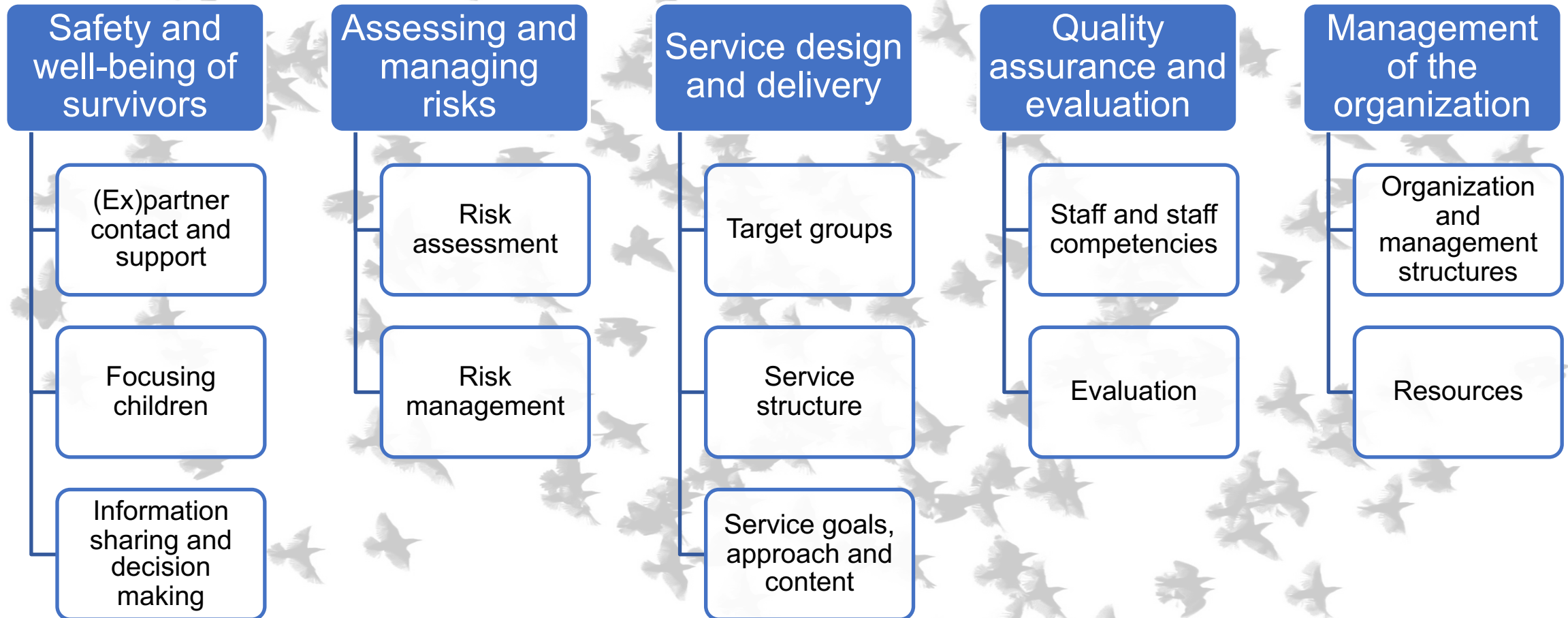
- No **international or national standards** for work with perpetrators in prison or probation.
- Standards for **community based programmes** (WWP EN standards, RESPECT).
- **Working guidelines**, ex: Caledonian System Scotland, England and Wales programmes accredited by the *“Correctional Services Advice and Accreditation Panel within the Ministry of Justice”*.
- Some countries **have started to create standards** for all contexts: Austria *“Federal Working Group on Victim Safety Oriented Work with Perpetrators”*; Sweden Grevio report creation of standards as a priority.



# Development of Standards and Accreditation



# Standards





# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Challenges:**

1. Ensure victims safety and security
2. Multiagency cooperation and continuity of interventions (post-penal support)
3. Interventions “one size fits all”



# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Challenge 1: Ensure victims safety and security**
- **Article 16 Istanbul Convention – Preventive programmes of intervention and treatment**
- *“Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support **programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships** with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns.”*
- *“Parties shall ensure that **these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.**”*





# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Challenge 1: Ensure victims safety and security**
- Victim support, **more than just a referral** of the victim to the support service (joint risk assessment and management, planning, evaluation, etc.)
- Conception that the **victim is safe** because the perpetrator is in jail, perpetrators might continue the abuse, even if being in jail.



# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Best practice: Ensure victims safety and security**
- In England and Wales, inclusion of Woman Safety Worker in all cases of identified domestic violence (no matter the crime man is convicted for).
- Ireland: NGOs that provide the programmes for perpetrators referred by Irish Probation service also provide Partner Support Service, which is funded by the Justice Department.



# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Best practice: Ensure victims safety and security**





# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

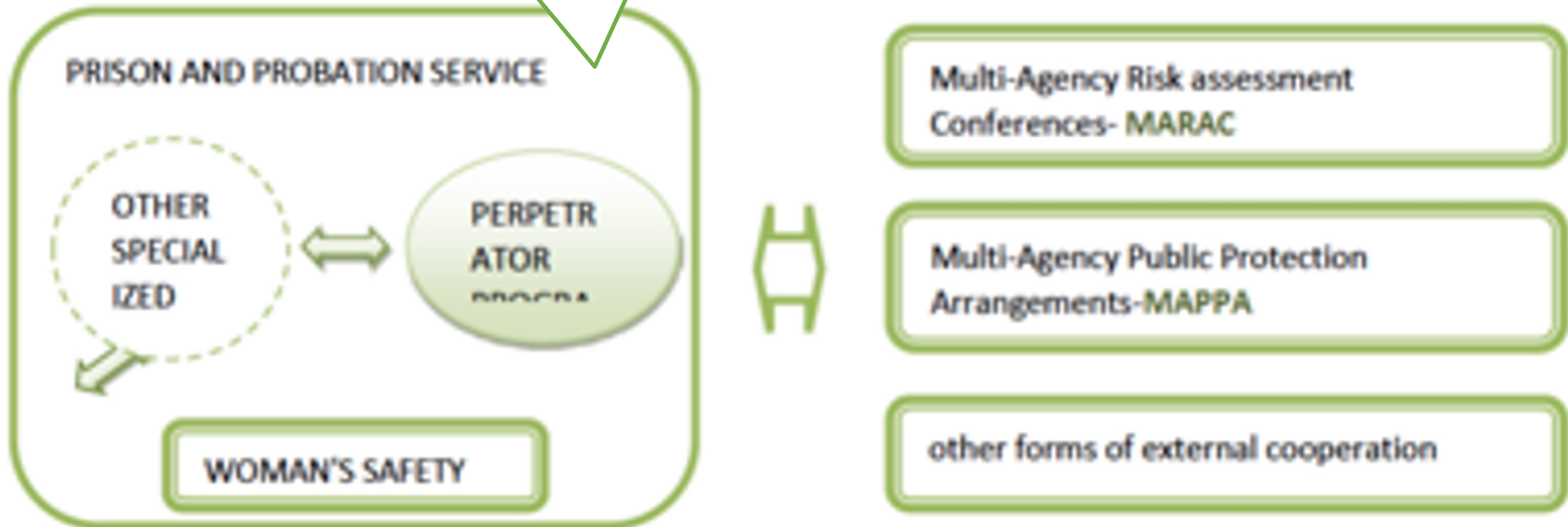
- **Challenge 2: Multiagency cooperation and continuity of interventions (post-penal support)**
- Not clear how this is established, **not enough information** (need for standards or non-publicly available documents).
- **Referrals** that do not fulfil the inclusion criteria.
- **Limited information** from perpetrators (more difficult risk assessment and support planning).
- **No post-penal support**, or no link to intervention after the sentence has finished.



# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Best practice: Multiagency cooperation and continuity of interventions (post-penal support) England and Wales**

all convicts with history of DV are sent to PP, even if they are convicted for some other crime





# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Challenge 3: Interventions “one size fits all”**
- **High heterogeneous perpetrators** in prison and probation: psychopathology, alcohol and drugs abuse.
- How to design interventions for such an **heterogeneous and multi-problematic** population?
- How to maintain a **gender-approach** in such a criminological setting?
- *Risk-Need-Responsivity Model?*



# Perpetrator programmes in prison and probation in Europe

- **Good practice: Interventions “one size fits all”**
- **England and wales:**
  - How to work with **women perpetrators**, with a gender approach and emphasizing the connection victimization – aggression.
  - How to work with **perpetrators with personality disorder** (based on the theory of mentalization, pilot phase)
- **Spain (Contexto program): Individualized Motivational Plan (IMP)**



# 5. Final Remarks





## Final Remarks: steps forward for PP

- More information is needed, regarding not only the existence of **victim support service**, but the type of the support it provides, principles of the work and its benefits for the victims.
- Information on the procedures or protocols about the **cooperation** of perpetrator programmes with external agencies are not found for the majority of the programmes. Importance for the post-penal continuity.
- Very important to adjust the programmes to **heterogeneous population**. For most of the programmes there is no data if and how this is tackled.
- Standardized and ongoing **risk assessment and management** procedures.
- Importance of **evaluating the outcome and process**, few evaluations in the prison and probation context



# Final recommendations

- Ensure victim safety/risk and harm
- Coordinated community response – Creating connections between inside and outside prison
- Specialized perpetrator programme (specific approach for different kinds of offenders)
- Gendered perspective
- Risk assessment needs to be tailored to intimate partner violence



Website: [www.work-with-perpetrators.eu](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WwpEuropeanNetwork/>

LinkedIn company page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/work-with-perpetrators-european-network/>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/european\\_network\\_wwp/](https://www.instagram.com/european_network_wwp/)

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