



MINISTER FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

# Action plan for the prevention of psychological and physical violence in intimate relationships

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2019-2022

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## **C O N T E N T S**

- 05 Preface**
- 07 Framework and coordination**
- 11 Recognising psychological violence and preventing violence in intimate relationships**
- 15 Outpatient programmes offering support and counselling**
- 19 Knowledge**
- 21 Permanent efforts to combat violence in intimate relationships**



# Preface

Far too many people experience family violence. Living under such conditions has serious consequences for the individual and especially for children who are the victims of violence or who witness acts of violence. Nobody should have to live with violence, especially in the home and in intimate relationships. The home should provide a safe environment where the individual feels respected and is able to act freely. Denmark should be a society built on gender equality and respect for the individual.

This action plan focuses on the many different forms violence can take. We often associate violence with cuts and bruises, but psychological violence can have just as severe consequences for the individual as physical violence. What is more, psychological violence is twice as common as physical violence. This is why the government is working to criminalise psychological violence by including an independent provision in the Criminal Code and is launching several initiatives to combat psychological and physical violence in intimate relationships.

Violence is best combatted through prevention. The best prevention efforts grow out of a fundamental consensus that violence is never acceptable. Therefore, information campaigns should target the general public, and children and young people in particular. These campaigns should describe the individual's rights and inform that violence – both physical and psychological – is a criminal offence.

The aim of this action plan is also to improve and strengthen outpatient programmes for victims of violence. Every year, approximately 1500 women and almost as many children seek help at a shelter. The shelters play an important role in providing help to victims of violence, but they only provide help to a small group of victims, namely those who cannot remain in their home. Our aim is for victims of violence to be able get help and counselling without having to move away from their familiar surroundings, home and network. Help should be available for everyone, regardless of whether they are male or female, and regardless of whether they are the victims of physical or psychological violence, stalking or online harassment.

We also need to consolidate our efforts to prevent intimate-partner violence among young people. Young people are twice as likely to be subjected to violence by a partner. This may be because many young people do not know where to set their boundaries, and often they do not know where to turn for help. It is important that young people know what violence is and how to set limits because we know that violence experienced in adolescence will often follow the individual into adulthood.

The many victims of violence in Denmark present a huge challenge. We have still not succeeded at reversing the trend. If we are to break the cycle of violence and prevent repetitive patterns of violence, we must provide treatment programmes for the perpetrators of violence. Therefore, this action plan focuses on providing treatment for perpetrators of violence and for stalkers.

The action plan complements the permanent measures in place in social services, in the healthcare system and in the judicial system. The action plan will be used to further develop and support measures in the area so that they can be adapted to best meet the needs of the target group. Most of the initiatives presented in this action plan will be financed by the rate adjustment pool agreement for 2019-2022 and they have been backed by a majority of the political parties represented in the Danish Parliament. We share a responsibility to combat violence in intimate relationships and promote equal and respectful behaviour between men and women, boys and girls.

**Minister for Equal Opportunities,** Eva Kjer Hansen

**Minister for Justice,** Søren Pape Poulsen

**Minister for Children and Social Affairs,** Mai Mercado

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The activities described in this action plan ensure that women and men, and children and adults alike, get the help and support they need.

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# Framework and coordination

Psychological and physical violence in intimate relationships, stalking and online harassment still constitute too big a problem in Denmark. Every year, approximately 38,000 women and 19,000 men are victims of intimate-partner violence<sup>1</sup>, and the numbers for psychological violence are estimated to be twice as high<sup>2</sup>. Approximately 84,000 individuals are the victims of stalking every year, and in more than a quarter of these cases the victim is stalked by a partner or ex-partner<sup>3</sup>. Women are the victims of physical and psychological intimate-partner violence, stalking and online harassment more often than men<sup>4</sup>, and the violence against women is often more severe. The number of men who are victims of intimate-partner violence has been increasing since 2005<sup>5</sup>.

Violence does not belong in a society such as Denmark, a society that is based on respect and gender equality. Denmark has an extensive system of public programmes aimed at victims of violence. The healthcare system, social services and the judicial system work to prevent violence in intimate relationships, to provide access to support and treatment to victims of violence, and to ensure criminal prosecution of the perpetrator of violence.

Since 2002, Denmark has had a number of action plans aimed at violence. These plans have contributed to developing new initiatives and methods to be used in the efforts targeted at violence in intimate relationships and have contributed to generating new knowledge in the area. These action plans have been backed by a broad majority of the Danish Parliament and have typically been financed by the Rate Adjustment Pool.

The present action plan contains a total of 18 initiatives, of which ten have been decided by the parties involved in the Rate Adjustment Pool and are being financed by the Rate Adjustment Pool agreement for 2019 with a total of DKK 101 million for the period 2019-2022.

The action plan focuses on the fact that violence in intimate relationships takes on many forms, and special focus is given to psychological violence. Children and young people, experts, and the general public alike must understand and recognise that being subjected to degrading or controlling behaviour can be just as harmful as being pushed, hit and kicked.

Moreover, the plan consolidates outpatient programmes aimed at victims of violence. Currently, efforts are primarily aimed at offering a place in a shelter to women who have been subjected to violence and their children, as well as to men who are suffering a crisis situation due to partner abuse, a divorce, unemployment or similar. This a good and important step, however, it only covers victims of abuse for whom it is vital that they leave their home. For many other victims of violence, moving away from familiar surroundings and their local community, home and network is not the best solution.

## Action plans targeting violence in relationships

- Since 2002, Denmark has had action plans for the prevention of violence against women and violence in intimate relationships. These action plans complement the permanent measures already in place in social services, the healthcare system and in the judicial system. The action plans are used to highlight specific areas and target groups, to test new efforts to prevent violence in intimate relationships, and to consolidate knowledge and prevention efforts.
- The responsibility for the action plans lies with an inter-ministerial working group for the prevention of violence against women and violence in intimate relationships. The working group relies on input from experts and civil society organisations for new knowledge that can be used to further develop efforts in the area.
- The action plans also secure funding for a large number of specific projects run by non-government organisations, and the plans are therefore developed in collaboration with stakeholders who have relevant experience and knowledge in the area.

1 National Institute of Public Health 2018

2 VIVE - The Danish National Centre for Social Research, 2018

3 Ministry of Justice, 2018

4 National Institute of Public Health, 2018; VIVE, 2018; Ministry of Justice, 2018

5 National Institute of Public Health, 2018

The current action plan expands the services available to victims of violence to also include other forms of help, counselling and support. For example, programmes that target the specific challenges that male victims of violence may have, or that young people who are the victims of intimate-partner abuse may have.

In addition, the action plan provides information and advice about online harassment of which children and young people are especially victims. Furthermore, it includes outpatient programmes for victims of stalking that enable victims to get the help and support they need, while at the same time being able to go to work or school and to maintain their social relationships, etc.

To break the cycle of violence, the action plan offers counselling and treatment to perpetrators of violence and to stalkers.

The objective of the action plan is to consolidate a holistic approach that targets both the different types of violence and increases the programmes available to victims of violence so that their different needs are met.

The activities of the action plan target both men and women, just as permanent efforts secure support and counselling for men and women, and children and adults alike.

Men and women experience violence differently and they react differently. The help provided to victims of violence should reflect these differences. Gender mainstreaming and gender specific challenges remain a central aspect in the way we approach and deal with efforts to prevent violence in Denmark. This action plan introduces specific initiatives within three focus areas: the recognition of psychological violence and the prevention of violence in intimate relationships, outpatient programmes providing support and counselling, and knowledge.

### **Permanent measures to combat violence in intimate relationships**

- Individuals who are the victims of violence in intimate relationships are entitled to help and support from public services. The healthcare system, social services and the judicial system are tasked with preventing violence in intimate relationships, with providing support and treatment to all victims of violence, and with prosecuting the perpetrator.
- Every day, professionals and experts such as case workers in the municipalities, healthcare professionals, police officers, and teachers provide help and support to women, children and men who are the victims of violence. Moreover, victims of violence can get help and treatment from accommodation programmes, shelters, as well as from services and hotlines providing psychological and legal counselling.
- Many different stakeholders are involved in the existing permanent measures, including the state, the regions, municipalities, voluntary associations and non-government organisations.

Read more about the permanent measures to combat violence in intimate relationships at the end of this publication.

# Overall initiatives in the action plan

## Recognising psychological violence and preventing violence in intimate relationships

- Criminalising psychological violence by including an independent provision in the Criminal Code
- Guidelines for the police and the prosecution service on how to deal with cases concerning psychological violence
- Prohibition against unwarranted monitoring of individuals using a GPS tracker or similar
- Information for women's shelters on how to prevent digital tracking
- Information campaigns aimed at the public about psychological violence\*
- Information campaign aimed at children and young people about psychological violence and domestic violence – Save the Children Denmark initiative “*Stærke sammen*” (Stronger together)\*
- Creative arts competition for the prevention of intimate partner violence among young people

## Outpatient programmes offering support and counselling

- Increased outpatient counselling and support for women and men subjected to physical violence – *Mødrehjælpen* (Help for mothers)\*
- Improved outpatient programmes provided by women's shelters offering support and counselling for women subjected to physical violence\*
- Increased initiatives to support men in crisis at men's shelters\*
- Better conditions for outpatient counselling and treatment for perpetrators of violence and families living with violence – *Dialogue against Violence*\*
- Trial runs with outpatient programmes that offer counselling and network groups for young people subjected to physical and psychological intimate-partner violence\*
- Counselling for children and young people about online harassment and abuse – Save the Children Denmark programme “*SletDet*” (Deletet)\*
- Permanent national support and counselling for victims of stalking and stalkers – operating grants for Danish Stalking Centre\*
- Screening of measures aimed at women and men subjected to violence
- Results of the measures aimed at men subjected to violence and assessment of the need for future programmes

## Knowledge

- National survey of the scope and nature of physical and psychological intimate-partner violence in Denmark\*
- Registering the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim in police records

\*Financed by the agreement on the Rate Adjustment Pool for 2019

Criminalising  
psychological  
violence by  
including an  
independent  
provision in the  
Criminal Code.



# Recognising psychological violence and preventing violence in intimate relationships

The number of women who are subjected to physical intimate-partner violence has remained the same since 2005, and the figure for men seems to have risen.<sup>6</sup> Violence in families and in intimate relationships can take on many forms. Traditionally, efforts have focused on physical violence, however, studies indicate that psychological violence is twice as widespread<sup>7</sup>. Different types of violence should be recognised, and violence in families and in intimate relationships should be prevented so we can succeed at reversing the trend of violence.

Intimate-partner violence is often associated with physical violence – and bruises. However, violence in intimate relationships can take on many forms, ranging from physical violence in the form of pushing, hitting or kicking, to psychological violence in the form of degrading behaviour, isolating the victim from their network, threats of violence, monitoring and stalking, and negative social control with regard to, for example, who the victim may see and what they are allowed to do.

Surveys indicate that women are three times more likely than men to be subjected to psychological violence by their partner<sup>8</sup>. Psychological violence affects the individual's well-being physically, mentally and socially. And the consequences of psychological violence may be just as serious as the consequences of physical violence<sup>9</sup>.

Not only does violence have serious consequences for the individual subjected to violence, children who witness violence between their parents have poorer health and are less successful socially and in school. Moreover, violence has great economic consequences for society in the form of additional expenses in connection with social measures, out-of-home placement for children, treatment of health-related conditions, etc.<sup>10</sup> More than 21,000 children are estimated to experience domestic violence at some point before they turn eight. This means that on average at least one child in every classroom has experienced acts of violence at home that have either led to a record being made at an emergency room or to charges being pressed against the

## Facts

### Studies show that:

- In Denmark, 3.9% of women and 1.2% of men have been subjected to psychological intimate-partner violence within a one-year period.
- Persons exposed to psychological intimate-partner violence are just as negatively affected as persons exposed to physical intimate-partner violence.
- In 2017, 97% of women at shelters had been subjected to psychological violence, and 83% had been subjected to physical violence.
- One in six children in Denmark has been exposed to physical violence in the home in the past year.
- 9% of children in 7th grade (13-14 years old) have been subjected to severe acts of violence at home, for example, hitting and kicking. 28% have been subjected to less severe acts of violence, for example, they have been shaken, pushed, pinched and had their hair pulled. 17% have been subjected to psychological violence, for example, they have been degraded or threatened or they have witnessed violence against other family members.
- 5.3% of children in Denmark grow up in families that have been reported for one or several episodes of violence before the child's eighth year.

Source: National Institute of Public Health, 2018; VIVE, 2018; National Board of Social Services 2018; SFI, 2016; National Council for Children, 2016; SFI, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> National Institute of Public Health, 2018

<sup>7</sup> VIVE - The Danish Center for Social Science Research, 2018

<sup>8</sup> VIVE - The Danish Center for Social Science Research, 2018

<sup>9</sup> VIVE - The Danish Center for Social Science Research, 2018

<sup>10</sup> SFI - The Danish National Centre for Social Research, 2017

perpetrator. Children who grow up with violence in the home are also at risk of perpetuating patterns of violence in their intimate relationships later in life.

Surveys indicate that individuals who exhibit violent behaviour typically begin this kind of behaviour at an early age – most often when they are in their teens – and before they have children<sup>11</sup>. Young men and women who are subjected to violence by their partners often struggle with mental-health issues, they take sedatives, and they may self-harm or even attempt suicide<sup>12</sup>. Despite this, they seldom seek help. This may be because they do not know that their experiences are wrong, or because they feel ashamed of the violence.

More focus on, and recognition of, the fact that violence in intimate relationships can take many forms, and that violence, regardless of whether it is physical

or psychological, has serious consequences for the victim and children who witness it. We need to send a clear signal that neither physical nor psychological violence is acceptable. For this reason, an independent provision that criminalises psychological violence is to be included in the Criminal Code, and the police and the prosecution service should be trained to deal with cases concerning psychological violence. It is also important to prevent violence before the violence happens. This is why especially children and young people should know more about their rights and psychological violence. Information campaigns targeting the general public should also be developed to help prepare individuals exposed to psychological violence to set boundaries or to seek help and support.

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Police academy training programmes are regularly adapted to accommodate new legislation and practices concerning psychological violence, and trained police staff are also regularly updated about relevant changes and news in the area.

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<sup>11</sup> SFI – The Danish National Centre for Social Research, 2017

<sup>12</sup> National Institute of Public Health, 2014; Centre for Suicide Research, 2015



## INITIATIVES:

**Criminalising psychological violence by including an independent provision in the Criminal Code:** In January 2019, the Minister for Justice presented a bill about the inclusion of an independent provision on psychological violence in the Criminal Code. This provision (section 243) will be included in Chapter 25 of the Criminal Code on criminal offenses against life and limb. The purpose of the bill is to criminalise psychological violence in intimate relationships; and one of the intentions behind the bill is to reflect that psychological violence is just as much a crime as other acts of violence.

**Guidelines for the police and the prosecution service on how to deal with cases concerning psychological violence:** In connection with the bill on psychological violence, the Director of Public Prosecutions will present a guideline for the prosecution service on how to deal with criminal proceedings regarding psychological violence in a memorandum, and will work to ensure the guideline is implemented. In connection with this, the Director of Public Prosecutions will monitor cases concerning psychological violence when this is deemed relevant. The Danish National Police will prepare guidelines for the police for how to deal with cases concerning psychological violence, and these guidelines will be disseminated to all police districts in the country. The Danish National Police ensures that police academy training programmes are regularly adapted to new legislation and practices concerning psychological violence. Moreover, the Danish National Police ensures that trained police staff are also regularly updated about new legislation and practices that are important with regard to dealing with cases concerning psychological violence. Based on experiences from Norway on implementing the provision on psychological violence, both the Danish National Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions will prepare recommendations on how questioning of the victim, the defendant/accused and witnesses is to be conducted.

**Prohibition against unwarranted monitoring of individuals using a GPS tracker or similar:** On 1 January 2019 a new provision in the Criminal Code (section 264 b) entered into force that criminalises unwarranted registration of an individual's movements using a GPS tracker or similar. Violation of this provision is punishable by a fine or imprisonment of up to six months.

**Information for women's shelters on how to prevent digital tracking:** The Danish National Police has prepared a guideline on digital safety to prevent digital stalking that can also be used when investigating cases concerning, for example, honour-related conflicts and family conflicts. The guideline has been disseminated to staff at LOKK (national organisation of women's shelters in Denmark).

**Public information campaign about psychological violence:** In 2019, the Danish Crime Prevention Council will conduct a national information campaign about psychological violence. The information campaign, which is based on the new provision in the Criminal Code on psychological violence, will inform the general public about what psychological violence is, and that psychological violence has serious consequences for both the individual and for society. One of the objectives of the campaign is to recognise and prevent psychological violence against women and men. The initiative is being financed by the agreement on the Rate Adjustment Pool for 2019.

**Information campaign aimed at children and young people about psychological violence and domestic violence – Save the Children Denmark's initiative "Stærke sammen" (Stronger together):** Based on material for an information campaign developed by Save the Children Denmark about children's rights, a new campaign will be developed that also focuses on psychological violence and witnessing violence in the home. The target group for the new campaign will be expanded to include children aged between 3 and 13. The objective of the campaign is to prevent child abuse by increasing children's awareness of what others may and may not do to them. The initiative is being financed by the agreement on the Rate Adjustment Pool for 2019.

**Creative arts competition for the prevention of intimate-partner violence among young people:** Together with a number of organisations, including *Bryd Tavsheden* (Break the silence), the Minister for Equal Opportunities hosts a number of annual competitions aimed at preventing violence by inspiring reflection and discussions among young people aged between 13 and 20. The contestants use film, music, prose and pictures to create a creative product that illustrates intimate-partner violence based on a specific theme. Through the competition, young people learn about intimate-partner violence and reflect on their own and other's boundaries.



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The outpatient counselling and treatment for perpetrators of violence in intimate relationships and their families provided by the organisation *Dialogue against Violence* will be consolidated and continued.

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# Outpatient programmes offering support and counselling

Family violence and violence in intimate relationships have serious consequences for the individual, for children who are the victims of violence or who witness acts of violence, and for society. Both shelters for women and shelters for men play an important role in providing support for victims of violence, but more programmes are needed that can provide help and support for individuals for whom moving to a shelter is not the best solution. Outpatient programmes provide counselling and treatment to victims of violence without them having to leave their home and local community. This not only makes it possible to provide help to more victims of violence and families with domestic violence, it also makes it possible to deal with problematic behaviour before it escalates.

An estimated 38,000 women and 19,000 men were victims of physical intimate-partner violence in 2017. Approximately 1500 of these women went to a shelter, and almost 50% of these women brought a child or several children with them. Just under 50% of the women are of non-Western origin, and by far the majority are under 40 years old.<sup>13</sup>

Social service efforts should offer immediate help for victims of violence and should contribute to ensuring that they can move on in their lives free of violence. Moreover, efforts should take into account that not all female and male victims of violence want to, or need to, actually stay at a shelter.

A survey indicates that over the past decade, the number of male victims of physical intimate-partner violence has increased, and 94% of these men report that the perpetrator was a woman<sup>14</sup>. Violence against men committed by their female partner is especially taboo and stigmatising. This is why it can be difficult for the individual to come forward and seek help.

Young women and men aged between 16 and 24 are more often victims of physical intimate-partner violence than the population in general<sup>15</sup>, and young people sometimes find it difficult to recognise violence and set boundaries<sup>16</sup>. It is important that young people who are in an unhealthy relationship get the help they need so they do not bring the violence with them into adulthood. Moreover, many young people are the vic-

## Facts

### Studies show that:

- 1.6% of women and 0.8% of men have been subjected to physical intimate-partner violence within a one-year period.
- 3.2% of women and 1.6% of men aged 16-24 have been subjected to intimate-partner violence within a one-year period. This corresponds to approx. 10,500 women and 5,500 men.
- In 2017, 1,500 women and almost as many children stayed at a shelter. Of those women, 8% had more than one stay in 2017.
- Approximately 70% of women who stayed at a shelter in 2017 were under the age of 40.
- Almost 50% of women who stayed at a shelter in 2017 were of non-Western origin.
- Within the past year, 27.2% of young women aged 16-24 have been subjected to non-physical sexual harassment such as unwanted text messages, emails, online pictures or similar. For young men aged 16-24 the number is 6.7%.
- 2% of the population aged 18-74 have been subjected to stalking within the past year. This corresponds to approximately 84,000 people.
- 2.4% of women and 1.7% of men have been subjected to stalking within a one-year period.
- Almost a quarter of stalking victims have/had a close relationship with their stalker (a partner or ex-partner).

Source: National Institute of Public Health, 2018; VIVE, 2018; Ministry for Children and Social Affairs, 2018; Ministry of Justice, 2018

<sup>13</sup> Ministry for Children and Social Affairs, 2018

<sup>14</sup> National Institute of Public Health, 2018

<sup>15</sup> National Institute of Public Health, 2018

<sup>16</sup> Epinion, 2017

tims of online harassment, for example, nude photos of them are shared online.

Approximately 84,000 people are subjected to stalking each year. Stalking can happen both physically and via digital platforms. Stalking affects victims in the same manner as violence, including serious long-term consequences such as anxiety, PTSD symptoms, isolation and absence from work due to sickness<sup>17</sup>. However, there is a lack of knowledge about what stalking is and where to seek help.

Every tenth child that has stayed at a shelter moved back in with the perpetrator of violence. Approximately 8% of the women who stay at a shelter return to the shelter several times in the same year<sup>18</sup>. This can be due to many different reasons such as women

returning to their violent partner in order to give the relationship another chance. To break the cycle of violence, the present action plan offers counselling and treatment to perpetrators of violence and to stalkers.

The range of programmes must be expanded in order to reach more people. This is why this action plan includes several outpatient programmes offering professional counselling and treatment for men and women who have been subjected to physical and psychological violence in intimate relationships and who have experienced stalking. Perpetrators of violence and stalkers will also be offered counselling and treatment. Counselling on digital harassment will also be consolidated so children and young people who are subjected to digital harassment can receive help and counselling.

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Justice, 2018; National Institute of Public Health, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> National Board of Social Services, 2017; Ministry for Children and Social Affairs, 2018



A consortium consisting of Danner, Ringsted Krisecenter (Ringsted shelter for women) and Randers Krisecenter (Randers shelter for women) is developing and testing a specialised outpatient support and counselling service for women subjected to physical violence and their families.

SÅT ÅRDOGEN PÅ NÅR DU GÅR UD ELLERS SMÆKKER DØREN

**SIDSTE KVINDE LÅSER DØREN**

## INITIATIVES:

**Increased outpatient counselling and support for women and men subjected to physical violence – Mødrehjælpen (Help for mothers):** Men, women and children who have been subjected to physical or psychological violence by a family member will be offered outpatient counselling and treatment. The programme will include a tailor-made plan to treat the psychological, physical and social consequences of violence. The programme “*Ud af voldens skygge*” (Out of the shadow of violence) offered by Mødrehjælpen (Help for mothers) will be consolidated and continued in the period 2019-2021. DKK 17.5 million has been allocated by the Rate Adjustment Pool agreement for 2019.

**Improved outpatient programme provided by women's shelters offering support and counselling for women subjected to physical violence:** A consortium consisting of the three women's shelters Danner, Ringsted Krisecenter (Ringsted shelter for women) and Randers Krisecenter (Randers shelter for women) is developing and testing a specialised outpatient support and counselling programme for women subjected to physical violence and their families, “*Sig det til nogen*” (Tell someone). The Rate Adjustment Pool agreement for 2019 has allocated DKK 5 million to expand the programme and consolidate psychological counselling in the period 2019-2021.

**Increased initiatives to support men in crisis at men's shelters:** A total of DKK 8 million has been earmarked for organisations offering support for men in crisis following a divorce, domestic violence or a dismissal, etc. In 2019, an application pool of DKK 4.8 million will be made available to support projects at shelters for men. These projects can, for example, focus on offering men in crisis outpatient counselling, network activities and subsequent care. Two shelters for men located in Jutland, *Horsens Krisecenter for Mænd* (Horsens shelter for men) and *Krisecenter for Mænd in Fredericia* (Fredericia shelter for men), will receive DKK 0.4 million in operating aid per annum between 2019-2022. The initiative is being financed by the agreement on the Rate Adjustment Pool for 2019.

**Better conditions for outpatient counselling and treatment for perpetrators of violence and families living with violence – Dialogue against Violence:** Dialogue against Violence outpatient counselling and treatment for perpetrators of violence in intimate relationships and their families will be consolidated and continued. The perpetrator of violence will receive specialised psychological treatment to stop violent behaviour. Help will also be offered to children and families living with violence. The Rate Adjustment Pool agreement for 2019 has allocated DKK 22.5 million for the period 2020-2022.

**Trial runs with outpatient programmes that offer counselling and network groups for young people subjected to physical and psychological intimate-partner violence:** An application pool of DKK 6 million will be made available for the development and testing of an outpatient

programme offering counselling and network groups for young men and women in unhealthy relationships or who have been subjected to intimate-partner violence. The project will be carried out in cooperation with organisations that work with young people and that have experience working with victims of violence, including victims of psychological violence, etc. The initiative is being financed by the Rate Adjustment Pool for 2019.

**Counselling for children and young people about online harassment and abuse – Save the Children Denmark programme “SletDet” (DeleteIt):** A total of DKK 8 million has been earmarked for the Save the Children Denmark programme “*SletDet*” for the period 2019-2022. The programme is aimed at children and young people subjected to involuntary photo sharing or other invasive online behaviour. Save the Children Denmark offers psychological assistance, help with deletion, and counselling on how children and young people can contact social media and the authorities (e.g. the police). Moreover, measures will be launched to increase awareness of the programme “*SletDet*”, so children and young people know where they can get help and counselling. The measure is being financed by the Rate Adjustment Pool for 2019.

**Permanent national support and counselling for victims of stalking and stalkers – operating grants for Danish Stalking Centre:** An operating grant for the Danish Stalking Centre has been allocated to ensure a nationwide outpatient hotline, social and legal counselling, and professional psychological treatment for both victims of stalking and stalkers. Moreover, the Danish Stalking Centre will hold seminars and upgrade the skills of professionals working in e.g. municipalities, the police and the State Administration. The measure is being financed by the Rate Adjustment Pool for 2019.

**Screening of measures aimed at women and men subjected to violence:** The Ministry of Children and Social Affairs will begin screening measures aimed at men who have been subjected to violence and women who have been subjected to violence but who do not stay at a shelter. The information gathered may be used, at a later point, to develop methods and subsequently expand the pallet of programmes offered to the target groups. The initiative is part of the 2019 development and investment programme for marginalised adults.

**Results of the measures aimed at men subjected to violence and assessment of the need for future programmes:** Based on the evaluation of a pilot project offering sheltered housing and counselling to men subjected to violence at *Mandecentret* (Shelter for men), the parties to the Rate Adjustment Pool will determine how to best ensure the necessary support for men subjected to violence. The aim is to ensure that the appropriate programmes are made available to both men and women. The evaluation is expected to be ready by mid 2019.



"Lev Uden Vold" (Life without violence) also acts as a knowledge centre that collects and disseminates knowledge and experiences to, for example, professionals who work in the field.

# Knowledge

Measures to combat violence in intimate relationships are – and must be – based on knowledge. Knowledge-based efforts are crucial to help people subjected to violence, to combat violence in intimate relationships and to ensure that these measures have the intended effect.

Several surveys on the extent of intimate-partner violence in Denmark have been carried out since 2005. Denmark is one of the few European countries that systematically studies the extent of intimate-partner violence.

The National Board of Social Services provides annual statistics on women and children at shelters including data on the number of stays at shelters as well as the type of violence women have been subjected to.

On 1 January 2017, the Ministry for Children and Social Affairs launched new register-based statistics on women in shelters. The statistics were published for the first time in the spring of 2018 and cover all stays at women's shelters pursuant to section 109 of the Social

Services Act. The new statistics are based on CPR information about the women and accompanying children registered by the shelters in connection with a stay, as well as data collection on the length of the stay. The new register-based information makes it possible to know more about who stays at a shelter and the situation of the women after their stay, including information on employment, education, family life and health.

Every year since 2005, the Ministry of Justice has carried out a so-called victim survey, which includes information on violence and the relationship between the perpetrator and victim. Moreover, regular surveys provide information on the frequency, extent and character of acts of violence.

It is crucial to investigate violence in families and intimate relationships on an ongoing basis in order to monitor development and adjust measures thereafter. Violence in intimate relationships is a complex problem. There are many factors determining whether a measure achieves its intended effect. Moreover, the many actors and authorities involved in a measure would benefit from a common knowledge-base.

Current knowledge about violence in intimate relationships indicates that far from all acts of violence in intimate relationships are reported. Violence in intimate relationships is a criminal act and the perpetrator of violence should be held accountable. Furthermore, it is difficult to help victims of violence in intimate relationships if the act of violence, for example by a partner, is not registered. This action plan will monitor incidences of violence in Denmark and make it easier for the police to register the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

## Case: Lev Uden Vold (Life without violence)

The Rate Adjustment Pool agreement for 2017 established a new national unit to combat violence in intimate relationships, Lev Uden Vold (Life without violence).

Lev Uden Vold (Life without violence) is a consortium consisting of the national organisation of women's shelters in Denmark (LOKK), Danner, Dialogue against Violence, Fundamentet (The foundation) and Mødrehjælpen (Help for mothers). Lev Uden Vold runs a number of programmes for victims of violence and perpetrators of violence, including a national hotline, legal counselling, network groups, etc. Lev Uden Vold also acts as a knowledge centre that collects and disseminates knowledge and experiences to, for example, professionals who work in the field.

## INITIATIVES:

**National survey of the scope and nature of physical and psychological intimate-partner violence in Denmark:** A national survey will be carried out on the occurrence of intimate-partner violence against women and men in Denmark, both physical and psychological. The survey is the fifth of its kind and ensures that we can monitor developments in intimate-partner violence and that we gain new knowledge about psychological violence in intimate relationships.

**Registering the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim in police records:** On 4 September 2018, the Danish National Police introduced a number of new search-keys in POLSAS, making it possible for the police to register the relationship between the perpetrator and victim under various case categories.



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Individuals who are the victims of violence in intimate relationships are entitled to help and support.

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# Permanent measures to combat violence in intimate relationships

In 2014, Denmark acceded to the Council of Europe's convention on combatting violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention). The convention obligates Denmark to combat domestic violence and violence against women in areas such as criminal law, data collection, prevention, dissemination of knowledge, training of professionals and programmes aimed at victims and perpetrators.

Furthermore, the convention obligates Denmark to designate a body responsible for the coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent and combat all forms of domestic violence and violence against women. The inter-ministerial working group is responsible for coordination while the different ministries are responsible for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation within their own areas of responsibility.

Danish efforts are based on the permanent measures under the auspices of the social services, the health-care system and the judiciary system, which are supplemented by action plans that contribute to the development of new methods and measures. This action plan is therefore only a small part of overall efforts.

The Danish Government has set 10 goals for social mobility. The aim of the goals is to reduce the number of socially marginalised individuals and to help more of them become part of the labour market. The government also aims to increase the number of people who begin education programmes or enter the labour market after being subjected to intimate-partner violence.

Every day, a large number of individuals across the country work with the permanent measures to prevent and combat violence and to help the men, women and children subjected to domestic violence and violence in intimate relationships. In Denmark, victims of violence have free and equal access to contact municipal case officers, doctors, hospitals and the police, etc.

The following is a description of some of the central actors and measures included in Danish permanent measures to combat domestic and intimate-partner violence:

**Municipalities** are by Section 109 of the Social Services Act obligated to offer temporary accommodation to women who have been subjected to violence, received

threats of violence or who are experiencing equivalent crisis situations in their family or their relationship. Women's shelters will offer them support, protection, counselling and help to move on.

Moreover, municipalities are obligated to offer preliminary and coordinative counselling to all women who stay at a shelter, see section 109 (7) of the Social Services Act, and to offer psychological assistance to all children accompanying the mother to the shelter.

Men who do not have a home or who cannot remain in their own home, for example due to certain social problems, can take up temporary residence at a residential facility pursuant to section 110 of the Social Services Act. The target group for a number of these residential facilities is men in crisis due to divorce, unemployment, violence and other crisis situations.

## Inter-ministerial working group

The inter-ministerial working group for the prevention of violence against women and violence in intimate relationships is responsible for:

- ensuring that the ministries exchange knowledge and coordinate cross-sectoral measures
- coordinating data collection on violence against women and violence in intimate relationships
- assessing the need for additional measures to combat violence against women and violence in intimate relationships pursuant to Denmark's international obligations, and international, political joint declarations of intent on the topic.

The inter-ministerial working group consists of representatives from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry for Children and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Immigration and Integration, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Employment and the Department for Gender Equality at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is chairing the working group.

The individual ministries are responsible for implementation, monitoring, data collection and evaluation etc., within their own areas of responsibility.

Municipalities have a special obligation to help children and young people under 18 who need special support measures due to e.g. physical, psychological or sexual abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. If there is concern that a child or young person is being subjected to abuse, the municipality is obligated to investigate the case and respond with appropriate help and support.

Section 19 of the Social Services Act obligates municipalities to have emergency response units to prevent, identify and treat cases of abuse against children and young people, including cases of violent assault. The emergency units must be approved by the municipal council. Furthermore, pursuant to sections 153-154 of the Social Services Act, private individuals and professionals are obligated to report knowledge or suspicion of a child or young person in need of special support measures, e.g. if the child is being subjected to violence or is witnessing violence at home. The municipalities must, cf. section 155 of the Social Services Act, assess whether the child's or young person's health or development is at risk no later than 24 hours after receiving the report. They must also decide whether it is necessary to implement emergency measures on behalf of the child or young person.

**"Børnehusene" (Children's homes)** were created in 2013 as part of the cross-sectoral collaboration between municipalities, police and health authorities on cases of abuse against children and young people. Municipalities are obligated to use "børnehusene" in connection with examinations to determine cases where there is a suspicion or knowledge of abuse against a child or young person, and where it is necessary to collaborate with the police and/or the health authorities. This is to ensure that the child or young person is met with gentle and coordinated measures in a safe and child-friendly environment.

**The National Board of Social Services' knowledge centre for social measures against violence and sexual abuse in Denmark (SISO)** works towards e.g. supporting the professional quality and cross-sectoral collaboration at "børnehusene". SISO has a permanent annual grant of DKK 10 million in the Finance Act, making it possible for SISO to continuously target its measures where they are needed. SISO's activities include fundraising, development and dissemination of knowledge about violence and sexual abuse against children and young people. SISO offers external counselling to municipalities on prevention, identification, managing and treating cases of violence and sexual abuse. SISO also hosts theme days for municipalities about abuse, etc. One of the focus areas for 2019 is psychological violence against children and young people. In connection with this, SISO will prepare a mapping of the best current knowledge on the target group and the measures aimed at psychological violence against children and young people.

**Women's shelters** ensure that women who have been subjected to violence have a place to go where they can receive support and counselling from specially trained staff. Women can be accompanied by children. They can receive counselling on matters such as finances, housing and the labour market. There are no delimitations with regard to the type of violence that brings them to the shelter and the women can be anonymous if they so wish. There are 53 women's shelters in Denmark (Q3, 2018) approved to receive women who have been subjected to violence. The 53 shelters are located in 39 municipalities across Denmark. Approximately half the accommodation available at shelters is located in the Capital Region of Denmark.

**Shelters for men** offer accommodation, help and support for men in crisis situations due to divorce, intimate-partner violence, unemployment, etc. "Mandecentret" (Shelter for men) runs 6 shelters for men in crisis that have been approved for accommodation pursuant to section 110 of the Public Services Act. They are located in Odense, Aalborg, Esbjerg, Aarhus, Frederiksberg and Copenhagen. There are also shelters in Fredericia and Horsens.

**The RED Centre Against Honour-Related Conflicts** offers counselling on honour-related conflicts (RED Counselling) as well as a safe place of residence for individuals subjected to serious honour-related conflicts, including honour-related violence, pressure, coercion, etc. (RED Safehouse). RED Counselling offers counselling to children, youths, parents and professionals, as well as mediation, long-term schemes, psychological assistance and physical trauma treatment. RED Safehouse offers a safe place of residence for individuals on the run from serious honour-related conflicts, as well as rehabilitation and support to achieve an independent and free life. RED Safehouse has two locations, one on Zealand and one in Jutland.

**ECEC teachers and primary and lower secondary school teachers** play an important role in preventive measures. Schools and ECEC centres help children and young people understand their personal limits and teaches them to respect the limits for others, which can contribute towards preventing intimate relationship violence. Moreover, ECEC teachers and teachers are subject to stringent reporting obligations pursuant to section 153 of the Public Services Act. This means they are obligated to report knowledge or suspicion of a child or young person under 18 years of age in need of special support measures e.g. because the child is subjected to violence.

**Healthcare professionals** in primary healthcare and at the country's emergency rooms provide emergency care and treatment for people who have been subjected to violence in intimate relationships. General practitioners and midwives play an important role in

connection with identifying victims of abuse in connection with e.g. consultations. Healthcare professionals can help victims get in touch with the relevant social authorities or shelters. Healthcare professionals are also subject to stringent reporting obligations pursuant to section 153 of the Public Services Act.

Male and female victims of rape can receive help at nine specialised centres for victims of rape across the five regions. The centres offer emergency medical examinations and treatment, psychological assistance and the involvement and counselling of relatives. Victims can remain anonymous when receiving treatment and counselling, and the centres do not require reporting the abuse to the police.

**The Danish National Police** is responsible for police efforts to prevent and combat violence in intimate relationships. A national prevention centre has been established. The centre directs, coordinates and supports the crime prevention efforts of police districts, including the prevention of violence in intimate relationships. Cadets at the police academy are instructed in how to approach and deal with “vulnerable groups” throughout their basic training programme. This includes how to approach and deal with victims of physical or psychological violence in intimate relationships. Moreover, the police are subject to stringent reporting obligations pursuant to section 153 of the Public Services Act.

**The local police districts** are responsible for enforcing police measures. Several police districts have prepared operative plans on the matter and the jurisdictions collaborate with the relevant external actors, including the national organisation of women’s shelters in Denmark (LOKK) and *Dialogue against Violence*, which provides outpatient treatment for perpetrators. Pur-

suant to legislation on protection orders, the police can determine whether a person suspected of subjecting a member of his/her family to violence can ban said person from being present at home for a period of up to four weeks in order to prevent further violence. Based on a concrete threat of violence, the police can provide an attack-alarm as a source of security and preventive temporary measure.

**The Director of Public Prosecutions** has the overall responsibility of the prosecution service’s handling of criminal cases, including cases on violence in intimate relationships. The Director of Public Prosecutions has set the guidelines for the police and the prosecution service on how to deal with cases concerning domestic serious crimes involving the risk of injury to other persons, including cases concerning violence in intimate relationships. Moreover, the Director of Public Prosecutions has prepared pamphlets for victims of stalking or harassment, and pamphlets for victims of violence and other serious crimes involving the risk of injury to other persons.

To ensure that prosecutors possess the necessary competences, the introductory basic training programme for the prosecution service focuses on teaching prosecutors how to question vulnerable witnesses/victims subjected to a traumatic event and how to explain their statutory rights. The continued education course on interrogation offered by the Director of Public Prosecutions also offers training on how to treat and question the groups of persons in question. A course on crimes committed against children is also offered. The course provides participants with a deeper understanding of the best interests of the child and children’s reaction patterns. Course participants become better equipped to understand and deal with abuse against children, including violent abuse.



**MINISTER FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**