



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF  
JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SECURITY

# Violence in close relationships – Norwegian experiences

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# Norwegian experiences

- Prevalence of violence in close relationship
- National Action plans
- Organizational framework to combat domestic violence in Norway
- “Children's houses” as a tool to strengthen cross sectorial cooperation
- Statutory municipal duty to provide women shelters as a tool to strengthen cross sectorial cooperation
- White paper on intimate partner violence
- Police
- Legal framework



# Violence in close relationships

## clarification of the term

- Violence in close relationships = Domestic violence
- Violence perpetrated by current or former partner/Intimate partner violence
- Forced marriages
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Honour related violence
- Sexual or physical abuse of children
- Violence against elderly



# Intimate partner violence – prevalence in Norway

- In February 2014 the results of a nationwide survey on domestic violence was presented. The Norwegian Center for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS) conducted the survey.
- 8,2 % of the woman and 2 % of the men reported severe partner violence (life threatening violence; attempted strangulation, use of weapons, beating head against an object or wall).
- The prevalence of lifetime rape 9,4 % in women and 1,1 % in men.



# Intimate partner violence – prevalence in Norway

- In the last decade, intimate partner homicide accounted for 20–30 % of the total number of killings in Norway. 6 of 27 victims of homicide in 2014 were killed by current or former intimate partner.
- There has been a sharp rise in the number of reported cases of domestic violence the last years. We observe an increase of 24 % from 2010 to 2014.
- Annually the women shelters receive 2500 women and 1800 children.



# Domestic violence – challenges in Norway

- Establish good predictable routines for cooperation.
- Prevent that victims of violence are shunted from one helper or service to another by creating a more coherent and unified chain of services for victims of domestic violence.
- Raise the efforts to combat domestic violence from the level of pilot projects or temporary programmes into the structures and routines of the various agencies, resulting in their sustainability at institutional level.
- Building and strengthening the expertise of persons and agencies that deal with victims of domestic violence.

# National Action Plans – an overview

- Action Plan to combat violence against women ( 2000 – 2003 )
- Action Plan to combat intimate partner violence ( 2004 – 2007 )
- Action Plan to combat intimate partner violence( 2008– 2011 )
- Action Plan to combat intimate partner violence (2012)
- Action Plan against forced marriages (2008-2011)
- Action Plan against female genital mutilation (FGM) (2008-2011)
- Action Plan against forced marriages and FGM (2012)
- Strategy against physical and sexual violence against children (2005-2009)

# National Action Plans – an overview

- Action Plan against forced marriages and female genital mutilation (2013-2016)
- Strategy against physical and sexual violence against children (2013-2016)
- Action plan to combat intimate partner violence (2014-2017)

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- Action Plan to Combat Rape (2012-2014)
- Action Plan to combat Human Trafficking (2005-2006)
- Action Plan to combat Human Trafficking (2006-2009)
- Action Plan to combat Human Trafficking (2011-2014)
- Action Plan 1325



# National Action Plan as a tool to combat domestic violence

- Translate political will into practical and appropriate action.
- As a tool to put domestic violence on the agenda
- As a tool to coordinate the governments and activity to combat domestic violence
- Make the agency/ministry/service which are responsible to carry out each measure visible
- Make a system of the efforts to combat domestic violence
- As a tool to generate funding
- <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/v-egms-nap2010.htm>

# Organizational framework in Norway

- The responsibility for coordinating the Government's efforts to combat domestic violence lies with the Ministry of Justice and the Police, and a coordinating position was established in the ministry in 2000.
- A cross-ministerial working group has been set up. This group consists of civil servants from the Ministries of Health, Education, Labour, Children-, Equality- and Social Inclusion, Local government and regional development and finally the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.
- The group is led by the Ministry of Justice



# Organizational framework in Norway

## Mandate for the cross–ministerial group:

- Ensure implementation of measures in the action plan.
- Present and publish reports on the progress in the implementation of activities twice a year ([www.regjeringen.no](http://www.regjeringen.no)).
- Coordinate the activities of different stakeholders and levels of government implementing the plan.
- Propose further efforts to combat and prevent violence in close relationships (FGM/Forced marriages, Human trafficking).

# Efforts to strengthen competence – national level

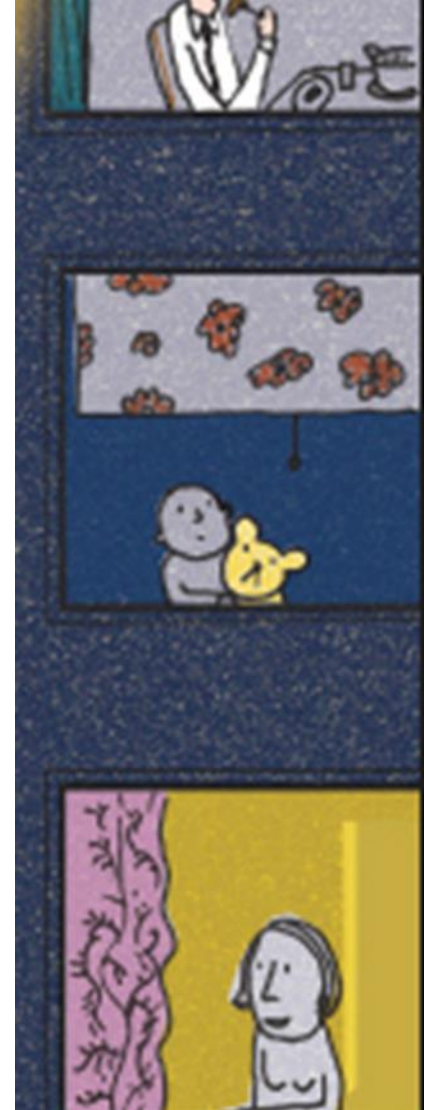
- National Centre of Competence on Violence and Traumatic Stress, was established in January 2004.  
<http://www.nkvts.no/Pages/Index.aspx>
- The purpose of this centre is to strengthen research, education and guidance for the public services in the field of violence and trauma. The centre has a special section for violence, family violence and sexual abuse.
- The centre has approximately 70 employees educated in the fields of social work, psychiatry, psychology, pediatrics, sociology, social anthropology, pedagogy, sexology, criminology and philology.

## Efforts to strengthen competence – regional level

- Five Regional Resource Centres for the field of violence and trauma have also been established, which assists the service apparatus with information, guidelines and expertise development, and create networks between all relevant partners in the region.
- The regional centres has drawn up a standard for municipal/inter municipal action plans against domestic violence and assists municipalities that wish to develop local action plans for this area

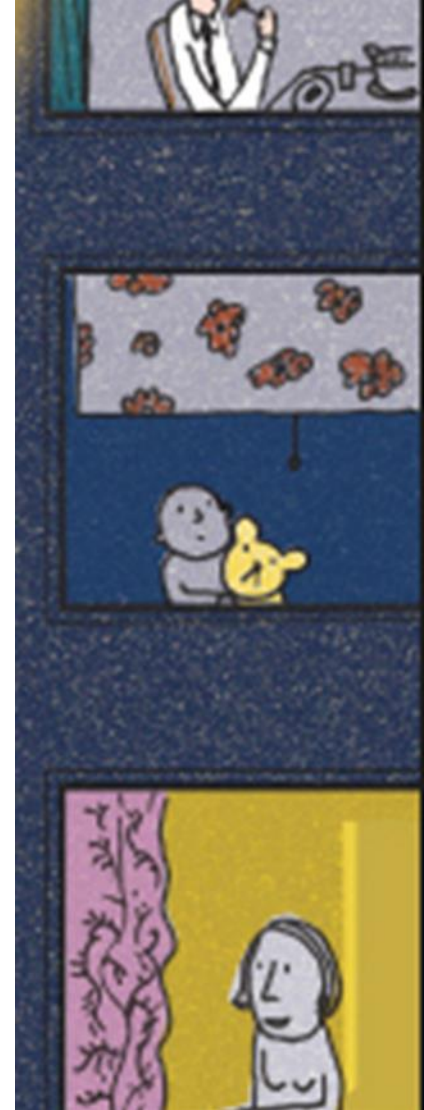
# Children's houses

- Children's Houses are a service for children and young people under 16 years of age, and for adults with intellectual disabilities, who are thought to have been exposed to violence or sexual abuse, or to have witnessed such violence, in cases that have been reported to the police.
- Children's Houses are child advocacy centres where judicial examination, medical examinations, treatment and follow-up can all be carried out in the same place.



# Children's houses

- The children's houses is not simply a physical place but a cooperative measure across sectors that will coordinate the relevant instances tasks.
- The children's houses ensure that the child does not have to be moved from one instance to another in order to tell and retell his or her story.
- The children's houses are run by a team covering several professional fields and with expertise on sexual and physical abuse



# Children's houses

- All public instances may apply to the children's houses to discuss anonymous cases where there is concern that children and young persons may be subject to abuse and violence.
- As by August 2015, 10 children's houses has been established in Norway.
- The children's houses was evaluated in 2012.





# Statutory shelter service

- The Government has adopted new legislation which involves the introduction of a statutory municipal duty to provide shelter services for its population irrespective of gender. The law entered into force the January 1<sup>st</sup> 2010.
- The main reason for providing a statutory shelter service is to make clear that the public authorities are responsible for ensuring that individual users of women's shelters receive coordinated, individual follow-up from other support services.

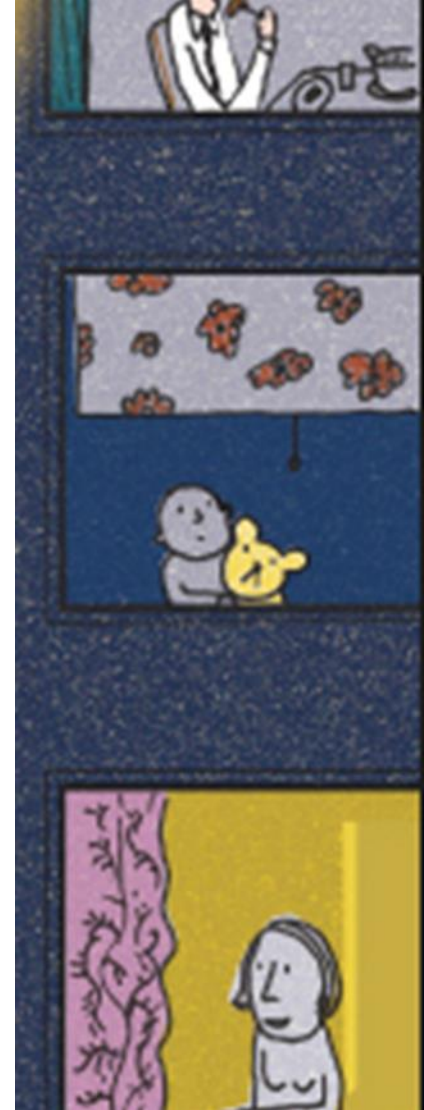
# Statutory shelter service

It is a statutory duty for local authorities to provide the following services to victims of domestic violence (free of charge):

- 24 hour telephone helpline
- a shelter or equivalent safe, temporary accommodation
- a day service including support and assistance
- assistance during the re-establishment phase
- co-ordinate different services
- give special attention to the needs of children.

# White paper on intimate partner violence (Meld. St. 15 (2012-2013))

- strengthen necessary assistance and protection of victims
- improved treatment services for offenders
- offer the victims arranged conversations with the offender (restorative justice)
- improve cooperation between the support services by introducing new models inspired by the Family Justice Centers in US and project KARIN in Sweden
- initiate research and development activities
- public awareness raising
- strengthen police work on domestic violence



# Police

- Police efforts have been considerably strengthened the last few years. They have been given a number of new tools for the treatment and protection of victims, and are focusing more strongly on investigating cases and taking them to court.
- A family violence coordinator has been appointed in all police districts. The coordinator is to help ensure that the police meet the victim of violence and her family and friends with understanding, knowledge and insight – in both professional and human terms.

# Mobile violence alarms

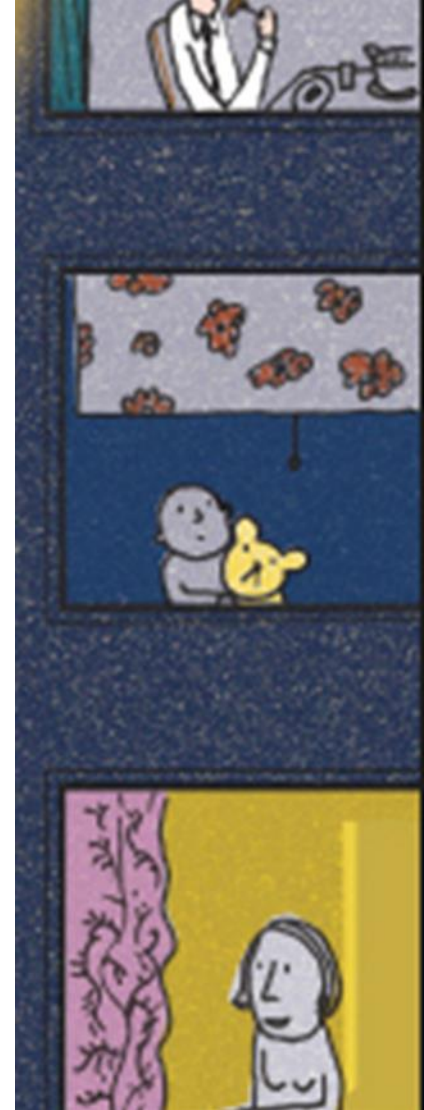
- Mobile violence alarms are intended to give persons under threat of violence greater freedom of movement and help prevent violence and threats.
- The alarm system is based on two geographical positioning systems (GPS and GSM) to ensure that the police can locate the person under threat as accurately as possible. When the alarm is triggered, the person concerned can communicate directly with the police operations center. As of January 2015 a total of approximately 1,750 alarms were in operation.

# Protection - Electronic monitoring

- As a tool to improve the situation for victims of violence by limiting the action of the offender we have implemented electronic monitoring of persons who have violated a ban on contact or visits.
- The use of electronic monitoring of offenders is only allowed as part of a sentence.
- The perpetrator is fitted with an electronic tagging device, which in the event of breach of a restraining order will trigger an alarm at the police station. The system uses 3 – way cellular, landline and RF communication as well as GPS tracking in order to monitor the aggressor and alert the victim and monitoring center.

# Protection – Risk assessment tool “SARA”

- Implementation of risk assessment tool SARA (Spousal Assault Risk Assessment) in the police force.
- SARA is a checklist and has a score form to screen for risk factors of spousal assault so that preventive measures can be taken.



# Legal framework

- From 1. of January 2006, domestic violence is a specific offence in Norway. Violent attacks in the private sphere come under the provisions of the Penal Code article § 219 .
- In 1988, unconditional prosecution was introduced in cases of domestic violence. A criminal case may be brought before the court, even if the woman withdraws the formal report.
- It has been ruled that the provision regarding free legal aid for abused women, includes women subjected to domestic violence from spouses and cohabitants, as well as prostitutes and pimps.



# Legal framework

- “§ 219. Any person who by threats, duress, deprivation of liberty, violence or any other wrong grossly or repeatedly maltreats
- a) his or her former or present spouse,
  - b) his or her former or present spouse’s kin in direct line of descent,
  - c) his or her kin in direct line of ascent,
  - d) any person in his or her household, or
  - e) any person in his or her care
- shall be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years. If the maltreatment is gross or the aggrieved person dies or sustains considerable harm to body or health as a result of the treatment, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a term not exceeding six years. In deciding whether the maltreatment is gross, particular importance shall be attached to whether it has endured for a long time and whether such circumstances as are referred to in section 232 are present.

# Legal framework

- Assaulted and sexually abused women are *protected against repeated violence from the abuser*. In an amendment, January 1 1995 to the Criminal Procedure Act (§ 222a), a person can be prohibited from entering a specific area, following, visiting or otherwise contacting another person ( restraining order/ban of visit)
- If a ban pursuant to section 222a of the Criminal Procedure Act on visiting another person is violated, the person violating the ban, if certain conditions are met, is arrested and remanded in custody.

# Legal framework

- The Criminal Procedure Act ( § 22a Chapter 17 a regarding “ban on visits etc.” was changed and revised in 2002 and 2003 ; on 10 January 2003, changes in the rules regulating ban on visits took effect. The changes are meant *inter alia* to provide better protection for persons exposed to violence from others in their own household. Section 222 of the Norwegian Criminal Procedure Act provides clear legal authority for prohibiting a person subject to such a ban from staying in his own home.

