



Norwegian Centre for Violence  
and Traumatic Stress Studies

## **Research on violence in close relationships in Norway – with special emphasis on NKVTS**

*Dr Solveig Bergman, Senior Researcher, Head of Unit  
research on adults), NKVTS*

## What is NKVTS?

Established in 2003, when four centres merged:

- National Resource Centre for Sexually Abused Children
- Psychosocial Centre for Refugees
- Office of Disaster Psychiatry
- National Centre for Studies and Information on Violence

Several ministries initiated the establishment of NKVTS and have been the main funders of its activities:

Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion

Ministry of Health and Social Care

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Defence

The Directorate of Health coordinates and manages the ministries' priorities; project requests; reporting.

NKVTS is a subsidiary of UNIRAND AS, which is owned by the University of Oslo.

**NKVTS has approximately 70 employees, educated in**

- **Psychology**
- **Psychiatry**
- **Pediatrics**
- **Social work**
- **Sociology**
- **Criminology**
- **Social anthropology**
- **Pedagogics**
- **Nursing**
- **Statistics**

**As well as librarians, information and IT specialists and administrative staff.**

## **Activities include**

- *Research and development activities (R & D)*
- *Teaching; training and education*
- *Dissemination of knowledge*
- *Supervision and consultation (academia; authorities)*

## **... within the topics of**

- *Violence and sexual abuse*
- *Disasters*
- *Traumatized refugees/asylum seekers*
- *Other traumatizing events*

## **Examples of recent projects on violence in close relationships:**

- Prevalence study – Violence and rape in Norway (2014)
- Effects of therapy for men who search help for their use of violence
- Provision of help and support to victims of violence
- Men in shelters
- Mothers' violence against their children

- A nation-wide helpline on violence in close relationships and rape: an investigation
- «A week with violence» – mapping cases in public agencies
- A web-based guide for municipal action plans on violence in close relationships
- Cooperation with the CMC in Slovakia and EWSU in Estonia (FFA/Norway Grants)

## **A new 5 year research programme on Violence in close relationships**

Nine projects (adults – children/youth):

- Violence, health and revictimization
- Violence and substance abuse
- Who commits the most common types of rape?
- Minority ethnic children, youth and their families – violence in close relationships



- Violence against the elderly
- Partner violence – gender, equality and power
- Why do so few women and men who are exposed to violence report it to the police?
- Non-help-seeking women's strategies after exposure to violence
- Health problems in children at the Children's Houses

## What's in a Name?

(Men's) violence against women – Domestic violence – Violence in intimate/close relationships – Gender-based violence .....

## Development since the 1970s

- Politicization and agenda-setting by the new Women's Movement. Rapid growth of the shelter movement. (1970s, 1980s)
- The issue enters the research agenda and the policy agenda. Close relations researchers-activists-practitioners. The first European intervention programme for abusive men (ATV) established in Norway in 1987. (1980s, 1990s)

- From Women's Struggle to a Public Health Problem and Public Responsibility, i.e.:

Institutionalisation in the welfare state (action plans, White Papers, legislative reforms; research & prevalence studies; public prevention, assistance, treatment services). (1990s onwards)

- Today we have a functioning structure for support/treatment services, as well as for knowledge development:  
- **yet, Norway is no «Paradise»!**

## «New» issues enter the research agenda and the political scene

- violence against men by other men/violence by women;
- violence in LGBT-relationships; hate crimes;
- children as witnesses/victims of violence;
- violence against the elderly and people with disabilities.
- violence in ethnic minority families/relationships;
- genital mutilation; trafficking & prostitution, forced marriage, honour crimes etc.

**The relationship policy-makers/academia/NGOs still close - but differs from the 1970s-80s** due to specialization, professionalization, societal/political/academic change.

**Civil society and women's/gender-based movements** remain important actors  
(= political pressure; bring up «new»/unresolved issues).

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**