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GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF AND ERADICATE
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

This paper has been prepared by the Institute of Women, Autonomous Organism assigned to the Spanish Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and by the Professors of Psychology of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, María José Díaz Aguado (General Director) and Rosario Martínez Arias (Director of the Methodology), with the indispensable collaboration of the persons from the fifteen Member States of the European Union who filled the base Questionnaire, and who we would like to thank for their important contribution.

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INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is a universal problem that affects all countries, regardless of their degree of development, and occurs across all segments of society. Not even the most advanced European countries, where the fundamental principles of freedom, justice, equality and protection of personal dignity and privacy are held to be values of a higher order than their respective bodies of law, are immune to this problem.

Violence against women is not an isolated or contingent problem, but one with deep structural roots whose definitive solution will call for an ongoing effort from society as a whole. Violence against women is a social phenomenon of many and varied dimensions. It is the expression of a social order based on inequality, a result of the assignment of different roles to women and men on the grounds of their sex and differential recognition of the male role as superior. Violence, an expression of gender inequality, is therefore a formula to which many men recur to maintain their privileges by subjugating women, with devastating effects for the victims.

The international community, and in particular the European Union, has recognised that the problem of violence against women is a violation of fundamental human rights and, therefore, an assault on the victim's right to life, safety, freedom, dignity and physical and psychological integrity that constitutes an obstacle to the development of any democratic society.

Women's organisations have played a very important role in exposing the true dimensions of the problem of violence against women. Their action has been of crucial importance in placing what was traditionally regarded to be a family issue and, therefore, a private concern, on the national and international political agenda.

The struggle against violence must become a basic pillar of social intervention policy. The measures implemented in this area must be essentially geared to **eradicating violence** through the prevention of violent actions by sensitising public opinion about the severity of the problem, ensuring that education is based on equality and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, punishing violent behaviours to deter and therefore contribute to prevent violence and **mitigate the effects** of violent acts on victims. In any case, it must be noted that both the preventive and the remedial measures that can be taken in this field often meet with privacy- and private relationship-related problems, particularly in the case of domestic violence, where intervention is much more complex than in the public domain.

Violence against women can only be eradicated by prevention, which calls for active repudiation by the entire community. **Sensitisation or awareness campaigns** must continue to be conducted so that no member of society remains insensitive to violence against women, a problem that affects the community as a whole. It may on occasion be necessary to target specific communities of people in such campaigns, such as judges or prosecutors, who are often reputed to be notoriously unaware of the seriousness of the problem.

Education is a basic tool to generate behaviour based on dialogue, respect, tolerance and equality. Attacking the problem at the root means planting the seed in the earliest stages of life – childhood and adolescence – when the attitudes and values that will largely define adult conduct germinate. Since education professionals also need to be imbued with the knowledge, attitudes and values referred above, the fight against violence towards women would appear to need to concentrate its efforts on **education and training**.

Violence victims are often defenceless because they remain dependent – even financially – after being battered. They feel unprotected, baffled and unable to solve their problem. Individuals in such a defenceless and particularly vulnerable situation should receive support from the authorities to protect and defend themselves, in the form of the provision of **social resources** of different kinds to help mitigate the effects of the violence inflicted on them. Under such

circumstances, victims must obviously be afforded suitable assistance, including both physical and psychological therapy, admission to shelters or recovery centres and access to follow-up services to monitor their progress until they are able to solve their problem, with the help of specialists. In short, they should be provided adequate support, therapy and psychological, financial, occupational, social and legal counsel.

To effectively combat violence against women, society must have the proper **legal, judicial and law enforcement measures** in place. In many cases, to improve the protection afforded to victims, legislative changes need to be introduced to more clearly define aggression as criminal behaviour; in others, judicial and enforcement procedures need to be simplified etc.

An in-depth understanding of the factors and variables that breed the violence to which some individuals recur on a more or less regular basis, and of the devastating effects caused by such conduct, helps to focus more sharply on the measures implemented to mitigate such effects. That kind of understanding calls for keeping records as complete as possible on violence reported and the sentences delivered, as well as for conducting **surveys and research** on the subject.

The general concern about this problem in the framework of the European Union, and the fact that we belong to a common space where every day, there is more to unite than to divide, provide sufficient reasons to pool our efforts and take joint measures, agreed by consensus, to combat this blight which is such a cause for concern within the international community. And as a result, the effort made by each Member State will be at once less costly and more effective.

Precedents and background

The **United Nations** Charter, which came into effect on 24 October 1945, is a call for reaffirmation of faith in fundamental human being rights, in the dignity and worth of the person and in the equal rights of women and men. Since then, a lot of documents and legal instruments have been approved by the United Nations, reflecting the international community's sensitivity to the need to eliminate sex-based discrimination and promoting the implementation of programmes of action in defence of women's rights. However, progress towards recognition and the fight to combat violence against women has been very slow.

One of the most important legal instruments for promoting women's fundamental rights and freedoms is the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 18 December 1979 and its Optional Protocol of 6 October 1999. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in its General Recommendation No. 19 of 1992, applied the CEDAW provisions to the subject of violence against women.

The earliest reflection on this subject arose on the occasion of the First World Conference on Women held in Mexico City, but it was not until five years later, at the Second World Conference on Women held in Copenhagen, that a resolution was first adopted on violence. This resolution, limited to mistreated women and family violence, sustained that violence occurring within the family environment is the most common covert crime in the world.

At the Third World Conference on Women, organised in Nairobi in 1985, violence emerged as a genuine problem affecting the international community and a growing problem, which must be addressed by governments and society in general. At this conference, a connection was drawn between the promotion and maintenance of peace and the eradication of violence against women in both the public and private spheres. And violence was cited as the major obstacle to development, equality and peace.

In the same year, the General Assembly approved the first Resolution on domestic violence and in 1986 a group of experts on family violence met to reflect on its implementation.

The World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993 proved to be a landmark in international recognition of the severity of the problem of violence against women. The conference affirmed that all human rights derive from the dignity and worth inherent in the person, and that the human person is the central subject of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It also sustained that the human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights, with which violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation are incompatible, in particular those deriving from cultural prejudice. Governments, intergovernmental institutions and NGOs were urged to intensify their efforts to protect and foster women's and girls' human rights.

The Fourth and to date last World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, approved two documents, the Declaration and the Platform for Action, in which women's rights were proclaimed to be human rights.

The Declaration called for the adoption of the necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls and remove all the obstacles to gender equality, as well as to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

The Platform enumerated twelve obstacles to women's advancement in the world, proposing objectives and strategies to be adopted by the international community, governments, NGOs and the private sector to eliminate such difficulties in the following five years. One of the obstacles enunciated was violence against women and the adoption of integrated measures was urged to prevent and eliminate this type of violence as well as to study its causes, consequences and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

In June 2000 the Special Session of the General Assembly reviewed the progress made in the years following the approval of the Beijing Platform for Action, and examined the obstacles hindering full implementation of the platform and agreed to new measures and initiatives designed to achieve complete and speedy application.

One of the areas where progress was identified was in the attention given to many forms of violence against women and girls, in both the public and private domains, by national legislation, policies and programmes. Moreover, issues that have risen or become more visible after Beijing, such as spousal rape or the need to support public sensitisation campaigns, have also been addressed.

The Council of Europe has been studying the problem of violence against women since 1985, and different regulatory provisions on the subject have since been approved. The major effort in connection with this problem was deployed on the occasion of the Third European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men held in Rome in October 1993, where the issue of the elimination of violence against women was expressly tackled. A series of important Declarations and Resolutions were approved in the context of this conference.

The most prominent of these include the *Declaration on Policies for Combating Violence against Women in a Democratic Europe*, which proposed the formulation of a Plan of Action, along with suitable legal instruments to fight against violence towards women. One of the priority themes discussed was *Elements for intervention strategies to be included in a Plan of Action to combat violence against women*.

The Council likewise approved the *Declaration of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995)*, the *Declaration on the Violation of Women's Human Rights in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia* and a *Resolution on the Rape and Abuse of Women*.

The issue of violence inflicted on women reappeared at the Fourth European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men held in Istanbul in 1997, whose general theme was *Democracy and equality between women and men*. There, the Council of Europe urged Member States to prepare a European legal instrument on this issue.

The Plan of Action to combat violence against women envisaged in the Third Ministerial Conference was formulated in 1997 by a group of specialists on the subject (EG-S-VL). The main objective was to identify the measures that should be adopted and the national, international, governmental and non-governmental institutions that would be entrusted with implementing the Plan.

In the Declaration of the Second Summit of the Council of Europe in 1997, the Heads of State and Government asserted their determination to combat violence against women and all forms of sexual exploitation of women. In the follow-up of this declaration, the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men organised an Information Forum in 1998, devoted specifically to the elimination of violence within families.

Subsequently, the Council of Europe approved Recommendation (1997) 1325 on traffic in women and forced prostitution in the Council of Europe Member States, Recommendation (2000) 11 against trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation, Recommendation (2000) 1450 on violence against women in Europe, inviting the Committee of Ministers to design a European programme to combat violence against women, harmonising legislations and procedures in order to create authentically European legal doctrine, and Recommendation (2002) 5 on the protection of women against violence.

Based on the Recommendations, Declarations and Conferences of other international bodies, primarily the United Nations and the Council of Europe, the **European Union** has been granting the subject of violence against women a more prominent role, formulating a number of Resolutions, Recommendations, Declarations and Actions that have led to greater sensitivity and awareness

within the European Union and given rise to different actions, especially in the nineties.

Presently, the European Commission has positioned the problem of violence against women in a prominent place in the Union's political programme. The objective is to promote co-operation and co-ordination among Member States, support NGOs working in this domain, improving statistics and information on violence, fostering preventive measures and enhancing the protection provided to victims.

Despite the work under way to make the criteria prevailing in the various Member States more consistent and establish co-ordinated action to combat this kind of violence, the penal aspects continue to fall within the jurisdiction of the Member States. Nonetheless, the tendency is to unify action, such as in the case of the Zero Tolerance Campaign, the DAPHNE Programme and the study of Europeans' attitudes towards violence against women and children. This is supplemented by a series of European Parliament Recommendations and Resolutions, among them, the Resolution of 16 September 1997, in which the European Commission and the Member States were asked to consider all forms of sex-based violence as a crime.

The Third medium-term Community Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (1991-1995) included among its aims the attainment of greater equality of opportunities for women on the labour market, urging the Member States to adopt measures to stem sexual harassment in the workplace. Community concern about sexual harassment, along with express recognition of such harassment as a form of gender violence, first came with the European Parliament Resolution of 11 June 1986 on violence against women, which urged Member States to establish measures to prevent and punish sexual harassment. This appeal materialised in the Commission of the European Communities Recommendation of 27 November 1991 on the protection of the dignity of women and men at workplace, including a code of practice to combat sexual harassment.

The Fourth Community Programme of Action on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women (1996-2000) attempted to extend the scope of the fight against violence, particularly to the defence of women's dignity in society in general and on the labour market in particular.

Nowadays, the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) is continuing along the lines discussed above.

In a more general approach to violence against women, in 1997 European Parliament urged the Commission to initiate a campaign to promote non-tolerance (*Zero Tolerance Campaign*) of violence, and especially on domestic violence against women, which began in March 1999. The *Zero Tolerance Campaign*, which pursued the mobilisation of public opinion in favour of an attitude of not allowing violence, targeted men, in the conviction that their active participation is essential for greater effectiveness.

This campaign against violence belonged to the actions implemented to meet the commitments assumed at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women and was associated with the designation of 1999 as the *European Year against Violence towards Women*.

In 1997 on the initiative of European Parliament, further action was implemented to contribute to the eradication of violence against women, namely the DAPHNE Initiative, whose purpose is to foster preventive measures designed to combat violence against girls, young persons and women.

In 2000, the DAPHNE Initiative became a full-fledged Programme to combat violence against children, young Person and Women (2000-2003). Its purpose is to guarantee protection in terms of physical and psychological health, preventing violence and providing support to victims as well as to NGOs and other organisations engaged in this area.

Attention should also be drawn to other types of action undertaken in the European Union, besides the DAPHNE Programme and the *Zero Tolerance*

Campaign, such as the survey (Eurobarometer) on violence against women conducted on 14 July 1999 in the fifteen Member States, which polled 16,000 people over the age of 15.

The results of the Eurobarometer survey were taken into account in the European Social Agenda of 7 December 2000, where the problem of violence against women was considered as one of the fundamental issues to be addressed.

Conceptual interpretation of the three types of violence considered

In 1995, in the framework of the Beijing Platform for Action and in addition to establishing the eradication of violence against women as one of its strategic objectives, the United Nations formulated a definition of such violence in the following terms: *any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. Accordingly, violence against women encompasses but is not limited to the following:*

- a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family,*
- b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community,*
- c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.*

Despite the amplitude of the above definition, this Good Practice Guide deals with domestic, sexual and workplace violence and expressly excludes other forms of violence as trafficking in women and prostitution from its discussion of sexual violence. Particular attention is lent to domestic violence, due to the enormous dimension of the problem in our society, as well as the inherent difficulties in detecting and eradicating it.

Many definitions have been put forward in recent years for the types of violence considered in this Guide. Referencing them all here would appear to be an arduous, complex and possibly unnecessary task, in view of the contextual limitations of the work undertaken. Therefore, an attempt will be made to provide definitions that synthesise many of them, specifying the common characteristics that distinguish each of the various types of violence studied: domestic, sexual and workplace.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence will be understood to be *any violence, physical, sexual and/or psychological – in the last case, if reiterated – inflicted on the perpetrator's spouse or intimate partner or on people comprising the core family. In many cases, in particular in the case of domestic violence inflicted on women, it occurs because the perpetrator is in a position to wield permanent power over the woman in question.*

Any definition of domestic violence must cover the following:

- Infliction of physical, sexual and/or psychological violence.
- Perpetration by the spouse or former spouse, partner, expartner or any other person with whom the victim forms or had formed a similar relationship (boyfriend/girlfriend) or by any other member of the family.
- In the case of domestic violence inflicted on women, command of a situation of permanent power by the perpetrator.
- Regularity, i.e., reiteration of violent acts, in the event of psychological violence.

Sexual violence

Any act in which a person is obligated, under coercion by one or several others, to bear or perform actions of a sexual nature may be termed sexual violence.

Any definition of sexual violence must cover the following:

- Reference to any abusive act of sexual nature.
- Violation of the person's sexual freedom, infringing on his/her human dignity.

Workplace violence

This type of violence refers to *abusive behaviour engaged in by superiors in rank or peers in the workplace, without the consent of the person on whom it is inflicted, creating an intimidating, hostile or humiliating work environment for the victim and jeopardising her/his job or interfering with her/his career.*

Therefore, the elements that characterise workplace violence are:

- Abusive behaviour.
- Perpetration at workplace.
- Infliction on a person without her/his consent.
- Creation of an intimidating, hostile or humiliating work environment for the victim.
- Placement of her/his job in jeopardy and limitation of her/his possibilities of promotion.

Two different forms of workplace violence are considered: sexual harassment and bullying. The only characteristic differentiating the two is the sexual connotation inherent in the former.

Objectives

The **ultimate objective** of drawing up a Good Practice Guide such as this is to furnish a working tool that can contribute to mitigating the effects of domestic, sexual and workplace violence and eradicating this type of behaviour.

The formulation of this draft Guide has also afforded the opportunity to achieve **instrumental objectives** such as the compilation of systematic information on violence, thereby contributing to:

- Ascertainment of the progress made in the European Union with respect to the measures proposed in the Fourth World Conference on Women's Platform for Action.
- Readier formulation of programmes and preparation of specific intervention strategies in the context of the struggle against violence towards women.

Methodology

A Questionnaire was formulated to gather information on the good practices in place in European Union Member States, which grouped a series of questions under eight subject headings: Sensitisation, Training and education, Resources and social services for victims, Specific measures geared to rehabilitating perpetrators, Legal, judicial and law enforcement measures, Surveys and research, Records on violence against women and Description of the most important measures adopted in each country with respect to the foregoing.

The Questionnaire was drawn up taking into account the recommendations and analyses on violence against women contained in the following documents:

- 1) *The Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women* held in Beijing in 1995. This Guide contains detailed references to the proposals included in the Platform regarding the proposals around which it is structured.
- 2) The papers drafted in *meetings organised by the European Union after 1995* on measures to combat violence against women, in particular those ensuing from: the International Expert Conference held in Vienna in 1998; the Interministerial Conference held in Cologne in 1999; the Expert Conference held in Jyväskylä in 1999 and the Closing Conference of the European Campaign to Raise Awareness of Violence against Women held in Lisbon in 2000. Specific recommendations were made in all these

meetings with respect to the subjects included in this Guide: specialised training; social resources and services for victims; rehabilitation of perpetrators; legal, judicial and law enforcement measures; surveys and research and data recording systems. Detailed reference to the recommendations proposed in the above meetings is given in the various chapters of this Guide that deal with these issues.

- 3) Papers drafted *after 1995 by the Council of Europe* on good practice to combat violence against women, in particular the report titled *Legislation in the Member States of the Council of Europe in the field of violence against women, 2001*. The Good Practice Guide contains references to Council of Europe recommendations on the same subjects as listed in the preceding paragraph.
- 4) The papers produced by NGOs under the European Union's DAPHNE Initiative and Programme, most prominently those referred in the General Evaluation Report of 1998 and the survey conducted in a number of European countries by the European Women's Lobby (*Dévoiler les données cachées de la violence domestique dans l'UE, 1999*) (Disclose the hidden data on domestic violence in the European Union, 1999) and THEMIS, the European Woman Lawyers Association (*Guía de buenas prácticas y usos forenses para combatir la violencia de género, 2001*) (a guide on good practice and coroner procedures to combat gender violence, 2001).

On the grounds of the above mentioned information, the Women's Institute, together with a research team at the Complutense University of Madrid, drew up the Questionnaire that has been used as background for this Guide; it was sent to the European Commission, as well as to Belgium and Denmark, countries preceding and succeeding Spain in the EU Presidency, to ensure continuity in the work undertaken during the three presidencies.

Since the subject of salary discrimination was addressed during the six months that the Presidency was in Belgium, the Questionnaire has contained workplace

violence as a continuation of the analysis of discrimination against women in this context.

Denmark, in turn, intends to formulate a series of indicators to measure and appraise the effectiveness of good practices that may be implemented to combat violence against women, analysing the changes, if any, coming about over time.

The contents of this Guide are based, mainly, in the replies of the fifteen Member States of the European Union to the Questionnaire, and in their comments to the first drafts of the Guide.

Exceptionally, information on certain specific countries has been taken from existing documents to illustrate good practices in the struggle against violence towards women.

Contents of the Guide

The Guide presented hereunder is organised into seven chapters, which concur with the first seven chapters of the Questionnaire used to gather the information, namely:

1. Sensitisation
2. Training and education
3. Resources and social services for victims
4. Specific measures geared to rehabilitating perpetrators
5. Legal, judicial and law enforcement measures
6. Surveys and research
7. Records on violence against women

Each chapter begins with the recommendations set out in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women on the subject in question.

This is followed by a brief overview of the reflections, considerations and results of studies conducted in the framework of the European Union and the Council of Europe, in some cases, and in others of the conclusions drawn from the countries' responses to the Questionnaire.

The essence of this Guide is to be found, in all chapters, under the heading referring to good practice. Wherever possible, practices referring to domestic, sexual or workplace violence are discussed separately (*sensitisation; education; legal, judicial and law enforcement measures; surveys and research*).

In all chapters, the measures being implemented in the various Member States are briefly discussed and the ones that appear to be examples of good practice are highlighted.

In some of these chapters, in addition to the foregoing items on the Beijing Conference, the European Union as a whole and each of the Member States individually, other sections have been also included, namely: keys to good practice (*Specialised education and training; Resources and social services for victims; Specific measures geared to rehabilitating perpetrators; Records on violence against women*); difficulties encountered in implementing such practices (*Education*) and the evaluation of the measures implemented (*Legal, judicial and law enforcement measures*).

1. AWARENESS RAISING

1.1. Awareness-raising measures to combat violence against women proposed at the Fourth World Conference on Women

As the Fourth World Conference acknowledged in its Platform for Action, *violence against women is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between women and men, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of women's full advancement. Experience in a number of countries shows that women and men can be mobilised to overcome violence in all its forms.*

The measures to be adopted in the context of awareness-raising campaigns include: changing sexist models and prejudice; sensitising the public at large about the adverse effects of violence against women on everyone; enhancing the awareness of present or potential victims of violence so they can protect themselves against aggression and break away from violent situations and disseminating information on the resources available in this regard.

The Conference highlighted the role of women's organisations and the media in raising awareness in particular, recommending: *Support initiatives of women's organisations and non-governmental organisations all over the world to raise awareness on the issue of violence against women; and raise awareness of the responsibility of the media in promoting non-stereotyped images of women and men, as well as in eliminating patterns of media presentation that generate violence, and encourage those responsible for media content to establish professional guidelines and codes of conduct; also raise awareness of the important role of the media in informing and educating people about the causes and effects of violence against women and in stimulating public debate on the topic.*

1.2. Awareness of violence against women in the European Union

In 1997, the European Parliament adopted a report in which it asked the European Commission and the Member States to consider all forms of gender-based violence to be a crime. It also urged the Commission to initiate a campaign to promote non-tolerance (*Zero Tolerance Campaign*) for violence against women, which was begun in March 1999. The campaign was conducted in conjunction with the designation of 1999 as the *European Year against Violence against Women*. These two proposals and corresponding actions proved to be highly effective in raising awareness and sensitivity to the problem all across Europe with respect to zero tolerance for violence against women.

The results obtained in the 1999 Eurobarometer survey, which indicate that Europeans condemn domestic violence against women *en masse* and acknowledge that it is a relatively common problem, serve as an illustration of the advances and limitations of awareness-raising campaigns in the European Union. Only 4% of the respondents claimed never to have heard about this social problem.

The main source of their information on the subject is the media (television in 89% of the cases; press in 65% and radio in 44%). The percentage of people who talk about the problem in their personal circles is very low (with friends, 31%; with family, 19%), indicating that to some extent the subject of violence against women continues to be a taboo.

With respect to how to combat the phenomenon, 95% feel that punishing the perpetrator is useful and 91% believe that stricter enforcement of existing legislation is needed and that young men and women should be taught mutual respect. The main causes of such violence cited are: alcohol (96%), drug addiction (94%), unemployment (79%), poverty and social marginalisation (73%) and the fact that the perpetrator was in turn a victim of violence (73%).

Moreover, there is general acknowledgement of the need for awareness-raising measures, since 86% believe that more brochures should be circulated and 84% that public information campaigns should be conducted.

Finally, a rather telling result of the survey is that whilst 67% believe that the European Union should become involved in the endeavour to curb domestic violence against women, 79% are unaware of the fact that the European Union has in fact proposed policies in this area.

As the above results show, substantial progress has been made in the European community with regard to raising awareness of and condemning violence against women, in which the media and awareness-raising campaigns conducted through the media have played an instrumental role. The change is particularly significant in connection with condemning the behaviour of perpetrators and recognising the need to punish such behaviour.

One of the most important causes of the problem, namely the inequitable distribution of power between women and men in society, is not among those most frequently mentioned, due very likely to the scant attention given this premise in the media. This limitation may detract from the success of awareness-raising campaigns, since target audiences may tend to feel detached from what they regard to be a marginal problem, in which only men with special problems are involved.

European Union policies, which most of the population regard as advisable, also seem to be wanting in visibility.

1.3. Good practice in awareness heightening about violence against women in general and in the domestic environment in particular, in European Member States

The replies to the Questionnaire on Good Practice to combat violence against women relating to the three major campaigns conducted in each country since 1995,

show that: all countries have taken measures of this type, most of which target either the population at large or victims of violence; the evaluation of results is very high in all cases and, while systematic evaluation of the impact is not general practice, where such evaluations were conducted (almost always limited to nation-wide campaigns, including television spots), the results proved to be even better than expected. Most of the campaigns run refer to domestic violence or violence against women in general.

In **Germany**, several campaigns to combat violence against women have been conducted since 1995 on both the regional and the local level, designed and implemented by different entities and with the participation of both public bodies and NGOs. The first of such campaigns (1993-1996), singled out as being particularly effective, was run by the Federal Government but involved regional initiatives. Support was given to fifty cities and districts to design and implement actions at the local level. The process gave rise to over three hundred actions, geared to a wide range of targets (population at large, victims, minors, perpetrators, witnesses, police, domestic workers, and schools). Such activities were described in a campaign manual, which also included general notes and working documents on public opinion and fund raising. The materials edited and measures adopted during this campaign are still in circulation and will continue to be circulated in the future. They include brochures, posters, poster-size photographs, a course for the police force and a multi-media package to address the problem in schools. The second most prominent public awareness effort listed in the German reply to the questionnaire was the campaign conducted around the recently enacted *Protection against Violence Act*.

The awareness exercise conducted in **Germany** constitutes good practice in terms of co-ordination among public bodies and NGOs at various levels (national, regional and local), adapting the final design of activities to the particular circumstances prevailing in each township, for a longer-lasting impact; proof of this is that the materials edited are still being disseminated.

The primary aim of the most important nation-wide campaign conducted in **Austria** in the last five years, *Stop violence* (1998-1999), was to enhance the awareness-raising of violence against women. A toll-free 24-hour hotline was set up during the campaign (helpline 800), which provides information on what to do in situations of violence against women as well as on the social services available (shelters, support centres, legal counsel...).

This campaign involved a television spot and brochures. It was intended for all kinds of targets (public at large, victims, witnesses of violent acts, perpetrators...).

As the number of calls received in the telephone support service was very large from the outset, the service continues to be available. It is run by experts who specify how to deal with violence crises as well as the information to be provided on where to go in each stage of the process. The campaign was evaluated and found to have had a greater impact than expected.

Two other campaigns – likewise nation-wide - were conducted in Austria in the last five years, consisting primarily of brochures targeting victims and the professionals catering for them.

The first, *Combating Violence against women and children* (1998), purposed to begin to make up for the lack of information on the subject. The other campaign, titled *Women have rights/ are right* (2002) and designed on the basis of the know-how acquired during the former experience, tried to respond more specifically to what should be done when violence occurs, as well as to questions about existing legal and penal measures.

The awareness exercise conducted in **Austria** constitutes good practice in terms of co-ordination and integration of the different services providing support for violence victims, in which the know-how acquired in preceding stages is effectively incorporated in subsequent endeavours.

The three main campaigns conducted on violence against women in **Belgium** in the last five years targeted the population at large and consisted of the following:

- 1) *Rompez le silence avant qu'il ne vous casse (Break your silence before it destroys you)* (1999), geared to informing victims and coroners about physical and sexual violence; 2) *Brisons le silence avant qu'il ne nous brise. La violence dans le couple est un délit puni par la loi (Let's break our silence before it breaks us. Partner violence is a crime punishable by law)* (2001), a campaign that constituted the first stage of a broader awareness policy undertaken by the Federal Government and federated states, which used posters, informative brochures and ads in the press, as well as a press conference; 3) *Cool, moins de violence ça ne ferait pas de mal (Cool it, we could use a little less violence)* (1999), a message that attempted to prompt reflection, especially among young people and with a view to prevention, about the presence of violence in society, stressing four major subject areas: violence at school, family violence, street violence and the problem of teenage tribes; the media used were posters and hand bills.

The campaigns conducted in **Belgium** constitute good practice in the attempt to raise the awareness of the population at large about the need to break the silence surrounding the violence perpetrated against women in order to eradicate it. Moreover, as described in the following section, two pioneer campaigns against sexual harassment were run in Belgium, to sensitise public opinion about the need to eradicate this specific form of violence, which seems to be enormously resistant to change.

The two most important campaigns conducted in **Denmark** in the last five years, included in the General Action Plan to Prevent Domestic Violence against Women, were nation-wide and used brochures, publications and web pages as media. One of these campaigns, *White Ribbon* (2000-2001), funded by the Ministry for Gender Equality, targeted the male population in general and perpetrators, in an attempt to

enhance their awareness of violence against women and reverse the acceptance of such violence among men. The evaluation of the impact of this campaign showed that the results were, as expected, very promising.

The Ministry of the Interior ran another campaign in 2000 intended to provide minority ethnic groups (in particular victims and witnesses of violence) with information on partner violence.

As a follow-up to the sensitisation work carried out, Denmark will undertake new awareness-raising campaigns on violence against women early in 2002, likewise targeting professionals (health services, doctors, police officers, social workers and people employed in support centres for women in crisis situations) who work with the perpetrators and the victims of violence. The aim is to strengthen co-operation among such professionals and provide wide-ranging and mutual knowledge of the various endeavours and initiatives under way; this information will be included in a publication synthesising the information on the work performed by each group of professionals.

The campaigns conducted by **Denmark** constitute good practice in terms, on the one hand, of awareness geared to the male population at large to sensitise them to the violence to which some men subject women, and on the other of the co-ordination of the efforts made by professionals in different areas working with the victims and perpetrators of such violence. This type of co-ordination is repeatedly recommended both by the Fourth World Conference on Women and the various European Union expert groups.

The three most important campaigns conducted in **Spain** (by the Institute for Women) in the last five years to combat gender-based violence were nation-wide in scope and used a variety of media (television and radio spots, ads in the press, posters and brochures).

The purpose of the first of such campaigns, 1999, geared particularly to victims, was to encourage them to report such acts of violence. The spot showed a woman taking off her make-up in front of a mirror, staring at the signs of a beating on her face. And the motto is: *if you hide the truth, no one will know that you need help; don't let fear scar you, dial (the following number)....*

In the second, conducted in 2000 and targeting the public at large as well as witnesses and perpetrators of violence, the spot showed a child consoling his mother, lying on the floor after an aggression. The purpose was to sensitise the Spanish public to the severity of the problem of violence against women. The slogan was *Violence against women hurts us all. Society condemns it and so does the law.* This spot, which was awarded a prize by the media, prompted a particularly intense social debate.

The last of these campaigns (2001), also geared to victims, was likewise intended to encourage women suffering violence to report it. In this campaign, a woman calls the Institute for Women telephone support centre, but is unable to utter a word. The slogan was: *If words fail you, so will everything else. Get a hold of your life. Speak up.*

All the campaigns were systematically evaluated, with the results showing that they had substantial impact both on the information community -the media- and the target groups. One indication of such impact was that immediately after the spots were broadcast, a significant increase was consistently recorded in the number of calls about abuse received in the Institute for Women's 24-hour call centre.

In parallel with such campaigns, the following action was conducted to sensitise the media about their role in this struggle:

- 1) The declaration of 25 November as the yearly *Day to combat violence against women*, to contribute to reasserting society's commitment to this goal, with

special coverage by the press, radio and television on the advances made and the areas where efforts still need to be made.

- 2) The development of an Advertising Observatory designed to eradicate sexism, using mainly two basic tools, a toll-free number to report adverse advertising and a Women's Portrayal Advisory Board in the different media.
- 3) The creation in 1999 of an annual award for the media and advertising agencies to distinguish the ones making outstanding contributions to the struggle against violence against women.
- 4) The organisation of working parties and seminars with media representatives and managers to analyse their role in the eradication of this problem, in which, in addition to acknowledging their important contribution to the progress made, relevant self-criticism has been expressed on the need to provide better protection for the victims of violence, including the treatment given them in the media.

The work done in **Spain** in the area of sensitisation constitutes good practice in terms of the evaluation of campaign impact, inducement of public debate and ways and means to encourage the media to assume their responsibility to combat sexism and violence against women.

Since 1995, two important campaigns to combat violence against women have been conducted in **Finland**. The campaign titled *A single blow is one too many*, conducted in 1998, was both national and local in scale and targeted the population at large, victims, children and young adults, as well as perpetrators, with television spots, ads in the press, billboards, posters and brochures. The campaign also included an eight-day seminar for professionals, DV articles in in-house journals, magazines circulated to all the households in Helsinki, readings titled *When love hurts* open to the public in the Helsinki Adult Education Centre, four different posters (*woman, a bride with a black eye – love is patient but how patient?; man – you have the*

courage to hit, do you have the courage to seek help?; boy - from father to son?; girl – from mother to daughter?) placed in buses, trams and underground cars and major bus, tram and underground stations during the weeks the campaign lasted. The main media used for the nation-wide campaign was a television spot whose central message was *A single blow is one too many* which also contained information on a telephone call centre providing help during the campaign.

In 2000 Finland conducted an important regional campaign to combat violence against women, titled *When love hurts*, targeting the public at large, children and young people, witnesses to violence, teachers, youth leaders and workers. The media used included: radio and television spots, ads in the press, posters and web pages. The primary objective of the campaign was to change attitudes among young men. Most of the work took place in schools, using participatory methods such as sketches and music. Thanks to the international co-operation enlisted, materials could be produced in both Finnish and Swedish, and posters for the European Union campaign in English.

The two campaigns conducted in Finland since 1995 were systematically evaluated. The results were very promising, as expected.

The work done in **Finland** to raise awareness is good practice in terms of how to gear campaigns to help change men's, including perpetrators', attitudes; it is also an example of how to link large-scale measures, such as spots and posters, to in-depth work, such as activities carried out in schools designed to help pupils assume attitudes contrary to violence against women as part of their personalities by involving them in participatory methods, which are the most effective to achieve this aim.

The campaign run in France en 2001-2002 to combat violence against women in general is nation-wide in scope and organised around the slogan *En cas de violence, brisez le silence* (*In cases of violence, break your silence*), targeting the population at large, victims, witnesses and professionals working with victims. The media used

were: ads in the press, billboards, brochures, publications, web pages and cards providing information on 24-hour call, nation-wide and permanent services of shelter and guidance. The campaign intended to raise the awareness of both professionals and the public at large about the different forms of violence against women, with information on the characteristics of this kind of violence, behaviour that needs to be encouraged, the steps to follow and possible legal action.

The campaign is part of a three-year overall action plan designed to foster close co-operation between institutions and associations and link nation-wide and local action, through three main areas of action: 1) reinforcement of the networking in place throughout France; 2) development of preventive action and support for victims (which includes the collaboration of associations and institutions) and 3) collaboration in the community with local groups to foster professional insertion or re-insertion of women victims of violence. This awareness campaign must reinforce the effectiveness of the three measures, and the staff sensitisation.

In France it has also been implemented, in January 2002, a campaign, likewise nation-wide, to combat sexual violence against minors, discussed in the section below that deals specifically with sexual violence.

The sensitisation carried out in **France** to combat all types of violence against women constitutes good practice in terms of collaboration between public and private bodies, effectively linking nation-wide and local endeavours. Therefore, the commissions of the departments to combat violence against women gather local institutions, professionals and associations, co-ordinating the different actions aiming at the eradication of this problem.

The most important campaign to combat violence against women in **Greece** in recent years, *Zero Tolerance* (1999-2000), was geared to the domestic environment and the public at large and deployed a series of media: television and radio spots, ads in the press, posters, brochures and publications. The campaign was conducted

by the *Centre on Equality Matters* and financed by the European Union and the General Secretariat for Equality (GSE).

The aim was to raise awareness of and sensitise public opinion about the problem. To this end, huge billboards were posted in five major Greek cities (Athens, Patra, Volos, Iraklio, Thessaloniki), messages were broadcast on television and radio on both local and national channels, six million brochures on domestic violence, signed by the Public Energy Corporation (DEH), were mailed, printed matter was edited, information stands were set up and a two-day meeting was held in Athens under the title *Breaking the Silence—Violence in the Family. A Crime Behind Closed Windows*.

The evaluation of the impact of the campaign showed excellent results, even better than expected; another indication of its effectiveness was the increase in the number of violence victims repairing to support centres.

The second most important campaign conducted in Greece on this subject, the *Information Campaign in the Area of Epirus about Violence against Women*, was regional in scope. Run by the *Centre for Research and Support of Victims of Abuse and Social Exclusion*, it included the following action: production and dissemination of printed matter on the resources available, production and broadcasting of 32 weekly programmes on a local television channel titled *Window on life*, a seven-hour television marathon to sensitise the local community and raise funds for violence victims, establishment of an information stand in the city's main square, open twelve hours a day for six months, production and broadcasting of radio messages; and broadcasting of a television spot on three national television channels.

The third campaign conducted in Greece in the last five years was titled *Awareness of Violence against Women*; local in scope, it targeted local associations, women's organisations, social services and hospitals. This campaign was run by the Institute of Educational Technology of Crete and the Prefecture of Iraklion.

The sensitisation work done in **Greece** constitutes good practice in terms of how to involve various segments of society in campaigns against domestic violence and co-ordinate the collaboration between public and private institutions, including in this regard specialised centres (research, education, communication), the media and local institutions.

Three important campaigns have been conducted in **Ireland** since 1995 to combat violence against women. The first, *Important information for women*, carried out in 1999 (with a second edition in 2000), which was national, regional and local in scope, was geared to victims and used the following media: radio and television spots, ads in the press and brochures adapted to the eight Health Board regions of Ireland. For that a Directory of Services for Women experiencing violence or the threat of violence was shaped. This comprehensive document lists all the services available for these women. Over 5,000 copies were distributed to doctors, A&E staff, citizen information centres, libraries, police and services providers. The Directory is available on CD ROM, and also accessible through the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform website (www.justice.ie). Although no formal evaluation was performed, the fact that this directory had to be re-edited in subsequent years is an indication of its success.

A second campaign run in Ireland in 2000 under the slogan *Going forward* targeted the public at large through television and radio spots, ads in the press, posters, press and pins. The campaign emblem was intended to convey support for women suffering violence. One indication of its success was the 30,000 pins sold across Ireland. This same motto had already been the object of a successful press campaign conducted in 1998, the purpose of which was to raise awareness of the existence of the National Steering Committee on Violence against Women, let victims know that they are not alone, that there are services designed to help them and tell perpetrators that violence against women is criminal behaviour that must be stopped.

The sensitisation carried out in **Ireland** constitutes good practice in connection with the co-ordination of national and local measures as well as action taken by the different services involved in helping violence victims and raising the awareness of the population in general to the need to provide support for victims.

Since 1995, three important campaigns to curb violence against women have been conducted in **Italy** with European fund financing. The first, *Zero tolerance*, 1998-1999, regional and local in scope, targeted the public at large, victims, children and young adults, witnesses of violence and law enforcement bodies. A number of media were used: television and radio spots, ads in the press, billboards, posters, brochures, publications, videos and web pages. The messages, showing young women in different everyday situations, encourage them to live without fear. The aim is to raise public awareness to the fact that violence against women exists, as well as to the need to ensure that men's violent behaviour should not be tolerated in any way. This campaign was run following the guidelines set out in the European proposal and fell on highly sensitive ground in certain communities, especially in Bologna and the Emilia Romana Region. It contributed to raise awareness about the struggle against the tendency to legitimise violence.

In 1998, the *Pink Telephone*, the leading Italian association against violence, sponsored the nation-wide campaign *Se un giorno qualcuno (If on any given day)* that targeted the general public, victims and elderly women, using media such as television and radio spots, ads in the press, brochures and conferences and round tables. The spots depicted normal situations which might place women, in particular elderly women, at risk.

The third Italian campaign, which took place in 1999, under the title *Pink Europe 2000*, targeted the public at large, victims and young tourists, using the following media: television spots, ads in the press, brochures, publications... One of the objectives was to alert young women travelling in Italy against possible aggression or

the risk of being lured into danger, furnishing basic information on what to do if they were subject to violence.

The three campaigns conducted in Italy since 1995 were systematically evaluated. The results, as expected, were very promising, and roused a good deal of interest, inducing discussion on the characteristics of violence against women. This, in turn, helped to raise awareness among many women and men, social service professionals and policy makers, to the severity of the problem of male violence and the need to train professionals working in this area, as well as the need to take action from a number of different areas to prevent violence and put an end to social tolerance of violence.

The work done in **Italy** in the area of sensitisation constitutes good practice with respect to the evaluation of campaign impact, involvement of NGOs, connection with Europe-wide action and inducement of debate in society as a whole.

The most important campaign conducted in Luxembourg in the last five years to combat violence against women and girls, *Fini le compromis (Meet the commitment) (1999-2001)*, was nation-wide in scope and used a number of different media (television spots, posters, brochures and publications). It was geared to different targets: public at large, victims, witnesses of violence, minors and young people.

On the occasion of the campaign, most of the country's newspapers published articles on the subject intended to create an environment against violence and in favour of victims, furnish information on prevention and legal support, eliminate taboos, sensitise the public about the responsibility of the perpetrators and the need to repress violence on legal and institutional grounds.

This campaign is an initiative of the Ministry for Advancement of Women and was conducted in conjunction with thirty-some NGOs, other ministries and the police force.

In addition to co-operation among these institutions, the campaign covered the following activities: a conference on research summarising specific and alarming statistics on potential violence in men; training on de-victimisation and feminist involvement geared to professionals working in shelters (based on a working method developed in Quebec, with excellent results, which enables violence victims to recover their self confidence and overcome the feeling of guilt) and self-defence courses for adult women and teenagers.

In conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, this campaign was linked to the one conducted to combat violence in school, with a poster contest on the subject and dedicating the closing day of the campaign, 27 November 1999, to solidarity with victims.

The work done in **Luxembourg** constitutes good practice in terms of how to articulate collaboration among public institutions and between such institutions and thirty-some NGOs involved in the campaign; this type of collaboration is highlighted in the proposals ensuing from the Fourth World Conference on Women and unquestionably played an important role in the good results obtained.

Two nation-wide campaigns to combat domestic violence have been conducted in **Portugal** in the last five years.

In one, *Youth Foundation* (1999-2000), intended for the public at large and particularly for young people, the media deployed included television, posters, brochures and web pages. The purpose was to furnish information on violence and change the attitudes that prompt it, thereby advancing in the area of prevention and reporting.

The second nation-wide campaign, *Information service for victims of domestic violence*, was geared to the public at large and victims, using different media: television and radio spots, ads in the press, posters, information posters and

publications. The aim was to furnish information on a 24-hour telephone support service.

The third campaign listed, *School against violence in family* (1999-2000), was regional in scope and was based on posters, brochures and publications. The purpose was to sensitise the educational community, in particular children and teenagers, about the reality of domestic violence, especially violence suffered by women and minors, furnishing information and documents to help clarify concepts and raise awareness of the problem.

Although systematic evaluations of the impact of these campaigns have not been conducted, the overall results were highly evaluated.

The campaigns conducted in **Portugal**, geared primarily to children, young adults and the school environment, constitute good practice in terms of changing attitudes that lead to violence before such attitudes develop, a measure that is highly relevant to preventing such violence in the future and one that, while generally acknowledged to be essential, is not often sufficiently implemented in practice.

Of the campaigns conducted since 1995 and reported by the **United Kingdom** in its reply to the questionnaire, three proved to be particularly relevant:

- 1) *Breaking the chain*, 1999, England and Wales, campaign based on an information guide and posters geared to the general public and domestic violence victims, as well as people aiming to help them, and distributed or posted in public buildings (municipal bodies, bookstores, police stations and emergency wards). According to the information available, an updated version of the guide could be circulated since summer 2002. Following this, another project is planned for 2003 includes a BBC television network advertising initiative. This will involve a television play on domestic violence, current affairs show with testimonials from victims of domestic violence. Other types of information on the problem will also be available

on the network's web page and through a support and information call centre that will be in place once the broadcasts begin.

- 2) *Living without fear*, 1999, England and Wales, campaign targeting victims and people working with them, which used the following media: ads in the press, posters, brochures and publications. These media showed examples of good practice in different areas of England and Wales and drew attention to the ways that governmental support could afford added value to the measures undertaken by local institutions.
- 3) *Behind closed doors*, 2000-2001. Scotland, campaign geared to the population as a whole, using a spot broadcast on television and shown in movie theatres. A survey on its effectiveness showed that the awareness rate was 75%, a figure regarded to be high in this type of evaluation. A previous campaign entitled *Domestic bliss*, was conducted in Scotland in 1998-99 and awarded three stars by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising.

In addition to the foregoing, the United Kingdom reported on the local campaigns conducted to adapt information very specifically to the peculiarities of the different communities involved, such as in Northern Ireland. The issues addressed in these campaigns included domestic violence and pregnancy and the directories circulated on the services available also contained examples of good practice and other basic information.

The awareness raising conducted in the **United Kingdom** is good practice with respect to co-operation among national and local institutions and ways to integrate the different campaigns in a general plan to reach the broadest possible audience and enhance campaign effectiveness by involving the private sector and expanding on the vehicles to be used through co-operation with television networks.

Of the most effective campaigns conducted in **Sweden**, was the series implemented in Stockholm titled *Operation Leave Women Alone* that targeted the public at large,

using as the basic media brochures and posters hung in the public transportation system (underground, bus and train).

The first of these campaigns, in 1997, stressed women's vulnerability when they are victims of violence.

The second, in 1999, attempted to raise awareness about men's responsibility in male violence towards women and sensitise them to the need to become involved in the struggle to curb this problem.

The third, in 2000, sought to enhance understanding about the situation of girls and boys in families where the man is violent to the woman.

The evaluation of their impact reflected very good results, even better than expected. Eighty per cent of the population reported that they were aware of the campaigns. Significant coverage was given to the subject in the media (press, radio and television) as well, and extended beyond the strictly local area.

Moreover, in 1998 Sweden implemented a nation-wide campaign, conducted by the *National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden* with Government funding and wide media support (ads in the press, radio and television, brochures, posters and publications), geared to eradicating the myths that contribute to violence against women and targeting both perpetrators and victims, stressing that such violence is a crime and sensitising public opinion about the role of shelters for victims.

The campaigns conducted in **Sweden** constitute good practice insofar as they are an attempt to sensitise the public in general about their connections with violence against women to help overcome the strong tendency to erroneously regard such violence as a very remote problem, affecting only men and women unrelated to the target audience, enabling this segment of the population to use the information provided to improve their everyday relations and prevent violence against women in any of its forms.

1.4. Good practice in terms of awareness about sexual violence against women in European Union Member States

The results obtained in the Eurobarometer (1999) indicate that Europeans have a particular aversion to sexual violence against women, since the percentage of people who regard it to be a very serious offence (90%) is higher than the percentage classifying other types of violence as very serious: physical violence (87%); psychological violence (65%); restriction of freedom (64%) and threatened violence (58%).

Despite the foregoing, studies on sexual violence indicate that the frequency is much higher than would be expected and to prevent it, a series of sexist beliefs that contribute to such violence must be eradicated, beliefs that continue to associate men's worth with their ability to overcome women's resistance to their sexual overtures, underestimating male self-control in such situations, especially when certain levels of arousal have been reached, and sustaining that men are subject to ongoing sexual tension that can be harmful if not released.

Even though important progress has been made in the European Union in recent decades with respect to the information about sex available to the population at large, which has helped to overcome certain taboos and reduce certain risks (such as unwanted pregnancies or the contagion of sexually transmitted diseases),

attempts to prevent sexual aggression in these campaigns have been significantly scant. The most relevant advances have been made in programmes implemented in educational contexts, described below.

Good practice in this regard consists of extending certain of the elements of such educational programmes that have proved to be particularly effective to the entire population; some examples are: the concept of sexual abuse and its incompatibility with the right to sexual freedom, the overcoming of beliefs that associate men's worth with their ability to wear down women's resistance or the need for men to understand that when a woman says no, she means no.

Denmark implemented, in 1999, a national campaign targeting professionals catering for the victims of sexual violence, using brochures and publications as media.

Conducting a sensitisation campaign, as the one implemented by **Denmark**, targeting women victims of sexual abuse and violence, can be considered good practice, concerning this type of violence.

In **France**, a nation-wide campaign has been launched in January 2002 to curb sexual violence among minors, geared to the public at large, victims and witnesses. The main media used include television spots and (advertising-type) short films, (situational) feature films, a commemorative billboard on the National Assembly's proclamation of the rights of the child and collaboration with the press and publishers. A pre-test comparing mothers-fathers and daughters-sons results has been very positive.

The awareness campaign conducted in **France** constitutes good practice insofar as it will help break the silence on one of the forms of violence that is hardest to curb, namely sexual violence, and one that has seldom been the object of sensitisation campaigns geared to the general public.

The campaign conducted in **Holland** before 1995 by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment Directorate for the Co-ordination of Emancipation Policy can also be considered to be good practice in sensitisation about sexual violence against women. The purpose was to create an environment in which this subject could be discussed and sensitise men and young adults of both sexes about the stereotypes underlying the portrayal of masculinity and femininity, the impact they have on their expectations and behaviour in connection with women and the risk that they may prompt certain types of sexual violence.

This campaign was implemented through intermediaries and the media both (in four sub-campaigns). During the five years it lasted, a wide range of media was deployed: a magazine for young people, brochures, posters and press and television advertising.

The studies run on the effectiveness of the campaign reflected great interest on the part of the media, due very likely to the novelty of the subject. The results showed that two thirds of the population of Holland had seen some part of the sub-campaigns and they were recognised, in the primary target group, by 70% of respondents. It was also found that the people who had seen the campaign had discussed the subject more often, felt more involved in it and were more aware it and held attitudes more in keeping with the aims pursued than those who had not.

The exercise in sensitisation about the problem of sexual violence conducted in **Holland** constitutes good practice in terms of prevention of such violence, changing, in the public at large but especially in men and young adults of both sexes, sexist prejudice and stereotypes that can lead to sexual aggression. The study run on its effectiveness may be regarded as a model of how to apply rigorous and systematic evaluation methods to measures taken to prevent violence against women.

1.5. Good practice in awareness to the problem of workplace violence against women

Despite the recommendations proposed by the European Commission in its 1991 *Code of practice on measures to combat sexual harassment*, the *Report on sexual harassment in the workplace in the European Union* (Luxembourg 1999), published eight years later, showed that the changes perceived in this regard are scarcely significant. Why is progress in the struggle against sexual harassment in the workplace so slow?

The report cites as possible causes a series of difficulties that could be circumvented via appropriate sensitisation campaigns, such as:

- An unawareness and lack of understanding, in broad segments of the population, of the concept of sexual harassment: particularly among men, but among women as well.
- The difficulty of eradicating stereotypes that contribute to maintaining the problem.
- The obstacles that still exist to report such incidents and the reluctance of companies to acknowledge them.

Such difficulties indicate that priority needs to be granted to prevention over punishment and that the political agenda for the coming years must inexcusably include sensitisation campaigns geared to both the public at large and the segments that play a decisive role in eradication of this problem (employers, trade unions, management and staff support teams, judges, prosecutors...).

The experience acquired in sensitisation about domestic violence, described above, may help to advance in this area, which appears to be highly resistant to change.

It is, moreover, important to bear in mind that there is some risk that the awareness of the extreme gravity of domestic violence may on occasion lead to an

underestimation of the severity of other forms of violence against women, such as workplace harassment, and a failure to understand the relationship between the two, or to capitalise on public sensitivity to the more serious situations to combat them all.

It may be deduced from the foregoing that there is a need to extend the impact of sensitisation campaigns so that violence against women can be seen as an attack on their dignity, which includes both the most extreme and least frequent types of aggression as well as other forms, such as workplace sexual harassment. While less severe, such abuse also has disastrous consequences on the victims' careers and physical and mental health, reduces the effectiveness and quality of the organisations where it occurs and constitutes a serious obstacle to development and progress towards equal opportunities for women and men.

The sensitisation about and debate on the possible gender components of workplace bullying may be regarded as good practice in combating violence against women in the workplace, since the problem of bullying appears especially to affect people in certain positions (such as subordination) that are more frequently filled by women than men, and thereby expand the struggle against sexual harassment to all kinds of workplace harassment against women.

Pursuant to the guidelines proposed by the European Union and the recommendations and analyses drawn up by trade unions, good practice in terms of sensitisation to sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace may be considered to consist of the following features:

- 1) *Conduct campaigns to enhance the visibility of the harassment to which women are often subject in the workplace*, helping to make victims aware that they are not alone, explaining their rights, the procedures to follow and the resources at their avail. Such campaigns should eliminate stereotypes about the guilt of harassment victims and the innocence of the perpetrators, and to raise awareness to the effect that reporting workplace violence is a duty. Reporting

opens the door to solving the problem and avoiding the appearance of further incidents.

- 2) *Foster and disseminate, in the business environment, the enforcement of the Code of practice adopted by the European Commission to combat sexual harassment and extend the scope to cover bullying.*
- 3) *Include specific references to sexual harassment and bullying in collective bargaining agreements, drafting clauses that define it broadly, as well as establishing an open list of examples of conduct that constitute harassment in all of its forms.*
- 4) *Promote the measures included in the European Union's Code of practice on measures to combat sexual harassment, equally valid for bullying, in the trade union environment, including such measures in union proposals, specific clauses in collective bargaining agreements and information activities targeting workers.*
- 5) *Draw up employer charters or statements that define conduct that may constitute harassment, covering both sexual harassment and workplace bullying.*

The programmes for preventing workplace violence implemented by **Danish** trade unions, in which many of the foregoing principles have been implemented, constitute good practice.

Furthermore, under the question on campaigns contained in the Questionnaire used as background for this guide, two Member States, namely Belgium and Holland (before 1995), listed campaigns against workplace sexual harassment; such campaigns constitute good practice in terms of how to extend sensitisation efforts made by the European Member States in connection with domestic violence to the specific area of harassment against women in their place of work:

- In **Belgium**, three campaigns were conducted on the problem by the *Service de l'égalité des chances* (Equal Opportunities Service), the body in charge of providing the first phase of support for victims of sexual harassment, inform them of their rights and guide them to the competent institutions (trade unions, legal inspection, medical inspection, National Labour Office, courts...).

With one of these campaigns, *Réseaux de personnes de confiance harcèlement sexuel sur les lieux de travail (Networks of confidential counsellors against workplace sexual harassment) 1996-2000*, the aim is to collaborate in, cater for, exchange information on and pose problems relating to this specific form of violence, recognising that the confidential counsellor needs to be deeply involved, psychologically, intellectually and from the administrative standpoint.

The second campaign, 1998, consisting of posters, conveyed the message: *Un entretien avec la personne de confiance peut vous aider? Si pour vous c'est du harcèlement (Can a chat with the confidential counsellor help you? If it's hard for you, it's harassment)*. The need for such a campaign, intended to clarify the role of the confidential counsellor, was expressed by the people comprising the network that grew out of the first campaign.

The third campaign (2001), using brochures, publications and a web page as media, was the backdrop for a number of documents on such aspects as the role of the confidential counsellor, creation of the crime of sexual harassment in the penal code, the status of the problem in the private sector... and including information on sexual harassment in a brochure titled *Violence, comment s'en sortir (How to get out of a violent situation)* which also describes other forms of violence.

- **Holland's** campaign, conducted in 1994 after enactment of the *Working Conditions Act*, included a television spot showing a man trying to make

photocopies while he was assailed by a dog intent upon copulating with his leg. This situation, highly uncomfortable for the subject, was an attempt to depict how women feel when they receive much the same treatment from men. The slogan was: *Women feel like this when sexually harassed by a man. How would you behave in such a situation?*

Copies of the picture were also distributed to workplaces. This measure was part of a broader campaign on sexual violence against women run in Holland between 1991 and 1995, described in the preceding section.

2. EDUCATION AND SPECIALISED TRAINING

2.1. Education

2.1.1. Measures to combat violence against women through education proposed in the Fourth World Conference on Women

As the Fourth World Conference on Women acknowledged in its Platform for Action, *equality, partnership between women and men and respect for human dignity must permeate all stages of the socialization process. Educational systems should promote self-respect, mutual respect, and co-operation between women and men.*

The measures to be adopted to achieve this through education include, most explicitly:

- Modifying sexist models and prejudice based on the idea of inferiority or superiority of one or the other sex.
- Raising awareness of the fact that violence against women is a violation of their human rights.
- Sensitising public opinion about the adverse effects of violence on the family, on the social setting and on the society.
- Teaching youngsters to communicate without violence.
- Counselling present or potential violence victims so they can protect themselves against aggression.
- Eliminating bullying and other forms of violence from educational institutions.

2.1.2. Measures proposed in the area of education to combat violence against women in the European Union

The crucial role that education can and should play in the eradication of violence against women is generally acknowledged throughout the European Union, both by

people in different professions and areas working specifically in this field, who nearly always stress the importance of educational change, and by society at large, which considers education to be a fundamental tool to change the attitudes and behaviours that tend to perpetuate sexism and violence against women from one generation to the next.

The results of the 1999 Eurobarometer survey on violence against women are relevant in this regard: 91% of the respondents asserted that *teaching young people mutual respect* could help to combat the problem.

But acknowledging the importance of education in the eradication of violence against women does not appear to suffice to reach the desired aims. The fact that the proposals formulated in different international fora on this subject rarely include detailed and specific recommendations that go any farther in this direction than the terms of the Platform for Action ensuing from the Beijing Conference may, for instance, be construed as evidence of this.

Furthermore, in the replies from Member States to the Questionnaire on Good Practice used to prepare this paper, only four of them, (Finland, France, Spain and United Kingdom) indicated good educational practice to be particularly effective, noting moreover, that while the subject of violence against women is gradually being included in formal schooling curricula and initial and continuing teacher education, this is not by any measure systematic or general practice.

These results concur with the findings of the 1999 Eurobarometer, in which only 8.6% of the respondents said they had dealt with the subject in school.

The strategies being used to overcome such limitations and to include the subject in formal education include:

- The production and distribution of teaching materials (Austria, Finland, Holland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom).

- Incentives for formulating such materials in the form of subsidies and awards (Spain and Sweden).
- The inclusion of the subject as part of cross-curricular themes such as equal opportunities for men and women (Austria, Belgium, France and Spain), violence (Italy and Luxembourg) or more specifically, through programmes designed to combat school violence, that include express training on how to deal with it (Austria, Germany, Holland and Spain) through general sensitisation campaigns about domestic violence targeting the school-age public (Portugal).
- The introduction of domestic violence is covered indirectly under the wide subject area of relationships and citizenship (United Kingdom) or as an elective unit that may be taken by middle school students (Ireland).
- The inclusion of the gender perspective in sex education programmes (France, Germany, Holland and Sweden), bringing specific programmes on the prevention of sexual violence implemented by other institutions to schools (United Kingdom, under the *Crime Reduction Programme*), or organising classroom lectures by experts in the prevention of sex abuse (Austria).
- The delivery of training in non-violent ways of dealing with conflicts (Germany, Greece, Holland and United Kingdom).
- The conducting of pilot programmes either by the Government or research teams, which are systematically evaluated before being distributed or generally implemented (Finland, Germany, Greece, Holland, Spain and United Kingdom).
- The inclusion of the issue linked to the sexual differences in the studies to be taken by teaching staff (France) or as a requisite in the education courses required of all university professors (Sweden).

2.1.3. Characteristics of good educational practice to combat violence against women in general

The results obtained in recent research on this subject point in the same direction as the proposals of the Fourth Beijing Conference and acknowledge that the general characteristics of good educational practice designed to prevent violence against women in all its forms should comply with the following criteria:

- 1) *Teach youngsters how to practise equality through co-operation between girls and boys based on mutual respect.* Co-operating from childhood and youth around shared goals and on an equal footing is a way of encouraging empowerment, an attitude incompatible with violence with violence against women, and of contributing to the elimination of two of the main conditions underlying this type of violence: the unequal distribution of power in society and the resistance to change fostered by this situation, particularly among men.

- 2) *Include the struggle against sexism and violence in the school curriculum,* teaching children to detect and combat problems that lead to sexism and violence against women. The mechanisms through which this behaviour is perpetuated are so difficult to eradicate that it does not suffice for schools to be non-sexist or non-violent: rather, the school curriculum needs to include experiences that actively and explicitly combat these two serious problems.

- 3) *Favour ways of overcoming the various components of sexism and gender violence by encouraging cognitive, emotional and behavioural change,* for which account must be taken of the following:
 - The cognitive component of sexism consists of confounding the social or psychological differences between women and men with sex-linked biological differences, in the erroneous belief that the former are an automatic and inevitable outcome of the latter, dismissing the impact of history, culture, upbringing...

 - Such beliefs often underlie the idea that women are inferior to men and in that regard justify discrimination and violence. Good practice in handling this problem includes reversing the invisibility of women in the curriculum by including the study of the history of discrimination and violence against women.

- The emotional component or valuation underlying these problems hinges on sexist identity building, which associates female values with weakness and submission and male values with strength, absolute control, emotional stamina or the use of violence, in particular in situations in which their *manliness* is threatened.

This component explains the relationship - observed for decades and still reported in recent studies - between the sexist approach to male identity building and most of the male violence, including not only violence against women, but their aggressive behaviour towards other men or even themselves.

The discussion of experience based on role models (among classmates and teachers) whose attitudes are openly contrary to sexism and violence is effective in dealing with this component.

- The behavioural component of sexism consists of the tendency to put it into practice through discrimination and violence. The risk of such behaviour rises in the absence of positive alternatives for responding to psychological and social functions (stand out, reduce insecurity, join a peer group, resolve conflicts of interest...) without resorting to destructive behaviour.

Practices that afford experience in the development of alternatives contributes to overcoming this component.

- 4) *Include the struggle against sexism and violence in a broader perspective: the defence of human rights.* Progress in the prevention of sexism and violence against women can only be made if students are helped to discover that these problems are not only detrimental to the most obvious victims, but to society as a whole, and to view them from a broader, more universal perspective.

Effective ways of achieving this include practices that sensitise students to the violations of human rights taking place in the private domain, where most such

violations take place, helping them to understand that sexism is a serious threat to such rights, especially when it translates into violence.

Including sexism and violence in a broader perspective, depicting them as serious threats to human rights, leads youngsters to regard them as problems that affect everyone, since they jeopardise the level of justice required to guarantee respect for our rights.

It is also important to enhance awareness of the limitations that sexism and violence impose on all human beings, by reducing values to the stereotypes associated with one's own sex (nurturing for women and energy for men, for instance) and hindering the development of values traditionally associated with the other sex or even discriminating against people who include such other values in their identity.

- 5) *Develop educational procedures that make it possible to implement the above objectives*, in which students are called upon to play a very active role, interacting with their classmates, to counter social influences that lead to sexism and violence against women; the aim is to teach them to critically analyse the stereotypes and models underlying the recurrence of such attitudes, such as often conveyed in the media. Good practice in this regard consists of using the media in school programmes against sexism and violence.

- 6) *Furnish schools with the facilities needed to implement effective programmes to prevent violence against women*, favouring technical and practical teacher training, providing incentives for the effort that educational innovation always entails, encouraging the inclusion of these programmes in schools' educational projects so they are assumed on the grounds of consensus, providing the space and time to set them up and evaluate them systematically, to monitor the progress made and identify any adjustments required, furnishing the various facilities that make all this feasible (funding, materials, scheduling adjustments, human resources, experts to whom inquiries can be addressed...).

7) *Integrate the action taken in the educational context with measures implemented in all other contexts around which society is structured*, connecting them from a multi-disciplinary approach that enables teachers to co-operate with other social actors (who may be invited to participate in classroom activities, for instance) and evaluating the effectiveness of their task in preventing violence. Such an approach should help teachers to overcome the feeling of impotence that this issue often induces, due to its complexity, as well as to *think globally* (to combat adverse influence that may come from any of the segments comprising society: media, family...) and *act locally* (in the classroom, for instance).

2.1.4. Difficulties encountered in educational institutions to implement the measures proposed in the Fourth World Conference to combat violence against women

One of the cases described in the evaluation of the European Union's DAPHNE (1998) programme on the struggle against violence towards women, minors and young adults illustrates the difficulties involved in moving from educational theory to practice in the subject of preventing such violence, as follows:

At the outset most projects had a good, workable idea corresponding to the measures and activities specified by the Daphne Initiative. There is, however, sometimes a gap between an idea, the plan of action and the actual implementation of the idea. Not well thought out project proposals that consequently lacked a coherent methodology were the most common factors resulting in ineffectiveness. When partnership complications are added to it, then projects had to seriously struggle to reach completion.

(...) An illustration of this is an organisation aiming to develop a preventive programme on sexual harassment targeting both young women and educational authorities. In practice, however neither the students nor the

educational staff were interested in the problems of sexual harassment and did not wish to continue the training. This had rather discouraging effects.

The point is that to appraise the effectiveness of programmes designed to fight violence against women through education and the difficulties encountered in putting such programmes into practice, account must be taken of the fact that the actors who should lead the educational change proposed by the Fourth World Conference on Women, beginning with the teaching staff, often have serious doubts about how to implement it due, among others, to the following:

1. Insufficient professional training to perform this task.
2. Inability to fall back on educational models used during their own childhood and youth to move ahead in this area.
3. Uneven progress made under programmes conducted from the gender perspective, which have often proved to be more effective for women than men and are sometimes perceived by the latter as a threat.
4. Complexity of a problem in which the perception of the risks involved hinders any headway. These risks include:
 - The risk that may be derived from the possible conveyance of generalised fear, obstructing the development of constructive couple relationships based on mutual respect.
 - The risk of converting the classroom into a context for airing clinical problems whose treatment teachers neither have nor feel they have the training to treat, in view of which they fear the cure may be *worse than the disease*.
 - The inability of traditional methods to curb the various kinds of social pressure that may lead to the recurrence of sexist patterns, along with the difficulties, for a sizeable proportion of the teaching staff, inherent in

the use of the type of educational procedures that might enable them to reach this aim.

2.1.5. Good practice to prevent or detect domestic violence through education in European Union Member States

On the grounds of the work performed with victims of domestic violence, including work systematically classified as research, three aspects of good educational practice to combat such violence can be singled out as particularly important, which:

1) Help curb the intergenerational recurrence of violence by establishing conditions that ward off that risk.

Studies of the personality traits of adults who live in families where violence occurs show that they were often brought up in a violent family background as well, but the intergenerational reproduction is not inevitable. Most people who suffered violence in childhood neither suffer from nor repeat this behaviour as adults.

It is also observed that the people who in their adult lives break away from the violence suffered as children differ from those who repeat such behaviour in a series of ways which can, therefore, be developed to break the violence cycle and prevent its perpetuation:

- The establishment of non-violent bonds of affections that afford gratifying social experience and contribute to the development of basic self-confidence and esteem.
- The rejection of all kinds of violence, including the mistreatment of children and violence against women and the incorporation the explicit commitment to exclude violence from future relations as part of their own identity.

- The recognition of the violence experienced in the family of origin as just that, acknowledging such behaviour to be inappropriate and conveying to others the emotions it aroused (when, on the contrary, such experience is justified on the grounds of sexist or patriarchal arguments, the risk of recurrence rises).
- The acquisition of skills alternative to violence to deal with stress and effectively solve social conflicts.

The work carried out with the victims of domestic violence, in an attempt to develop the above traits, reflects on the effectiveness of this approach to help prevent the recurrence of violence.

Moreover, the primary prevention programmes conducted in schools suggest that these same traits can be developed in teenagers not exposed to such violence, to protect them from the adverse effects of possible future exposure.

One example of good practice in this regard is action taken in **Germany**, based on the Federal Government's Action Plan to combat violence against women, which stressed the need to break away from intergenerational recurrence of domestic violence as one of the mainstays of prevention, taking account of the fact that *the teachings of violence can only be countered in the long term if not only parents but educators, teachers and even the media set examples of strategies free of violence to solve personal conflicts and convey, in the treatment of people, a culture of non-violence*. The materials designed for teachers, parents and all those working with young people, as well as the various pilot programmes run, were formulated on these grounds.

Some of the pilot programmes implemented were: *Girls in the Context of Youth Services and Social Services for the Young, Alliance for Democracy and Tolerance, against Extremism and Violence and the Federal Health Education Programme*, geared to fostering communication and conflict-solving skills, self-

esteem, personal responsibility and the need to change the stereotypes that lead to violence.

2) *Teach youngsters to detect the early signs of intimate partner violence, from the very outset of such behaviour patterns.* The studies conducted on partner violence show that the problem often appears in the early stages of the relationship.

At first, the victim believes she can control it. In this first stage, violence is generally less frequent and less serious than in the later stages and often takes the form of emotional abuse. The victim attempts to accommodate the perpetrator to avoid aggression, thereby enhancing her own vulnerability. Most perpetrators combine this conduct with other kinds of behaviour, through which they persuade the victim that the violence will not recur, alternating two types of behaviour, as if they were two different people.

In the more advanced stages, the perpetrator threatens the victim with very serious acts of violence if she leaves him, threats which may even lead the victim to fear for the safety of her children or other family members.

A good understanding on the part of possible victims of the pattern described contributes to preventing violence by alerting them to the risk that the early stages entail and to reject violence and victimisation as a part of their own identity.

Sight should not be lost of the fact that very significant changes occur in gender identity and the first partner relationships are formed in adolescence.

Good practice, in this regard, consists of helping youngsters understand that partnerships must be based on mutual respect and to regard emotional abuse and absolute control as incompatible with such relationships.

The programmes (a book and two videos) that the Spanish Women's Institute will be sending out to secondary schools in Spain are geared to the above objective;

the programmes, which include a series of seventeen activities formulated and verified by a Complutense University of Madrid research team, in conjunction with secondary school teachers, around the seven recommendations described in the preceding section, aim to help teenagers build an identity contrary to sexism and violence.

In one of these activities, for instance, youngsters play the role of experts on violence against women, designing television campaigns that target teenagers to encourage them not to engage in violence or which enable them to repudiate violence in its early stages. By playing the role of experts against violence and sexism, they acquire the skills and know-how involved in such activities and identify with the objective: the defence of the equality and dignity of all human beings, realising that sexism poses a threat that affects everyone in this regard.

One of the aims of Personal, Health and Social Education and Citizenship Education lies in providing pupils knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens (United Kingdom).

- 3) *Establish mechanisms that enable educational teams in schools to detect cases of domestic violence in the student body that may be affecting girls and their mothers.*

Professionals working in schools are in an excellent position to detect such problems, since:

1. They generally can watch girls every day throughout at least one school year.
2. They are able to compare their behaviour with that of other girls of the same age and from the same social and cultural background.

3. They can interact with girls and their families. The studies run in this regard show, however, that most education professionals have serious doubts about concluding, on the basis of their observations, that a girl is being mistreated. This may explain why they often fail to report cases where they detect such a risk, due to the fear of erring and the possible adverse consequences of such a mistake.

There are well grounded surveys that show that such obstacles can be circumvented by questionnaires or protocols formulated specifically for that purpose, systematising teachers' observations on girls in risk situations which can lead to the initiation of inquiries and subsequent action by the respective social or judicial services.

2.1.6. Good practice in prevention of sexual violence through education in the European Union Member States

The educational programmes implemented in recent decades to prevent or stop sexual abuse beginning in childhood attempt to develop a series of skills and resources that protect children from the risk of victimisation in both the sexual and other domains. Such skills enable teenage and younger girls to:

- 1) *Detect and avoid* dangerous situations, without altering their basic trust in others.
- 2) *Say no* in situations that may involve abuse without jeopardising their capacity for empathy and the establishment of gratifying social relationships.
- 3) *Ask for help* when they need it and especially when they begin to be or risk becoming victims.
- 4) Be emotionally prepared not to *feel guilty* when they are not.

Research on the prevention of victimisation in childhood and youth also stresses the need to teach:

1) That everyone is entitled to sexual freedom and, therefore, to say no to an unwanted intimate relationship or body contact.

2) That there are secrets that should not be kept and that a victim is never, and should never, feel guilty about situations created by people who abuse of their power, and that any adult who behaves inappropriately in this sense must always be so regarded.

3) That confidence counsellors (whom youngsters must be taught to choose) must be told about the disturbing or unwanted situations suffered to enlist the protection that anyone needs when she starts to be a victim, since otherwise the problem tends to worsen.

In studies conducted on prevention of victimisation, it is found that even one-hour programmes suffice to enable victims of such situations to report them, as it helps them to overcome their fear and sensation of guilt (the perpetrator's principal allies) and ask for help.

It is likewise observed that a few months after participating in these programmes, there are two things that they tend to forget: that children are never guilty of the sexual abuse inflicted on them by adults and that there are secrets that should not be kept, beliefs that contribute to victimisation and seem to be very deeply rooted in traditional sexist culture, as it is conveyed to children and teenagers.

Pursuant to the foregoing, good practice consists of including the gender perspective in sex education programmes delivered in school (**France, Germany, Sweden**) and the prevention of sexual abuse (**Austria, Holland and United Kingdom**).

In this regard, for example, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science sent schools a circular titled *Safe schools*, which stresses that education is only possible in contexts that meet that requirement and encourages the creation of environments that guarantee such safety; the measures suggested include the implementation of

telephone information services for students and parents as well as teachers and projects specifically geared to preventing sexual abuse and harassment by providing information, materials and training methods and organising lectures and other activities designed to create a safe atmosphere at school.

2.1.7. Good practice in the prevention of violence in the workplace through education in the European Union Member States

The studies conducted in recent years on bullying at school, which include several of the projects on school violence implemented under the European Union's Socrates programme and pioneered by Norway, show that such violence has characteristics in common with sexual harassment and bullying among adults in workplace contexts, since the former:

- 1) Generally include, in addition to physical aggression, teasing, threats, intimidation, humiliation, systematic exclusion, insults...
- 2) Tend to originate problems that recur and last for some time.
- 3) Are usually prompted by a single student, generally supported by a group, against a defenceless victim who is unable to get out of the situation by him/herself.
- 4) Last over a more or less long time because the people surrounding the perpetrators and their victims fail to interfere directly due to unawareness of the situation or the adoption of a passive attitude towards it.

Studies on bullying at school show that it occurs rather more frequently than expected. It appears that at one time or another during their schooling, all students may suffer the harmful consequences of this problem, as passive observers, victims or perpetrators, which increases the risk of the recurrence of such problems in their adult lives.

The good practice implemented in recent years to prevent or detain bullying that sometimes appears in schools is geared to creating standardised contexts (such as class assemblies) in which the problems arising are periodically and preventively discussed and procedures are developed to help establish a culture of non-violence, and zero tolerance of violence, on the part of all the members of the school community. To attain this:

a) A *non-violent style* must be adopted to vent stress and solve conflicts that may arise, helping to actively build a *culture of non-violence*, teaching youngsters to reject any behaviour that causes intimidation or victimisation. This implies that adults must refrain from using such behaviour among themselves or with their students.

b) The *conspiracy of silence* that generally surrounds bullying at school must be broken: indeed, the educational system itself, inside the institutions, may appear to side with the bullies when it does not encourage reporting of destructive situations which, if not actively halted from the outset, tend to degenerate into more serious problems.

c) *An end must be put to perpetrator impunity*, breaking away from the tendency to look the other way that usually prevails in schools when violence occurs. The disciplinary procedures that prove to be most effective against impunity and against the tendency for bullying to recur are the ones that: help the violent student to put him/herself in the victim's place, understand how destructive violence is, repent from having used it and try to repair the damage done. The availability of mediators between bullies and their victims usually enhances the effectiveness of such practice.

2.2. Specialised training

2.2.1. Measures on specialised training proposed in the Fourth World Conference on Women

As the Fourth World Conference on Women acknowledged in its Platform for Action, combating violence against women calls for *promot(ing) an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes related to violence against women; actively encourag(ing), support(ing) and implement(ing) measures and programmes aimed at increasing the knowledge and understanding of the causes, consequences and mechanisms of violence against women among those responsible for implementing these policies, such as law enforcement officers, police personnel and judicial, medical and social workers, as well as those who deal with minority, migration and refugee issues*; the training delivered should help to provide fair treatment for victims, avoid abuses of power and revictimisation.

2.2.2. Specialised training in violence against women for professionals catering for victims in the European Union

Based on the responses to the Questionnaire on Good Practice addressing specialised training for victim support and assistance personnel, it is observed that:

- 1) *Law enforcement and security corps personnel are the ones who seem to have received most specialised training to deal with violence against women.*

In nine Member States (60%) training is included in the studies required to qualify for the position: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. Nine countries also include studies of this nature in their continuing education programmes: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Specialised training for law enforcement corps is nearly always furnished by public institutions.

An indication of the special status afforded police training in this area in the European Union is the fact that a question in this regard was included on the Eurobarometer (1999) and that 78% of the respondents said they agreed to the need for the police force to receive specific training in the area of violence against women.

2) In three States (20%), *social service professionals* receive specific training on how to deal with violence against women to qualify for the job (Germany, Greece and Ireland). In nine (60%), such training is provided in continuing education courses (Austria, Belgium, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom –Northern Ireland-), delivered primarily by public institutions, although in some cases by private bodies as well. This training is often acquired under broader programmes designed to combat violence against women.

3) *Court system staff* must take specific training on the subject of violence against women to qualify for the job in France and Spain only, i.e., 13% of the Member States. Six (40%) provide continuing education courses: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain and Sweden.

4) Nine Member States (60%) do deliver courses on violence against women under continuing education programmes for health professionals (Austria, Belgium, France, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom – Northern Ireland-).

5) Courses on violence against women are required much less frequently of *professionals engaging in law* to qualify for their positions, with the imperative in place in Ireland and Spain only. As far as continuing education for this community of professionals is concerned, Austria and Sweden, in addition to Ireland and Spain, deliver training on violence against women.

2.2.3. Characteristics of good practice in specialised training for professionals catering for victims

Pursuant to the recommendations proposed at the international expert conference held at Vienna (1998) on *Measures to Combat Male Violence against Women*, good practice in specialised training is characterised by the following:

- 1) *General characteristics*. Specialised training should contribute to interinstitutional co-operation in this field – a process that involves circumventing considerable obstacles – and be subject to ongoing evaluation to ascertain which models and procedures are most effective and should be universally implemented.

This calls for formulating and evaluating specific training materials adapted to the nature of the work performed in each area. Given the special vulnerability of women immigrants, professionals working in this field should receive training about cultural diversity and racism.

Good practice in this regard consists of including professionals from minority groups, especially women, in the services catering for victims from minority groups.

- 2) *Training and police support for victims of violence*. In law enforcement organisations, cases of violence against women should be entrusted to trained officers.

Good practice in connection with such training is to involve experts from public institutions and NGOs who work with violence victims.

Police officers are entitled to receive clear and precise guidelines in the face of the ambivalence in society on violence against women. Moreover, police training must help them to understand victims' needs and provide treatment that

contributes to their empowerment, disregarding anything that obstructs their recovery from the psycho-social trauma caused by violence; in particular, no pressure should be exerted on the victim throughout the penal process.

The States must guarantee that their officers are trained to avoid revictimisation and have to implement effective legal measures that ensure victims' safety, undertaking effective and ongoing control procedures.

Moreover, good practice in terms of specialised training to acquire the skills needed to handle particularly difficult situations such as in the case of professionals catering for violence victims, is identified in the research published on the subject in recent years to comprise the following peculiarities:

1. *The training model should foster co-operation at several levels:* first, among officers who are to apply new know-how and skills in their everyday work; second, among officers and other professionals working from complementary perspectives (public institutions and NGOs, for instance), and third, among the above two groups of professionals and independent experts conducting programmes to combat violence against women.
2. *The training programme should combine theory and practice,* dividing the course into a series of sessions devoted to reflecting on the aims to be reached, the obstacles that are generally encountered and the innovations that may help overcome them, establishing the relationship between theoretical principles and practical activities.

The course should be divided in accordance with a previously established schedule to be able to plan a given innovation, apply it in everyday practice and reflect on the benefits and difficulties as the practice is successively implemented. This, in turn, implies that the training course should last for several months.

3. *There should be incentives to reward the effort involved in participating in the training programme, with appropriate acknowledgement and credits on the person's professional record as well as financial remuneration.*

2.2.4. Good practice in specialised training on violence against women in the European Union Member States

The paper on *Legislation in the Member States of the Council of Europe in the field of violence against women* (2001) contains a number of examples of good practice in respect of specialised training for professionals catering for victims, in which the above principles are applied:

Belgium: Members of the gendarmerie and the police receive training on police assistance to victims of violence and attend a basic instruction course on violence. Some police stations have received grants for installing suitable reception facilities where victims of violence can be attended to and questioned in a calm environment. In order to qualify for the grant, a station must have put a member of its staff through the necessary training in specialised interview techniques for questioning victims.

Since 1997, the training programme for judges and prosecutors has included special training on physical and sexual violence. In 1998, this training was added to the basic programme for trainee judges so that all the trainees in the country now take courses on the subject.

The specialised training conducted in **Belgium** constitutes an example of good practice insofar as it involves the integrated delivery of theoretical and practical know-how on catering for victims in training courses for professionals, which address specific techniques to gather information from and about people undergoing particularly trying circumstances.

United Kingdom: In June 1999, the Home Office and the Women's Unit published a joint document *Living Without Fear*, discussed in the chapter on awareness raising, which sets out an integrated approach to tackling violence against women. It addresses all forms of violence against them, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape and sexual assault, violence at work and stalking.

The document highlights concrete, practical examples from different organisations, agencies and local authorities, of how violence is being successfully tackled across the country. It focuses on the way different organisations and agencies work together to deliver better, quicker and more effective services for women who have experienced violence.

The foregoing example of good practice in the **United Kingdom**, illustrates the importance of complying with the recommendations of the paper on Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action 1995-2000, in connection with the need to: *create an international knowledge base of models to put an end to violence against women, including guidelines, model legislation, training modules, documentation procedures and other decisive materials on the subject.*

In the Questionnaire on Good Practice used as background material for this guide, some Member States provide a detailed description of the process followed to deliver specialised training for people in charge of catering for violence victims, in which certain important characteristics of the recommendations proposed to enhance the quality of such training are observed:

Austria: In 1996/1997, special training seminars were held for professionals working in the legal, medical, social, etc. fields to ensure victims are afforded suitable treatment and violence is appropriately handled by the target groups.

Since 1998, special seminars have been held for staff in offices providing support for women and other institutions offering assistance for women

subject to violence. The underlying philosophy of such interdisciplinary seminars, based on previous experience, is that the different groups of professionals need to co-operate with one another to protect victims. These seminars address issues such as ways to improve co-operation among institutions and between them and the region where they conduct their activities and approaches that further the strong points and minimise the weak points of co-operation.

These seminars showed a high effectiveness, Austria informs.

The training effort deployed in **Austria** constitutes good practice in interdisciplinary co-operation which, moreover, addresses both the issues that the constant contact with violence poses for people who have to help victims and the need to teach and acquire the skills to deal with such issues.

Belgium. In 1998 the training programme for judicial interns (stagiaires), included specific training on physical and sexual violence. In the context of the National Action Plan against Violence towards Women of 11 May 2001, the Ministry of Justice, through the Senior Council of Justice, established specific training for the Bench with respect to intimate partner violence.

These professionals have been sensitised about the problem of physical and sexual violence through study sessions (organised by the provincial co-ordinating committees on combating violence against women) and the publication for physicians *Aidez-les à rompre le silence (Help them break their silence)*.

In the framework of the above National Action Plan against Violence towards Women, the Ministry of Health has undertaken to sensitise family doctors and health professionals in emergency wards about domestic violence.

The Ministry of the Interior undertakes to train police and future police officers. The violence issue is broached from different types of training: legal, general and socio-psychological, as well as in relation to professional techniques of a practical nature.

The purpose of the *police escort for victims support service* or the *victims' assistance centre* is to sensitise all the officers in the corps on a face-to-face basis. They ensure that all members of the corps receive training on support for victims, adapted to the various local situations. And they are in constant contact with other agents involved in catering for victims.

In 1996, the Ministries of the Interior and of Employment and Labour drafted a protocol on the prevention of revictimisation that calls for police stations to establish reception areas for victims of physical and sexual violence, which must be staffed by specially trained personnel.

As can be seen from the foregoing description, good practice in **Belgium**, specified in the paper on *Legislation in the Member States of the Council of Europe in the field of violence against women* (2001), continue to bear fruit and are a model of how to involve the various bodies concerned in the extension of training to all professionals catering for victims.

They are likewise an example of the co-ordination of theory and practice in training on the prevention of revictimisation, one of the most prominent aims in the Fourth World Conference's Platform for Action.

Spain: A total of 1,502 training courses were conducted between 1998 and 2000, attended by 60,878 professionals from different areas involved in catering for women subject to violence and the prevention of such violence.

The number of courses and attendance by the various groups of professionals are shown below:

	Training courses	Attendance
Health professionals	106	4,218
Social services	152	8,579
Law enforcement and local police forces	279	15,951
Judicial, legal professionals	201	8,782
Educational community	763	23,185
Media	1	163
TOTAL	1,502	60,878

The training courses conducted in **Spain** can be regarded as good practice in terms of combining theoretical and practical expertise and of taking account of the opinions of women's associations and NGOs in their design.

Greece: Although in its replies to the questionnaire this country acknowledges that it does not organise continuing education courses on a routine basis, it has held several seminars intended for different groups of professionals, namely:

- Seminars targeting law enforcement personnel organised by the *Inter-ministerial Committee for the Repression of Violence against Women*.
- Since 1999, the Research Centre on Equality Matters (KETHI) has frequently organised seminars for attorneys.

This same institution has also conducted seminars for nurses and social workers, among other groups.

The above committee is planning to edit educational materials and intensify seminars for social services in prefectures, hospitals, townships and welfare services.

Holland: Has implemented training courses, characterised by special content, for health and social service professionals, in addition to the courses in place for law enforcement personnel.

The Netherlands Centre for Gender-Specific Care, Innovation and the Combating of Sexual Violence, has, in the last four years, assumed the responsibility for driving the implementation process by performing four basic duties: foster inter-regional co-operation, attempt to ensure that the problem of sexual violence receives structural attention in professional training courses, improve the quality of policies and contribute to victim empowerment.

The results of this policy were: a series of materials for practical training; a training module on violence against women for university students; training for domestic violence instructors; the inclusion of the study of sexual violence in training programmes for psychiatrists; a training module on incest for universities; a training course on sexual abuse, detection and treatment for psychologists and psychotherapists.

The work performed by **Greece** and **Holland** constitutes good practice in terms of collaboration with bodies specialising in research and higher education to foster the implementation of programmes and develop high quality materials to contribute to the struggle against violence towards women.

Most of the responses to the Questionnaire on Good Practice provided by Member States indicate that advances in the inclusion of specialised training for professionals working with violence victims have been made in most cases in the continuing education process and exceptionally in specific courses, with the possible concomitant risk that such training may not reach all the professionals engaging in this work.

Good practice to expand the scope of such training consists of enhancing the awareness of the bodies in charge of formulating and implementing curricula, such as universities and research institutions, of the relevance of the issue of violence against women for the future of the professionals they train.

Involving such bodies in co-operative endeavours with public and private institutions routinely working in the area (for instance, including the issue in grants for research projects or for the design of continuing education programmes, such as is being done in Greece and Holland) generally contributes to meeting this aim.

The experience accumulated in recent years in training for police force and social service professionals may be very useful in extending such training to other highly relevant areas in the struggle against this problem, including, *inter alia*, judicial and health professionals, psychologists and other professionals working with high risk groups (such as immigrant women or women with disabilities), as well as public officials at the national, regional or local level.

Sweden provides an example of good practice in terms of the foregoing proposal, namely, the inclusion of the study of violence against women as part of the compulsory university curriculum, where the subject is one of the areas on gender equality required for the compulsory (university) exam in law, medicine, nursing, psychology, psychotherapy, social work, social care-giving and theology.

Important progress has also been made in **Holland** in this regard, with the inclusion of the study of violence against women in the curricula for a number of training courses, such as those taken by people training for positions in the judicial and/or police force. The foregoing was a part of the national campaign launched early in 2001 to prevent and combat domestic violence initiated by the Ministry of Justice, with the involvement of numerous governmental and non-governmental organisations; the two main priorities of the campaign were: to foster the formal inclusion of domestic violence in the basic curricula for all relevant professionals and

to develop and implement *on-the-job training* to improve the support provided for victims and ensure effective treatment of perpetrators.

The **Dutch** experience is good practice on how to encourage co-operation among the various bodies involved, including NGOs, to improve the quality and scope of specialised courses in the curricula for people training to work in the struggle against violence towards women.

3. RESOURCES AND SOCIAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

3.1. Measures on resources and social services for victims proposed in the Fourth World Conference on Women

As the Fourth World Conference on Women acknowledged, Governments should *provide well-funded shelters and relief support for girls and women subjected to violence, as well as medical, psychological and other counselling services and free or low-cost legal aid, where it is needed, as well as appropriate assistance to enable them to find a means of subsistence.*

Information on the availability of such resources and how they can be accessed should be amply disseminated so the women in need of them are aware of their existence.

Explicit mention is made in the platform of certain groups of women who are particularly vulnerable to violence, such as women with disabilities, elderly women, refugees or immigrants, etc. To guarantee access to information and the services available to them if they should become victims of violence, it may be necessary to *establish linguistically and culturally accessible services for migrant women victims, who are victims of gender-based violence.*

3.2. Characteristics of good practice in resources and social services to help victims of violence against women

Pursuant to the proposals of the Fourth World Conference, the Council of Europe formulated an *Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women* in November 1997, which asserts that all women and girls subject to violence must have immediate access to safety and protection through appropriate support services that attend to their needs and enable them to find suitable financial resources, regardless of their relationship with the perpetrator.

The following recommendations with respect to resources and social services for violence victims ensued from the discussion taking place at the expert meetings on violence against women organised by the European Union in Vienna in 1998 and Jyväskylä in 1999:

- 1) Create a sufficiently extensive network of women's support centres with at least one place per 10,000 women, where violence victims can receive the assistance they need.

These services should be staffed by qualified and suitably remunerated personnel and should provide legal, psychological, social and occupational counsel. Victims' right to assistance should not depend on their financial situation and they should be allowed to stay as long as necessary to meet their needs. These centres must also have qualified childcare personnel.

- 2) Gear services to women's empowerment, helping them organise their lives independently of the perpetrator, which entails assistance in finding a job if necessary, particularly when they have children to support.

It should be borne in mind, in this regard, that shelters generally provide a short-term solution, so this measure must be co-ordinated with others that guarantee the victim's long-term safety and empowerment.

- 3) Overcome the special difficulties affecting certain groups of women, since the incidence of the above problems tends to be higher when violence victims pertain to socially stigmatised groups or when their legal status is precarious, such as is often the case, in the European Union, of irregular immigrant women.

To help overcome these difficulties, measures ensuring their safety and protection from violence must be adopted, regardless of their legal status, along

with measures designed to facilitate independence from the perpetrator, such as access to a job, free language courses and childcare services for their children.

- 4) Acknowledge the decisive role that NGOs play in these services. In this regard, *shelters should be managed and run by women's NGOs with a feminist outlook.*
- 5) Organise services from the standpoint of multi-institutional co-operation, creating an environment that fosters such co-operation.
- 6) Establish mechanisms that provide for ongoing evaluation and quality control of the existing services designed to help violence victims.

The European Interministerial Conference (Cologne, 1999) on Violence against Women, taking account of the above recommendations, concluded that *all national governments are to be obligated to establish and to finance a comprehensive and cost-free offer of support for abused women and their children, regardless of their legal status, under the management of women's NGOs.*

The results of the Eurobarometer 1999 illustrate the support that certain of the above principles command among the European population as a whole: 89% of the respondents said they favoured the provision of a toll-free telephone service for assistance.

With respect to who should be involved in providing support for victims, the results show that: 93% favour delivery of such support by the social services; 91% by health services; 90% by the police force; 86% by the Government; 83% by attorneys or prosecutors; 80% by volunteer organisations and 65% by religious organisations.

3.3. Good practice in resource and social services to help victims of violence against women in European Union Member States

The DAPHNE (1997-1999; 2000-2003) initiative and programme, created to guarantee the protection of women's and girls' physical and psychological health through the prevention of violence and the provision of support for victims, can be regarded as good practice in the European Union in general in terms of services that cater for victims.

The actions under such programme are geared to fostering transnationality, establishing multi-disciplinary networks and ensuring the exchange of information, the implementation of good practice, co-operation across the Union and raising of awareness in society.

Funding was provided for NGO projects in the first stage and extended in the second to public institutions, private sector organisations, countries that are candidates for accession to the European Union and European Economic Area countries.

The assessment of the DAPHNE (1997-1999) initiative indicates that it has effectively fostered good practice in victim support services, especially as regards *co-operation* and the development of an *assessment culture* around projects and services; it was found that the most effective of these took a multi-sectoral approach, enlisting the participation of a number of different bodies, a feature that facilitates knowledge transfer.

The participating organisations evaluated action involving international co-operation very highly, pointing out that the experience proved to be an important and gratifying learning opportunity. The implementation of outside assessment also constituted a source of assistance and exchange of ideas for such organisations.

The replies of the European Union Member States to the Questionnaire on Good Practice show that the recommendations agreed have been followed more closely in the case of support services for the victims of violence against women than other areas; differences are observed, however, in the nature, scope and quality of the services offered, and a number of widely extended difficulties still need to be addressed.

It is likewise noted that most of the services focused on victims of domestic violence and that substantially less effort was devoted to extending them to other types of violence.

On the grounds of the responses to the questionnaire from the fifteen Member States, the following conclusions can be drawn about good practice followed across the Union with respect to support provided for victims of violence:

- 1) *Information and counselling centres for violence victims* are available in all fifteen Member States, although there are differences in terms of the scope of coverage. Where the type of services are specified, all States except one include psychological, legal and social-occupational support.

One instance of good practice with respect to information and support centres for violence victims is in place in **Italy**, whose self-help groups aim to help women assess their situation and possibilities.

- 2) There are *shelters for victims and their children* in all fifteen Member States; psychological support is always provided in these shelters, and, in 87% of the countries, legal and social and occupational counselling is also available.
- 3) *Emergency assistance services* for victims are likewise available in fourteen of the fifteen countries (93%): Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

- 4) *24-hour toll-free call centres for victims* have been established in thirteen of the fifteen States (87%): Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

In this regard, attention might be drawn to good practice implemented in **France**, which has different telephone numbers for different types of violence: domestic, sexual and at the workplace.

- 5) *Resource guides on the services available* to victims have also been formulated in fourteen countries (93%): Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

- 6) They have all created or are developing *official web pages* to disseminate information of interest over the Internet.

In some cases, such as **Spain**, violence may be reported by e-mail. This type of good practice may help overcome the difficulties involved in reporting violence against women.

Attention may also be drawn to good practice in the **United Kingdom**, consisting of dissemination of information over the Internet, on the *Living without fear* project, the *Crime reduction* programme and specific information on *services for children*. *Living without fear* is geared to service providers and presents a series of good practices that have been found to be particularly effective and constitute a strategic framework for the future. Another measure worthy of note as good practice is a guide drafted by local authorities and intended to raise sensitivity among local officials in their dealings with women who are victims or potential victims of domestic violence

7) Eleven Member States (73%) report the existence of *specific support units in their law enforcement services for women who are victims of violence*, which provide psychological and legal support in conjunction with the respective social services: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom. France also reports the existence of such specific units in all the districts of the territorial police.

Sweden reports that it does not have such units, but adds that all police officers receive training on violence against women and that these cases are handled by specially trained professionals. These squads offer psychological and legal services or information on how to access specific services outside police facilities. Law enforcement officers are obliged to inform victims of their right to support and the social services available. A working group whose membership includes local police representatives has been created within the police force for this purpose, whose mission, among others, is to *produce and circulate* good ideas. One outcome of the group's efforts is a manual on crime victims.

8) Nine Member States (60%) report the existence of *specific support units for women who are victims of violence in the court system*: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. In most of these countries legal counsel is also provided. Sweden notes that such assistance is not automatically provided, but contingent upon meeting certain requirements. In some cases, these units provide psychological counselling and co-ordinate this kind of support with the various social services.

In **Germany**, *witness protection units* have been developed, a good practice that may improve violence victim protection and the effectiveness of perpetrator indictment.

While United Kingdom and France replied to this question in the negative, they were counted among the countries answering affirmatively because:

- United Kingdom asserts that some services are delivered by NGOs to provide rape and sexual assault (as well as other crime) victims with support. Northern Ireland further reports that specific victim support services are available in the court system.
 - France indicates that it has support services, but not specifically geared to women. These services furnish all kinds of useful information for domestic violence victims, with respect to lodgings, employment, childcare and financial and social assistance.
- 9) Nine Member States (60%) report that they *routinely organise training courses for women victims of violence to enhance their employability*: Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain and United Kingdom (Northern Ireland).

This can be regarded to be an example of good practice that contributes to victim empowerment by guaranteeing their financial independence from perpetrators. Its effectiveness is enhanced when supplemented by other measures, as verified in projects implemented under the DAPHNE initiative.

10) Six Member States (40%) report the existence of *a protocol for medical support for victims*: France, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom (Northern Ireland); such protocols may be very useful in detecting cases of violence against women. In this regard, the following countries included relevant comments on the questionnaire:

- **Austria:** Catalogues of symptoms have been developed for health professionals and circulated throughout the country in the form of brochures. Multidisciplinary child protection groups of doctors, nurses, psychologists and social workers have been formed to raise awareness in hospitals on how to detect violence and the measures to be taken.

- **Finland:** A protocol on rape was formulated as part of the National Programme for the Prevention of Violence against Women.
- **France:** Specific documents have been elaborated and distributed aiming at the health services staff as helpers of the victims of conjugal and sexual violence.
- **Greece:** The University of Athens has drawn up a manual on medical treatment for victims.
- **Sweden:** Assistance, treatment and support are provided for violence victims through the *National Centre for Battered and Raped Women*, under the aegis of the Uppsala university hospital. The centre also conducts specific research on the kinds of support that health services can provide these women and circulates information on its working methods to other regions of the country. Furthermore, a project is under way in three Swedish counties to identify women violence victims in maternity wards and shelters.
- **United Kingdom:** Several Health Guides have been drafted on the local level in England and Wales, addressing a series of issues such as: how to recognise abuse and mistreatment, what questions should be asked of victims and how to contact local support services. Nationally, the Department of Health has issued a publication titled *Domestic violence: a resource manual for health care*.

11) Eleven Member States (73%) report that they have a *protocol for co-ordinating action taken by the various official institutions* working with women victims of violence: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom . This protocol is highly relevant for the co-ordinated organisation of the support provided to victims, with a view to preventing revictimisation as well as the unnecessary repetition of case histories while optimising existing resources. In their replies to the questionnaire, the following countries included relevant comments on such co-ordination, summarised below:

- **Austria:** Has developed a documentation sheet for the legal and psycho-social case processing, used to co-ordinate co-operation among the various institutions involved. Moreover, this country draws attention to the relevance of its *anti-family violence mediation services*. The police force is obliged to notify the respective service of any decision to expel a family member from the household. This service then contacts the woman concerned to offer her protection: formulation of a safety plan, legal and psycho-social assistance, childcare... Women may also repair directly to these services, which co-ordinate the mediation process among all the professional groups concerned. The so-called *Case conferences* have proved to be particularly effective in this regard.

- **France:** Has established a mechanism of co-ordination at two levels:
 1. At national level, a commission integrated by representatives of the Ministries (Social Affairs, Justice, Home Affairs, Defence, Health, Housing, National Education...), elective representatives, associations and experts.
 2. At local level, in all the departments, commissions for action to combat violence against women, under the authority of the civil governors and of the representatives of local institutions, different professions, elective positions and associations networks.

- **Italy:** Is presently working on the establishment of co-ordination. A common protocol is being formulated to co-ordinate services as part of the *Rete Antiviolenza: URBAN* programme (*Anti-violence Network: URBAN*).

- **Spain:** In addition to a co-ordination protocol, has created two Commissions specifically for this purpose:
 1. An Interministerial Commission composed of representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Health and Consumption, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice and the

Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports. Not only are they involved in co-ordination, but also monitor and assess measures undertaken to combat domestic violence.

2. A Permanent Commission within the regional Equal Opportunity bodies that facilitates the exchange of effective and/or innovative experiences, as well as co-ordination.

- **Sweden:** The *Bill on Violence against Women* of 1997 establishes the tasks common to the different authorities (public prosecutor, national police force, National Crime Prevention Council, National Health and Welfare Council...) and relevant non-governmental organisations and provides for follow-up on international developments.
- **United Kingdom:** The *Crime and Disorder Act* of 1998 provides local authorities and other agencies with instructions on co-operation. A document titled *Domestic violence: break the chain, multi-agency guidance for addressing domestic violence* has also been published to raise awareness among the various agencies of the need for co-operation.

12) Eleven Member States (73%) report having conducted *evaluations* of one or several of their victim support services; in most cases, such evaluations have confirmed the effectiveness of these services. The following is a list of services and countries evaluating them:

- Information and counselling centres for victims: Austria, Greece, Holland and Italy. Evaluation is planned in Spain under its Plan for Action against Domestic Violence.
- Shelters: Austria, Denmark, France, Greece, Holland and Italy. Evaluation is planned in Spain under its present Plan for Action against Domestic Violence. In France, a quality management experiment was launched in 2002 as part of a policy to modernise services, drawing on some of the principles that govern

the action carried out in these shelters (among others, networking) with sensitivity in matters of equality between men and women.

- Emergency services: Austria, France, Greece and Italy.
- 24-hour telephone support service: Austria, Italy and United Kingdom (Northern Ireland).
- Resource and social service guides: Austria, Greece, Holland, Ireland and Italy.
- Information on the Internet: Austria, France, Holland and Italy.
- Specific units in law enforcement services: Greece, Holland, Ireland and Italy.
- Specific units in court system: Finland, France and Holland.
- Employability enhancement training: France, Ireland and Italy.
- Health protocol: Ireland and Italy.
- Service co-ordination protocol: Germany and Sweden.

It may be deduced from the foregoing that the Member States have made a considerable effort to implement a series of indispensable social services to provide women victims of violence with the psychological, legal and social support they need, services which, pursuant to European Union and Council of Europe recommendations, should be continually improved in terms of both scope, to reach all the people concerned, and quality.

Good practice to reach this aim includes co-ordination and systematic evaluation, which are beginning to be implemented in some countries and which should be generalised. Good practice in terms of the co-ordination of services to combat violence against women includes creating bodies expressly mandated to conduct and ensure the continuity of such co-ordination.

In **Germany**, this role is assigned to the *German Forum for Crime Prevention*; in Greece to the *Interministerial Committee on Violence against Women*; in Portugal, to the *Expert Committee for Monitoring the National Plan against Domestic Violence*; in Spain, to the *Interministerial Commission on Monitoring Domestic Violence*, and in the United Kingdom to the *Interdepartmental Group on Violence against Women*.

Attention should also be drawn to another form of good practice, consisting of the provision of special support for communities of particularly vulnerable women, such as in the following cases:

- **Austria:** In the framework of the platform against family violence, specific projects are being implemented on Violence against seniors: foremost among the measures being taken are ones contributing to awareness raising (newspapers, conferences, congresses...) or that involve support for self-help groups of family care-givers catering for seniors, to prevent burnout.
- **Denmark:** a statistical analysis of the profile of violence victims admitted to shelters showing that women migrants account for about 35% has led to the earmarking of special funding for NGOs working with ethnic minorities and specific programmes for support for women who do not speak Danish.
- **Finland:** in the *National Prevention Project of violence against women*, one of the seven subjects considered concerns multiculturalism in immigrant women.

- **Germany:** innovative projects have been implemented to improve support for elderly women (*Violence towards elderly people in their personal environment*, Hanover 2000; *Care practices for nurses catering for the elderly*) and prevention of burn-out of staff working in centres for the elderly (*Handling burn-out: preventive measures for people working with the elderly*).
- **Luxembourg:** a specific shelter for teenage violence victims has been created.
- **Spain:** EMUMES, rural “Guardia Civil” (rural law enforcement corps) offices to specifically cater for women in this segment of the population, have been established.
- **Sweden:** Thirty shelters for young women are in operation.

4. SPECIFIC MEASURES GEARED TO REHABILITATING PERPETRATORS

4.1. Measures for rehabilitating perpetrators proposed at the Fourth World Conference on Women

The Platform for Action established at the Fourth World Conference proposed that legal measures should be designed to prevent violence, judge and punish perpetrators, protect women, redress damage and rehabilitate perpetrators. With respect to this last issue, the Platform specifically mentions the need to *provide, fund and encourage counselling and rehabilitation programmes for the perpetrators of violence and promote research to further efforts concerning such counselling and rehabilitation so as to prevent the recurrence of such violence.*

4.2. Rehabilitation of perpetrators in the European Union

The results of Eurobarometer 1999 reflect the controversy usually inherent in any assignment of priorities for the rehabilitation of perpetrators in comparison with other measures to combat violence against women. Sixty-five percent of the people surveyed agreed with the need to rehabilitate perpetrators, in comparison with the 95% who agreed with the need to submit them to criminal proceedings or the 91% who requested stricter law enforcement.

The replies given by Member States to the Questionnaire on Good Practice with reference to rehabilitation of perpetrators show that:

1) Thirteen Member States (87%) report specific measures geared to rehabilitating perpetrators: Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

2) The numbers relating to rehabilitation in the above thirteen countries are given below:

- Psychological or psychiatric treatment is available within penitentiaries in eleven (73%), namely Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. Outside penitentiaries, this treatment is available in these eleven countries: Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Holland , Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.
- Participation in systematic rehabilitation programmes is offered in six Member States (60%): Austria, Holland, Ireland, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.
- Six States (40%) also have guides for changing attitudes in perpetrator: Austria, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Sweden and United Kingdom.
- Only five States (33%) have systematically evaluated their rehabilitation programmes: Germany, Holland, Ireland, Spain and United Kingdom. Austria reports that although it does not run routine evaluations in this area, certain pilot projects, such as the *Project for working with male sexual abusers*, have been assessed.

The above results show that measures are being developed for perpetrator rehabilitation, although the issue seems to pose special difficulties.

4.3. Keys to good practice in the rehabilitation of perpetrators

A concern for the advancement of measures to rehabilitate perpetrators has been strongly evident in the meetings organised by the European Union on violence against women.

Since the *international Expert Conference on Measures to Combat Male Violence against Women*, held in Vienna in 1998, emphasis has been placed on ensuring that work with perpetrators helps them assume their responsibility, *avoiding anything that*

such men might interpret as a justification or mitigation of their conduct. This same recommendation has been reiterated at subsequent meetings.

The *European Interministerial Conference on Violence against Women* held at Cologne (1999), which included a forum devoted to the discussion of work with perpetrators, reached the following two conclusions:

- General legal conditions must be established in all Member States in order to provide instructions and guidelines on perpetrators' participation in mainstreaming programmes.
- Work with perpetrators of violence must be based on international experience and scientifically supported and evaluated as part of a package of measures aimed at combating violence against women and their children. The opinions and experience of such victims must be taken into account in this work.

The *Expert Meeting on Violence against Women* held in Jyväskylä, Finland in 1999 agreed on the following good practice recommendations in perpetrator-directed programmes aimed primarily at eradicating domestic violence.

- 1) Programmes for perpetrators should not be used as a substitute for court action.
- 2) Work with perpetrators should include the mechanisms necessary to ensure that the safety and well-being of victims are the first priority and are not endangered at any time.
- 3) In line with the priorities expressed in the preceding point, programmes for perpetrators should be funded by budget lines other than those used to finance services for victims. These programmes can only be carried out if the needs of victims (counselling services, independent shelters...) are adequately covered.

- 4) Victims of violence should receive information regarding the programme structure and changes in the perpetrator, and their safety and confidentiality must always be ensured.
- 5) Mechanisms should be established to guarantee that if a risk to the confidentiality or safety of the women or their children should arise or become known at some point during the perpetrator programmes, law enforcement and other agencies involved are notified as soon as possible.
- 6) People who work in these programmes should recognise that the conceptual interpretation of violence against women includes physical, psychological, sexual and economic abuse and understand the connection existing between this violence and other types of similar behaviour such as excessive control and other forms of emotional abuse, which at times are erroneously interpreted as an exaggeration of acceptable behaviour within a partnership.
- 7) The objective of these programmes should be to re-educate violent men by changing the attitudes that led them to violence. They should be taught that they have no right to control or attack their (ex) partners. This is the main objective of this intervention, and superior to any other change the perpetrator may need such as a treatment for alcohol abuse.
- 8) Programme duration should be at least for twelve months with sessions once a week, since short-term programmes are not enough and may even be dangerous. They should include both individual and group work, the latter being the key to the effectiveness of the programme.
- 9) Programmes should be based on appropriate research in order to employ the effective methods that have been developed and evaluated in other programmes.
- 10) All programmes should be monitored and evaluated to ensure they improve women's safety and are effective in changing men's attitudes. The evaluation must be performed using other sources of information in addition to the

perpetrator's own report and should include, whenever possible, the accounts of the victims and other types of evidence on the change that may have taken place.

- 11) Perpetrator programmes must be part of a co-ordinated action to combat violence against women and should involve the police, justice, the services working with victims and social welfare bodies. To this end, formal collaboration agreements among such bodies should be established.

4.4. Good practice in perpetrator rehabilitation in European Union Member States

In their replies to the questionnaire, four Member States provide rather detailed descriptions of the rehabilitation measures for perpetrators presently in place. The characteristics of such measures, which constitute good and innovative practice, are summarised below.

Austria: Men's Counselling Centres in several Austrian cities (Vienna, Linz, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Bregenz and Klagenfurt) offer programmes for violent men. In the Vienna centre, where perpetrators are required by the public prosecutor and youth authorities to take these courses, a pilot project targeting perpetrators of sexual abuse has been implemented in recent years (1997-2001). This project was evaluated by the University of Vienna's Institute of Psychology, whose final report will be published shortly. One of the chapters discusses perpetrator diagnosis and prognosis and includes a series of measuring instruments that are suitable for this purpose.

Several expert groups conducted a series of studies designed to propose action guidelines for the perpetrator rehabilitation programmes implemented in Austria. One such study was run in 1998 on *International models for authors of sexual abuse*, and another in 1998-2000 proposing a series of measures and criteria for action along the lines of the recommendations made during the 1999 conference held in

Jyväskylä, Finland. The working model resulting from this study was published in 2000 under the title *Täterarbeit - ein Beitrag zum Opferschutz (Sexual abuse - a contribution to protection of victims)*. The study concludes with a series of principles, rules and content relating to programmes for perpetrators (distinguishing between perpetrators of *sexual violence against minors* from those whose *victims are women*), which have since been approved by both victim protection establishments and the institutions working with perpetrators.

On the grounds of the above study, the following basic principles were adopted for work with perpetrators:

- Measures should be geared to protection of victims.
- The primary objective is to curb violence and prevent further acts of violence.
- Women's and minors' safety is an essential element in the work done with perpetrators.
- The responsibility for violent acts lies exclusively with perpetrators - their abuse cannot be justified by troubled family dynamics, previous violence or other types of experience.
- In the approach adopted perpetrators must be viewed as *whole human beings* who may have committed violent acts but who at the same time have the potential to change both themselves and their abusive behaviour.

These principles are translated into specific rules for working with perpetrators of violence against women that follow along the same lines as specified above in this section, in connection with the Jyväskylä Conference recommendations.

Perpetrator rehabilitation as conducted in **Austria** is good practice insofar as it addresses issues such as how to factor international evaluations in such work, how to prioritise protection for victims and how to co-ordinate the action taken by bodies responsible for protection with the work done by entities dealing with perpetrators.

Germany: The Federal Government's Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women describes the measures adopted to rehabilitate perpetrators in

approximately the following terms: *On the one hand, perpetrators are treated by the State as the delinquents they are.(...) However, a process must also be initiated that will lead the perpetrator to modify his violent conduct (...), because even though regular application of penalties may have a general preventive effect by showing society that such behaviour will not be condoned, it usually has no preventive effect on the future conduct of the individual convicted.*

As mentioned above, Germany's responses to the Questionnaire on Good Practice included the following remarks on rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators:

- The approach used by centres for violent men usually combines three treatment areas: psychotherapy, training in social skills and counselling.
- In the case of a suspended sentence, the court may order the perpetrator to take interim steps for his rehabilitation. For example, the court may order a psychotherapeutic treatment and/or prohibit the author of the crime from having any contact with the victim. If relevant, it may also order him to abstain from consuming alcohol or, with his consent, order him to take a detoxification cure.
- During execution of the perpetrator's sentence, different rehabilitation measures are established for those who have committed crimes or misdemeanours involving physical abuse and those who have committed sexual crimes or misdemeanours. In the first case, anti-violence or "coolness" training is used. Such training is given in most reformatory institutions in order to modify the attitudes and personality traits conducive to violence. An intense debate is held with participants so that they assume responsibility for their actions (background, development, consequences for the victim) and, if necessary, they are confronted with the victim herself. One of the aims of these programmes is to help develop alternative behaviour patterns, including a reflective attitude in stressful situations.
- In line with numerous national and foreign studies showing that the risk of a recurrence of sexual crimes is lowered if the perpetrator receives intensive

therapy, measures have been taken so that convicted perpetrators who meet certain criteria have access as soon as possible to this kind of treatment. Under the law in force up to 1998, penitentiary authorities could decide what therapeutic measures were necessary and, even if the need to transfer the perpetrator to a sociotherapeutic institution was confirmed, this was only possible if both the perpetrator and the director of the institution gave their consent. There were not enough places available in sociotherapeutic institutions within the Länder for all the prisoners requiring therapy. This unsatisfactory situation prompted legislators to modify the Penitentiary Law (as of 1 January 2003) and establish mandatory transfer to a sociotherapeutic institution for sex offenders in need of treatment, provided that such transfer is deemed warranted after a study of the prisoner's personality and general health and that he has been sentenced to more than two years' confinement.

- In the framework of the scientific methodology applied to anti-domestic violence projects in Germany, perpetrator rehabilitation programmes have been under evaluation since the beginning of 2001 and results should be ready by the end of 2002. Results on the treatment of sex offenders are currently available.

Germany's approach is an example of good practice in incorporating perpetrator programme measures which help to change the beliefs underlying violence, and in setting up pilot programmes which realistically evaluate the effectiveness of such measures before bringing them into general use.

Sweden: The Swedish Government is prioritising work with men in this area, as evinced by the expert meeting called by the Swedish Presidency of the European Union in March 2001 on *Men and gender equality*, where their responsibility in violence against women was discussed. The Swedish reply to the questionnaire also highlights the following five measures:

- 1) In recent years, several men's organisation have been created with public funding, pursuant to the Act on violence against women, to help perpetrators

abandon violence. A project is presently under way along these lines in conjunction with immigrants' organisations that work with men from these communities to eradicate violence against women.

- 2) The *National Prison and Probation Administration*, in conjunction with the *National Board of Health and Social Welfare*, has conducted research into the methods used to treat men committing violent crimes against women; and, in conjunction with the Forensic Psychiatric Institute of Karolinska, into the measures involving confinement or probation for men found guilty of sexual violence.
- 3) Previously tested measurement instruments are used in programme evaluation to contribute to improve the work's effectiveness and accuracy:
 - a) Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA), an instrument evaluated in Canada and also used in the programmes implemented by the United Kingdom in this area, enables detection of risk situations and informs about what to do to avoid recurrence. With appropriate training, the guide can be used by social workers, penitentiary employees, police and other professionals.
 - b) HCR-20, an instrument for measuring needs and risk situations in the case of delinquents convicted of violent crimes, to be applied by psychologists and psychiatrists trained in its use.
- 4) Establishment (in half of Sweden's local prisons) of a co-operative programme involving the police, social services and probation services for work with both the perpetrators and victims of violence. The police are responsible for initiating this collaboration, which involves:
 - a) Training of the professional teams working with perpetrators of domestic violence against women within each area.

- b) When a police officer investigates a case of domestic violence against a woman, he or she recommends that the victim contact the social services unit that can help her and move her to a safe residence if necessary.

In some areas, police use a special version of the above-mentioned SARA Guide to decide what to do after an incident of male violence against a spouse.

- c) Communication is established with the perpetrator of this violence so that he enters a special group programme organised by the social services department, which at times may begin before the trial. At other times, participation in such programmes is due to a judicial order, combined with probation if imprisonment can be avoided.

- 5) International collaboration and information exchange: Sweden is presently working with the Home Office in England to develop a programme based on systematic evaluations. A first version should be finished by the end of 2002.

In some penitentiaries, an anti-aggression programme is being implemented, especially with young offenders, in conjunction with probation services. This programme is based on an original created by Goldstein, Glick and Gibbs which is widely used in U.S. prisons and was produced to work with aggressive youth in a school context. It contains three basic components: skills acquisition, anger control and moral reasoning training. The Swedish programme consists of thirty two-hour sessions.

The work conducted in **Sweden** is an example of good practice on how to involve men's organisations in perpetrator rehabilitation, formulate programmes with a scientific and methodological base, evaluate them taking account of previous international experience and implement them with the collaboration of professionals who work with perpetrators and victims.

United Kingdom: The following are among the most important perpetrator rehabilitation programmes conducted:

- 1) The Duluth programme for perpetrators of domestic violence. The effectiveness of this programme is being evaluated by teams working out of the Universities of Liverpool and Leicester on a sample of 200 subjects. The study assesses effectiveness from a number of perspectives, contrasting calls to the police with the results obtained in the following scales for measuring results from the standpoints of perpetrators and victims:
 - Used by professionals working with perpetrators: *Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA)*; *Dobash checklist offender version*; *Quality of life - offender interview*; *Revised attitudes to offence scale (RATOS)*; *Inventory of beliefs about wife beating (IBWB)*; *Locus of control scale (LCS)*.
 - Used by professionals working with victims: *Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide (SARA)*; *Dobash checklist - victim version*; *Injury assessment index (IAI) - victim*; *Quality of life - victim interview*.
 - Used by researchers: *Staff impact survey*; *Stakeholder survey*.
- 2) *The Edinburgh Domestic Violence Probation Project*, highlighted in the United Kingdom's reply to the questionnaire as the first programme implemented in Europe in this area, was initiated in 1990 with around thirty five men. It includes parallel support service for couples. The men participating, under probation for at least one year, take eight individual sessions and participate in group work for twenty one weeks. This process is monitored by both the law enforcement authorities and the men's partners to verify perpetrator progress and guarantee their families' safety. This project has links with other, funded by the DAPHNE Initiative and titled *Working with men*, whose purpose is to extend the support provided by agencies working with victims to draw attention to fact that treating

the men involved may be regarded as a way of enhancing the safety of women and children.

The perpetrator rehabilitation work conducted in the **United Kingdom** is good practice insofar as it develops systematic action programmes that include rigorous and thorough evaluation of results, in which victims' opinions are also considered.

Questionnaire replies indicate that other Member States are conducting perpetrator rehabilitation programmes, directed by agencies specialising in psychosocial treatment or research, which constitute good practice in this field (factoring results obtained in previous applications, seeking the involvement of bodies which can contribute to improving their effectiveness and dissemination). The following is a summary of the specific references made in their replies by Finland, France, Holland, Ireland, Portugal and Spain:

- **Finland:** Several types of voluntary programmes are in place. The best known, the Jyväskylä model, is presently under evaluation. Its key characteristic is the close cross-professional co-operation it involves. The centre provide 24-hour access to services. A great deal of importance is attached to the evaluation phase as an essential part of perpetrator treatment. The primary objectives include helping them understand that their violent behaviour is a problem and the establishment of a safety plan for victims (women and minors).

The experimental programme *Lyömätön Linja Espoo* was launched in 2001 and is presently still in progress. This is a new type of co-operation among the police force, the public prosecutor's office, the bodies responsible for treatment for men and the Naisten Apu association that provides support for women. In this context, the law enforcement bodies advise men admitting to being guilty of domestic violence to participate in the programme to break the violence cycle. The objective is for these men to assume their responsibility for their behaviour in order to be able to help them curb their violence. This

pilot programme is expected to make a very significant contribution to the development of nation-wide measures.

- **France:** The Act on prevention and repression of sexual infringements and protection of minors of 17 June 1998 provides for social-judicial follow-up, including surveillance and support measures implemented by the courts. Such follow-up is applied to most perpetrators of sexual abuse. In the framework of this social-judicial follow-up, a *service order* may be issued if a physician specialising in the field, supervised by a medical co-ordinator, feels it is warranted. The Ministries of Health and Justice have instituted an interministerial *health/justice* working group to facilitate enforcement and application of this act, whose purpose is to train the professionals involved in research and prevention and define how this service should be organised. The changes generated by this initiative and its effectiveness will be the subject of evaluation.
- **Holland:** The Zorg Onderzoek Institute is carrying out an ambitious programme, financed with public funding, which combines research and actions geared to rehabilitating men who have perpetrated acts of domestic or sexual violence.
- **Ireland:** Two interdisciplinary programmes have been developed for perpetrators of sexual abuse to reduce the recurrence rates of participants and further their rehabilitation. They are based on group therapy, working with groups of ten men. All prisoners convicted of sexual crimes are offered the opportunity to participate in these programmes on a voluntary basis. The intention is for delinquents to confront the issues associated with their criminal behaviour, helping them to develop empathy for the victim and plan and apply strategies to prevent recurrence and eliminate their violent behaviour. Supplementary individual sessions are provided, as well as a voluntary follow-up service after programme completion. Moreover, probation officers in some institutions, in conjunction with professionals from other disciplines, conduct preparation programmes for group participation with perpetrators who want to initiate group treatment but feel unable to carry it through successfully on their

own. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has commissioned the evaluation of perpetrator treatment programmes conducted at the Arbour Hill penitentiary from the University of Dublin, which is comparing the changes observed in an experimental group to a control group.

- **Portugal:** The Faculties of Psychology at the Universities of Mihno and Porto are developing perpetrator rehabilitation programmes.
- **Spain:** A pilot programme to treat and provide psychological and educational attention for perpetrators of domestic violence was started up in 2001. The programme has four stages: prior evaluation of prison inmates, development of treatment sessions, monitoring of inmates who have attended the programme and evaluation of the entire project.

The programme consists of twenty two sessions conducted over a five-month period.

The foregoing perpetrator rehabilitation measures implemented in **Finland, France, Holland, Ireland, Portugal** and **Spain** constitute good practice insofar as they involve the inclusion of such measures in systematic programmes with rigorous evaluation of results. This can be highly useful in terms of subsequent wide-scale application of the action found to be most effective.

5. LEGAL, JUDICIAL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

5.1. Legal, judicial and law enforcement measures proposed by the Fourth World Conference on Women

As acknowledged by the Fourth World Conference in its Platform for Action, violence against women must be prevented by *enacting and/or reinforcing penal, civil, labour and administrative sanctions in domestic legislation to punish and redress the wrongs done to women and girls who are subjected to any form of violence, whether in the home, the workplace, the community or society.* Although such sanctions may exist, violence against women is often tolerated, which makes it very difficult to detect and eradicate. *When it is reported, the victim is often not protected nor are the perpetrators punished.*

To overcome these problems, measures such as periodic review and analysis of existing laws, with special emphasis on their effectiveness in preventing violence are specifically proposed. It is also essential to bring perpetrators to trial and protect victims, adopt measures leading to the reparation of harm caused and the compensation and treatment of the victims. *Create or strengthen institutional mechanism to that women and girl can report acts of violence against them in safe and confidential environment, free from the fear of penalties or retaliation, and file charges. Strategies must be promoted and established to ensure that women who have been victims of violence are not exposed to repetition of such acts due to lack of a gender perspective in the law, in law enforcement practices and court proceedings.* Finally, special measures must be adopted to eradicate violence against women who are especially vulnerable by enforcing existing legislation and drafting new laws as needed for women migrant workers in their countries of origin and in host countries.

5.2. The situation of legal, judicial and law enforcement measures to prevent violence against women in general in the European Union

On the basis of debates in the conferences attended by experts organised by the European Union in Vienna in 1998 and in Jyväskylä in 1999 on how to prevent violence against women, the following legal, judicial and law enforcement measures were proposed:

- 1) The home should be a safe place. Therefore, if a crime is committed within the household unit by any member of it, this must be considered an aggravating factor.
- 2) Criminal proceedings for acts of violence against women should be fully expedited.
- 3) In cases of this type of violence, it should be possible to initiate criminal court proceedings.
- 4) The victims must be informed of the progress of the case in all stages and with no unnecessary delay, especially if the perpetrator is released from custody. The official in charge of the case must ensure that the information is understood by the victim, who must have the right to be assisted by an interpreter at no cost if necessary.
- 5) It is advisable to take measures to prevent revictimisation while the trial is under way by avoiding confrontations between victim and perpetrator in the courtroom or nearby, as well as not forcing the victim to repeat her testimony.
- 6) In all stages of the trial priority should be given to measures designed to protect the victim by means of temporary writs, orders aimed at restricting the perpetrator's proximity, alarm systems, etc. It is essential to guarantee the right of the victim to remain in the home in cases of

domestic violence (in which case it must be the perpetrator who is obliged to leave the home). And the woman and her children should be offered the possibility of moving into a shelter where they will be completely safe.

- 7) Free legal aid should be provided throughout the trial to women who are victims of violence.
- 8) The people responsible for assisting victims of violence must have specific training on performing their task so they can provide the necessary care and prevent revictimisation, both on police and court premises. It is advisable to set up special units in heavily populated urban areas.
- 9) Legally established compensation payments must be made to victims of violence against women.
- 10) There should be adequate co-ordination among the various social, legal, judicial and law enforcement measures taken to assist victims of violence against women.

Studies have been carried out in several European Union countries under the DAPHNE programme. These include an analysis entitled *Dévoiler les données cachées de la violence domestique dans l'UE (The hidden facts behind domestic violence in the European Union)* in 1999 by the European Women's Lobby. Also include two done in 2001 by the Spanish Association of Women Jurists (THEMIS). One titled *Guía de buenas prácticas y usos forenses para combatir la violencia de género, 2001 (Guide to good forensic practices and procedures for preventing gender violence, 2001)*. The other titled *Guía de los derechos de las mujeres víctimas de la violencia familiar (Guide to the rights of women victim of family violence)*. They show that the implementation of legal, judicial and law enforcement measures often faces serious difficulties, such as the following:

- When the victim starts to lose her fear and finds the courage to report her perpetrator — a decisive step in escaping her situation of violence and an important one toward social progress in eradicating the problem — her situation may worsen. It is therefore necessary to protect her without harming her rights and help her strengthen her position.
- Measures taken to restrict the perpetrator's proximity to the victim are often difficult to enforce.
- The victim often withdraws her complaint before the case comes to trial or does not appear in court to testify. Although procedures have been established to prevent such circumstances from leading to impunity for the perpetrators, they are difficult to enforce. This is probably due to the practical difficulty of adapting legal systems strongly oriented toward guaranteeing the presumption of innocence.

The evaluation of the legal, judicial and law enforcement measures in the studies mentioned above leads to the conclusion that, in general, the main difficulties found in the European Union with regard to preventing violence against women are due basically to the way in which existing legal regulations are interpreted and enforced.

In this regard, we should also look at the following conclusions taken from the preparatory work for the evaluation by the platform for action of the Fourth World Conference on Women:

- Legal strategies alone are not enough. The law can be enforced effectively only if it is accompanied by other measures to guarantee and ensure compliance.
- If progress is to be made in making existing laws effective, a number of common obstacles must be overcome. These are related to enforcement of current legislation, lack of protection for women and girls who have

been victims of violence and the impunity too often enjoyed by those who commit acts of violence.

As a reflection of the opinions of the European population on the role of legal, judicial and law enforcement measures, it is interesting to note the high level of agreement expressed in the 1999 Eurobarometer on the following issues:

- The two measures asked about, in which the highest percentage of agreement was expressed, turn on the need to punish perpetrators (95%) and the need to strengthen existing laws substantially (91%) — the same percentage obtained when inquiring about education based on mutual respect. In addition, two more questions related to legislation also showed a high percentage of agreement: toughening the laws (86%) and legislating against gender discrimination (85%).
- 62.4% regard domestic violence to be unacceptable in any circumstances and should always be punished under the law. 32.2% also consider it unacceptable in all circumstances, although not always punishable by law, as opposed to 2.3% who see it as acceptable in certain circumstances and 0.7% who consider it acceptable in any circumstances.

5.3. Good legal practices for preventing violence against women in general in the European Union Member States

The responses to the Questionnaire on Good Practice given by the Member States replying to questions related to this issue show that, in fourteen (93%) of them, measures have been taken to integrate action to eradicate violence against women. Three different ways of accomplishing this integration were observed, in terms of the instruments used:

- 1) *Comprehensive act to curb violence against women.* Four of the fifteen European Union countries (27%) report that they have a comprehensive act to prevent violence against women: Austria, Ireland, Italy and Portugal.
- 2) *Comprehensive action plan to curb violence against women.* This is the instrument most frequently in place, with eleven Member States (73%) reporting that they have such a plan: Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.
- 3) *Comprehensive act and comprehensive action plan to curb violence against women.* Only three countries (20%) have both these co-ordination instruments in place: Austria, Ireland and Portugal. The existence of either constitutes highly relevant good practice to co-ordinate the different measures implemented in the struggle to curb violence against women and enhance the effectiveness of the action taken.

Holland reports that it established general plans aiming to curb violence against women prior to 1995, indeed, as early as 1982, but they are not presently in force. Between 2001 and 2002 it is implementing a *Plan to Prevent and Combat Domestic Violence*, which integrates measures designed to combat violence perpetrated against women and other family members in that environment.

To assess the instruments for integration action mentioned above, account should also be taken of the following:

- Of the four countries that have a comprehensive law only Austria has allocated budgetary appropriations to implement it and evaluates performance under the act.
- Of the eleven Member States with a comprehensive plan, nine (France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom) have made budgetary appropriations and four (France, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) have evaluated plan performance.

A good general legal practice to prevent all forms of violence against women is the fact that **all the European Union Member States** have signed the main international instruments on human rights that are relevant to this issue, as recommended by the Fourth World Conference on Women. Most of them have also ratified these instruments, which legally bind a state to comply. This is something that should be generalised.

5.4. Good legal, judicial and law enforcement practices for preventing domestic violence against women in the Member States

The replies to the questionnaire for a good practice guide reveal that all countries have legal, judicial and law enforcement measures to deal with domestic violence, along the lines of the recommendations of the 4th World Conference on Women. We note the following:

1) Seven Member States (47%) have *defined domestic violence to be a specific crime or misdemeanour*. France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. Five States, in turn (33%) condemn domestic violence through general definitions of violence of any nature: Austria, Finland, Greece, Holland and United Kingdom. No information is available in this regard on the three remaining European Union countries.

In the seven countries that specifically define domestic violence to be a crime or misdemeanour, the definition covers physical violence; in five, psychological violence as well, and also in five, sexual violence.

Specifying physical, sexual and psychological violence to be a crime or misdemeanour is good practice that helps to prevent all types of domestic violence.

2) According to the replies given by the Member States, in no case are *kinship or bonds of affection considered as attenuating circumstances* for criminal liability. In eight states (53%) this situation is an *aggravating circumstance*: Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Sweden.

The foregoing is good practice because it explicitly acknowledges that the household must be a safe place in which violence is not acceptable.

3) Five of the fifteen European Union countries (33%) report that they have *specific legal procedures in place to expedite cases of domestic violence*: France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Luxembourg. This is good practice that should be extended, considering its relevance to shortening the time in which victims are exposed to the risk of further aggression.

4) Eleven Member States (73%) report that *criminal proceedings can be brought at the behest of the victim*: Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. The state prosecutor may bring proceedings in twelve (80%): Austria, Belgium, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

The fact that the state prosecutor may bring proceedings, whether or not the incident is reported by the victim, is a generalised good practice highly recommended by experts who have studied the issue in prior European Union meetings.

Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that, as NGOs often state, even though this possibility of independent reporting is legally established, it is sometimes difficult to implement. It is common that if the victim withdraws the accusation or does not appear in court to testify, the perpetrator goes unpunished.

One illustration of this situation is contained in the legal provision mentioned by Austria in its reply to the Questionnaire, which specifies that: *A dangerous act of intimidation (...) against a wife, a close relative (mother, daughter, etc.), sister or other person living in the home (...) will be prosecuted or will continue to be prosecuted by the public prosecutor's office only if the victim authorises it. The authorisation will be taken as denied if not granted within fourteen days counting from the notification of a (mandatory) plea by the public prosecutor. (...) All other crimes considered here, such as, for instance, bodily injury, are indictable ex officio, i.e., not subject to the victim's authorisation.*

In France, proceedings may be brought as consequence of the police verifications.

Italy adds, in this respect, that proceedings may be brought not only at the victim's behest, but also ex officio under certain circumstances, such as in the event of severe injury.

5) In addition to the channels mentioned above (proceedings brought by the victim or the state prosecutor), it is also *possible to bring criminal proceedings by private prosecution* (reported by eight countries - 53% -: Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom) or by *health-care personnel* (in four countries - 27% -: Germany, Ireland, Portugal and Spain). Eight Member States (53%) add that proceedings may be brought by *anybody*: Austria, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Portugal and Spain.

In Austria and France, health care staff is obliged to violate professional secrecy where they suspect that a punishable action has caused death or severe injury to a person, or in the event of child abuse.

France adds another channel for instituting criminal proceedings: at the behest of associations created to combat sexual or domestic violence.

The extension of channels for bringing criminal proceedings to include private prosecution, health-care staff or individuals is good practice to make progress in curtailing cases of perpetrators going unpunished. It also sends a message to the agents involved in terms of their responsibility to take action against domestic violence, thus overcoming the so-called *conspiracy of silence* that considers it a private problem.

6) Seven countries (47%) state that under their legislation it is *mandatory to notify the victim of procedural changes in the perpetrator's circumstances*: France, Holland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. Four of them (27%) report that it is mandatory to notify the victim of *the perpetrator's circumstances after the sentence has been served*: Belgium (in the case of probation), France, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Austria comments in this regard that if the victims have brought criminal proceedings on the basis of private law relative to a criminal act, they are summoned to the hearings and are notified of the sentence in writing, which keeps them informed of any change in the perpetrator's circumstances. Furthermore, the Austrian code of criminal procedure establishes that it is obligatory to notify victims of aggression of all orders served on the offenders which directly affect the interests of the former.

France replies to this question indicating that, in general, during the execution of the sentence, victims may be informed of perpetrators' status, especially of their release from confinement. Furthermore, the sentencing judge is empowered to hear the victim to consider her interests before deciding about the penalty.

The existence of legislative measures that facilitate information to the victims on the perpetrator's circumstances is good practice that contributes to the victims' protection and safety.

7) Eight countries (53%) state that their legislation contains *legal provisions to prevent victims of domestic violence from revictimisation*: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

Spain and Sweden qualify the statement in that these special measures are limited to youths under the age of 18. In Spain, however, such measures may also apply to adults when they appear in court to testify, without private prosecution, and the court authorities feel that there is a serious risk of harm to them personally or to their freedom or assets.

Germany states that the Witness Protection Act introduces the possibility of videotaping testimony as a substitute for questioning in person.

In Austria, the above possibility is also open to women who are victims of domestic or sexual violence and request this procedure, as well as for children under fourteen suffering this type of violence, even if not requested.

In France, it exists the possibility of keeping in secret the victim address or giving the address of the police station. The examining magistrate can also avoid repeated appearances in court of the victim or bringing her face to face with the perpetrator.

The existence of these legal provisions avoids the need for the victims to repeat their testimony and confront their perpetrators, which is highly recommended by experts at the European Union meetings. This is considered good practice to protect victims of domestic violence from the risk of revictimisation while the court proceedings are underway.

8) Twelve Member States (80%) report that their legislation includes *measures to restrict the perpetrator's proximity to the victim*: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. Although Luxembourg does not currently have such measures, they are contained in a draft legislative measure now being approved. Among the most widely extended in the Member States that already have such measures is

the provision for *mandatory distance that the perpetrator must keep* from the victim, included in the legislation of eleven (73%), followed by *prohibition to communicate with the victim* in ten (67%) and *evacuation of the abode* in nine (60%). Spain and France also provide for the possibility of prohibiting perpetrators from frequenting certain places and in France they may be required to establish their residence in a specific place.

9) In the eleven Member States (73%) that have measures restricting the perpetrator's proximity to the victim, *means are employed to guarantee the effectiveness of such measures*: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. Among those mentioned are: *notice served by the court to the police station nearest the home* in nine (60%) and *to the police station nearest the workplace* in three (20%); *electronic alarm facilities* and *police surveillance of the perpetrator* are in place in two (13%).

In addition, certain countries have other types of measures designed to guarantee the effectiveness of proximity restrictions, such as: communication through a police database (Finland) or enforcement of such prohibitions by probation services and court sentence monitoring associations (France).

The use of effective means that guarantee enforcement of measures restricting the perpetrator's proximity to the victim is good practice that is highly relevant to protect her.

10) Of the fifteen European Union countries, nine (60%) state that under their legislation *infringement of measures restricting the perpetrator's proximity to the victim constitutes a crime*: Austria, Finland, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

France reports that when perpetrators fail to comply with these measures it is considered as an infringement subjected to certain penalties, provisional arrest and revocation of suspension or a sentence.

Considering infringement of measures restricting the proximity of the perpetrators to the victims a crime is good practice to improve their protection.

11) Nearly all the Member States, that is, fourteen (93%), state that *free legal aid is available to victims of domestic violence*: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Sweden, Spain and United Kingdom. In twelve of them (80%), such assistance covers *legal counselling*, and also in twelve *legal assistance during trial*. Some countries qualify their reply to this item stating that free legal aid depends on certain requirements being met by the case or the person and others add that, in addition to cost-free legal assistance, victims are offered the services of a general support counsellor (Finland) or, specifically, of psychological and material support from associations (France).

The availability of free legal aid is good practice since it enables the victims to be aware of the possibilities for taking action against an act of aggression and facilitates their access to justice.

12) Four countries (27%) have *specific domestic-violence victim-assistance units on judicial services*: France, Holland, Ireland and Italy. Holland reports in this regard that in all district public prosecutors' offices there is a prosecutor specialised in cases of sexual violence who plays an important role in the specialised work and in co-operation with other services.

Spain, while replying that there are no specific units, notes that numerous courts and tribunals have offices for assistance to victims of crimes against sexual freedom and any violent crime. This would consequently include victims of domestic violence, for whom specialised personnel are available to provide assistance.

13) Eight countries (53%) state that they have *specific domestic-violence victim-assistance units on police services* staffed by specialised personnel for this

purpose: France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Good practice to prevent domestic violence is to have specific victim-assistance units on judicial and police services, always staffed by specialised personnel, to provide the necessary support and prevent revictimisation.

14) It may be deduced from the replies to the question about *legally established indemnities for victims of domestic violence* that eleven Member States (73%) have them, although in most no specific mention is made in their legislation to domestic violence, but only to violent crimes in general. Portugal is the sole exception to this general rule, as its legislation provides for indemnities for victims of spousal violence when certain requirements are met. The other countries included under the foregoing percentage are: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain and Sweden.

The guarantee of indemnities to the victim and acknowledgement of the state's responsibility for not having been able to protect her is good practice to mitigate the destructive effects that violence causes in the woman subjected to it (by making it very clear that she is not guilty and that she has the right to reparation). This is a practice that should be generalised.

15) Only four countries (27%) state that they have *legal measures to ensure co-ordinated action by the various public authorities involved in domestic-violence proceedings (judicial, law enforcement, health...)*: Austria, Portugal, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Several countries report that while no such measures have been generalised, certain specific action has been taken to enhance co-ordination. In Holland for instance, some communities are systematising co-ordination locally to improve actions to prevent and combat domestic violence. Finland, where law enforcement agencies collaborate with other authorities and volunteer associations to prevent violence against women in their families, monitors

international developments in this area; France, where some norms invite to a co-ordinated action, reinforced by the creation of a national commission against violence, and in Italy the courts and the police co-ordinate their proceedings in connection with domestic violence, especially where minors are involved.

The existence of a legal mandate to ensure co-ordinated action by the various public authorities involved in domestic-violence proceedings is good practice that should be enhanced at all levels (local, regional, national) to improve the effectiveness of such measures.

16) Ten States (67%) point out that they have *measures to ensure collaboration between public and private organisations* to combat domestic violence: Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain.

The collaboration of public organisations with private ones, especially NGOs working to prevent domestic violence, is good practice that should be sustained and developed, as recommended by the 4th World Conference on Women.

5.5. Good legal, judicial and law enforcement practices to prevent sexual violence against women in the European Union Member States

In the replies to the Questionnaire on Good Practice by Community countries, all of them for which information is available (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom) state that they have legal, judicial and law enforcement measures relative to sexual violence in place along the lines of the recommendations made by the Fourth World Conference on Women. It is observed, in this regard, that:

- 1) The above fourteen countries (93%) have *defined, among others, crimes against sexual freedom, rape*, and thirteen of them (87%), *sexual abuse* as well. In Luxembourg —the only country that has not codified sexual abuse— behaviour related to it may be penalised under crimes defined as acts against modesty committed without violence against minors, or with violence against anybody.
- 2) In eleven countries (73%), other crimes against sexual freedom are defined that help prevent this type of violence against women: sexual aggression other than rape, trafficking in people, pornographic exhibition of minors, exposure of minors to threats against morality, seduction of youth, pimping, sexual exploitation, etc. These countries are: Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.
- 3) None of the nine responding countries consider kinship or bonds of affection between perpetrator and victim as attenuating circumstances with regard to criminal liability. Nonetheless, Austria states the following with regard to sexual abuse in a couple relationship:

In the case of sexual abuse with force against the wife or partner, the law in general does not provide for attenuating circumstances. However, if the victim is willing to continue living with the author of the crime and the prognosis for the couple's remaining together is favourable, the minimum legal sentence may be applied in consideration of extraordinary attenuating circumstances (within certain limits).

- 4) In ten countries (67%) provisions include aggravating circumstances for criminal liability in terms of kinship or bonds of affection in crimes against *sexual freedom*: Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom.

The expert meetings held in the European Union acknowledge that such legal measures are good practice to fight against the impunity and conspiracy of silence that usually surrounds sexual violence against women.

- 5) Four States (27%) report the existence of *special judicial proceedings to expedite cases of sexual violence*: France, Ireland, Italy and United Kingdom. However, when the aggression falls under domestic violence, Germany and Luxembourg have proceedings for such situations.

The establishment of special mechanisms to expedite legal proceedings in cases of sexual violence can be considered good practice that protects women who are victims of violence.

- 6) Ten countries (67%) state that they have *legal provisions to keep the victim of sexual violence from being revictimised*: Austria, Belgium, France, German, Holland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. In some countries these provisions can be enforced only in certain circumstances: when the victim is a minor, when an individual appears as a witness or when the victim is considered to be especially vulnerable.

These measures are good practice and highly relevant to keep victims from suffering further aggression during the trial, as stressed by the Fourth World Conference on Women, and should be extended to all cases where necessary. It is noteworthy to point out that **Germany** is especially effective in its new measures for protecting victims and witnesses, which generally include the possibility of videotaping testimony. In the same way, **France** informs that has implemented an audio-visual system that records the statements of the minors victims during the entire proceedings

- 7) The fourteen countries (93%) replying to this question state that *free legal aid is available for victims of sexual violence* when certain requirements are met, such as the economic situation. This assistance varies throughout the Member States:

- In Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and United Kingdom free services include counselling as well as legal assistance during the trial.
- In Greece and Spain, legal counselling.
- In Germany and Sweden, legal assistance during the trial.

Some countries add that, in addition to the above cost-free legal assistance, victims are offered the possibility of having a support counsellor (Finland) or comprehensive psychological and psychiatric assistance, provided by Social Security in the case of minors subjected to sexual violence (France).

8) Four Member States (27%) point out that *specific sexual-violence victim-assistance units are available on judicial services*, staffed by specialised personnel: France, Holland, Spain and Sweden.

9) Nine countries (60%) report that *specific sexual-violence victim-assistance units are available on police services*: Austria, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg (for minors only), Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom. These units are nearly always staffed by specialised personnel.

In Holland the handling of sexual crimes has emerged as a specific field of police specialisation. It is being sought more and more, and regional law enforcement agencies employ specialists who are available 24 hours a day. Such units must include a sufficient number of female officers.

Although Sweden does not have such specialised units, assistance for sexual-violence victims is a priority generally covered by specialised personnel.

The establishment and development of this type of service on judicial and law enforcement premises is good practice that can contribute to improving assistance to sexual-violence victims and preventing revictimisation.

10) Eleven countries (73%) report that they have *legally established indemnities for victims of sexual violence*: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. They are included under indemnities for all types of violence or are specifically established for infringements of sexual freedom. This would be good practice, highly relevant to mitigate the destructive effects of victimisation.

5.6. Good legal, judicial and law enforcement practices to prevent violence against women in the workplace in the Member States

The responses to the Questionnaire on Good Practice show that all countries have brought about major advances in recent years in legal measures relative to sexual harassment in the workplace, along the lines of the recommendations made by the Fourth World Conference on Women. We note the following:

1) Eight Member States (53%) have defined *sexual harassment in the workplace as a specific crime or misdemeanour*: Belgium, France, Holland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom.

The codification of sexual harassment in the workplace as a crime or misdemeanour is good practice, which can help prevent violence against women in this setting.

In the case of countries that do not have this definition, sexual harassment can be penalised via crimes against freedom, dignity or personal integrity of the following types: abuse of authority, affront, abuse, humiliation, assault or illegal violence. Other instruments, such as labour laws, are also available to deal with it.

Examples of good practices are the regulation of sexual harassment in the labour legislation of Belgium and the Netherlands:

- The Royal Decree of 18 September 1998 in **Belgium** requires employers to include the following in labour regulations: 1) A definition of sexual harassment in the workplace, stating that such behaviour will not be tolerated in the company; 2) the designation of a person or service of confidence where victims of sexual harassment can go; 3) the procedure to follow for reporting incidents; 4) sanctions applicable to guilty parties.
- The legislation in **Holland** on the improvement of **working** conditions requires employers to adopt a policy on this issue based on measures of occupational risk, as well as using security and health services to detect problems and aid in their solution. Sexual harassment is an important aspect of this law and can be reported as soon as a person begins to experience it.

- 2) The legislation in **Germany** and **Spain** *distinguishes between quid pro quo harassment and environmental harassment*. This distinction can aid in preventing the different modes of this type of violence against women.

- 3) Four countries (27%) have defined *bullying in the workplace as a crime or misdemeanour*: **Belgium, France, Ireland and United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)**, which is good practice to make progress in combating all forms of violence in the workplace and should be generalised.

Although Italy reports that workplace bullying has not been defined as a crime or misdemeanour in the national legislation, it is so regarded in certain regional regulations.

Other countries mention other crimes under which bullying can be dealt with legally: an act that causes physical injury, recognised as such by physicians (Austria); abuse and coercion (Germany); aggression, threat and blackmail

(Greece); harm, threat and action against one's private life (Luxembourg); coercion and crimes against moral integrity (Spain); assault, illegal threat, humiliation or insulting behaviour (Sweden).

4) Ten Member States (67%) report that *free legal aid is available for victims of workplace violence*, depending on compliance with certain requirements such as the victim's economic situation. This assistance varies among the Member States:

- In Austria, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal both free legal counselling and assistance during trial are provided.
- In Greece and Spain, legal counselling.
- In Germany and Sweden, legal assistance during trial.

Finland notes in this respect that while there are no specific rules on provision of cost-free legal assistance for victims of workplace violence, they may benefit from the general provisions on legal assistance.

The provision of free legal assistance to victims of workplace violence can be considered good practice since it provides the victim with legal information and makes it possible for them to better defend their rights.

5) Only two countries (13%), **Luxembourg** and **Spain**, have a *specific judicial procedure to expedite cases of workplace violence*, which can be considered good practice that contributes to mitigate the serious consequences that prolonging these trials causes to victims.

5.7. Evaluation of the legal, judicial and law enforcement measures for preventing violence against women in the European Union Member States

This section discusses the replies given by twelve Member States when asked in the Questionnaire on Good Practice to indicate the three legal, judicial and law enforcement measures they consider most effective.

Austria mentions, in first place, the *Federal Domestic-Violence Protection Act* of 1997, which gives the police authority to expel the author of a violent act or a threat of violence from the home and the immediate environment in which the victim lives. It is also possible to ban him from returning for at least ten days (prohibition order). If the domestic-violence victim is a close relative of the perpetrator, she may ask the court for an interim injunction, which replaces the prohibition order, if the latter has already been issued. This injunction extends beyond the home and covers a wider area than the police order. The court can also ban the perpetrator from going to or remaining in certain places, such as the schools attended by his children or his wife's children, or the wife's workplace. Similarly, the perpetrator can also be instructed not to meet the victim or contact her. If the court receives a sufficiently detailed report on the police intervention (included in the prohibition order), it may refrain from listen to the perpetrator (or his defence counsel).

Secondly, Austria mentions the *Criminal Prosecution Act*, which contributes to prevent revictimisation while the trial is underway, thus avoiding the need to testify again in hearings. There is also the possibility of establishing special circumstances for hearing the victim's testimony (without having to confront the author of the crime) so that questioning can take place without her being present. The questioning can also be entrusted to a professional expert (usually a psychiatrist).

Finland reports, firstly, on its *Act on Restriction Orders*, in force for three years now, during which the one hundred-some such orders issued per month stand as proof of the need for such a measure. A proposal to improve it is presently in Parliament and is expected to be passed in 2002. The amendments include an extension of such orders for application to perpetrators living with victims, whereby they would be required to abandon the place of abode, a measure not included in the existing Act. Secondly, this Member State highlights the 1999 reform of its Penal Code on sexual crimes, which has proved to be highly relevant to adapt this chapter of the code to the enormous disadvantage at which victims are generally placed in such situations. Among other changes, the reform allows criminal charges for sexual crimes to be brought by the public prosecutor. Thirdly, Finland mentions the Criminal Act of 1997, on the grounds of which courts may designate a support counsellor to cater for the victim of a sexual crime throughout the police investigation and court proceedings.

France highlights, firstly, the improvement in the treatment and assistance provided victims through the: 1) reinforcement of their rights, in particular after the act of 15 June 2000 (mandating that records must be kept of charges, even if the service involved has no territorial competence and that victims must be notified of all of their rights throughout the procedure, and providing for simplification of ways to institute civil proceedings...) and 2) enlargement of the scope of victim support squads in police services and initial and continuing education for these professionals on such issues. Secondly, it reports that spousal violence has been defined as a crime and that violence committed by the victim's spouse or de facto partner is an aggravating circumstance. Thirdly, this State mentions the establishment and promotion of departmental commissions to curb violence against women whose purpose is to favour co-operation among local institutions, elected representatives and associations, co-ordinated under the authority of the civil governor, and the creation, in 2001, of the national commission on violence against women.

Germany mentions, first of all, the recently approved *Violence Protection Act* of 2001, which improves civil preventive protection against violent acts in general and against domestic violence in particular. It includes legal measures such as

banning contact, proximity and harassment. The perpetrator is required to evacuate the home when the perpetrator and the victim have been managing it jointly on a long-term basis. Secondly, the *Victim Protection Act* includes procedural improvements to enhance the safety of victims and witnesses. And thirdly, the *Employee Protection Act* contains effective measures for protection against sexual harassment in the workplace. With regard to evaluating the effectiveness of the measures, Germany comments that all intervention plans include a scientific evaluation and that the new measures mentioned will soon be available.

Greece states that the most effective measure in this area is the creation in 1999 of the *Interministerial Committee for the Repression of Violence Against Women* under a decision by the Ministry of the Interior, Public Administration and Decentralisation, in co-operation with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Public Order. The purpose is to co-ordinate, specify and implement appropriate, immediate actions to eradicate this phenomenon. It is made up of teams including members of each of the ministries responsible and the Research Centre on Equality Matters (KETHI), whose members include prestigious experts from the academic community and the women's movement.

Holland mentions a study on the effectiveness of legislation covering sexual harassment in the workplace, published in 2000, which compares the results obtained then with an evaluation carried out in 1995. This study shows that employers have improved considerably in the knowledge of their obligations under the Working Conditions Act, to cope with sexual harassment. 72% of employers have taken measures to identify risks and 57% have implemented a strategy — figures considerable higher than in 1995 (23% and 19%, respectively). The most commonly used procedure for protection against sexual harassment focuses on meetings in the workplace to discuss the issue openly (26% in 2000 as opposed to 22% in 1995).

Ireland highlights its *Children's First Protocol* on action procedures by law enforcement agencies and health professionals, a national guide to ensure the protection of and welfare for minors. One of the objectives of the protocol is to

improve the identification, measurement, treatment and control of child abuse. Secondly, this country mentions the establishment of the DVSAIU in March 1993, a nation-wide unit designed to further better practice in DV operations and investigation of rape, sexual assault and the sexual abuse of children. Thirdly, this country reports on the 1996 *Act on Domestic Violence*, which expands the *Barring Orders* to include other types of people, such as those who live with victims and their children. This new legislation empowers courts to establish long-term protection orders and also vests the Health Board with new powers.

Luxembourg states the main legal, judicial and law enforcement measures are those relating to police training.

Portugal mentions three measures as the most relevant in this area: 1) that the state may compensate victims of conjugal violence in certain circumstances; 2) removal of the perpetrator from the place where the crime was committed or where the victim or other family members live; 3) the National Plan on Domestic Violence. This plan is currently being evaluated and includes measures not only for sensitisation and prevention of domestic violence but also to protect victims, as well as studies and research on the issue.

Spain reports the following as the three most relevant legal, judicial and law enforcement measures for combating violence against women: 1) the inclusion of psychological violence under the crime of domestic violence; 2) free legal assistance for victims of violence against women; 3) the inclusion in procedural legislation of the precautionary measure of keeping the perpetrator away from the victim.

Another measure taken in Spain is the creation of an Interministerial Commission, whose membership comprises senior officials from the Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs, the Interior, Health and Consumer Affairs, Justice, and Education, Culture and Sport to co-ordinate, evaluate and conduct follow-up on the Comprehensive Plan against Violence.

Sweden mentions in first place the definition of serious violation of a woman's integrity by force as a crime. This new legal device makes it possible to increase the criminal status of repeated crimes (assault, illegal threat, sexual humiliation) when they are committed by a man against a woman with whom he has a close relationship. It is punishable by a prison term ranging from six months to six years. Secondly, as part of the reform on violence against women, instructions are given by the government to the following agencies to carry out common tasks for preventing violence against women: the state and regional prosecutors' offices, the national police agency and regional law enforcement authorities, the National Council on Crime Prevention, the national health and welfare services and some departments within the National Justice Administration. These instructions focus on the five following areas: enhancing efforts to prevent violence against women; designing an action plan and a document on policy to implement; co-operation with other relevant authorities and organisations; supervising the development of this issue internationally; and reporting regularly to the government on measures adopted. As a third measure, in 2001 Sweden approved a series of actions to improve the victims' circumstances, including one to enhance the recognition of the victims' rights — especially for women — in order to extend the possibility of free defence.

The **United Kingdom** reports, firstly, on its *Victim Support's National Witness Service*, available in all *Crown Courts* in England and Wales. This service can arrange for such things as visits to familiarise victims with the court prior to the trial, separate waiting rooms prior, during and after the trial, aid to defray expenses and information on indemnities. Secondly, the UK highlights a co-operative effort with municipal police, known as *Enough is Enough*, designed to develop a proactive strategy against domestic violence, focusing on safety for the victims and children undergoing this ordeal and on the responsibility of the author of such abuse. This endeavour has contributed to developing good practice for action in crisis situations and longer term support for victims and established the framework for reviewing cases of domestic violence resulting in death for the purpose of reinforcing co-operation between agencies and providing better protection for victims. Thirdly, mention is made to a guide entitled *Prosecuting cases of domestic violence*, issued by the *Crown*

Prosecution Service and intended to help users through all stages of the process, informing them of relevant information and the procedural steps to follow.

The responses to the Questionnaire on Good Practice show that highly relevant legal, judicial and law enforcement instruments have been developed in the European Union to prevent violence against women. According to studies carried out by several organisations in recent years, the effectiveness of these instruments could be improved by a systematic, ongoing evaluation of all the measures adopted. This would make it possible to detect and remedy existing limitations on their compliance and enforcement. The most specific recommendations are the following:

1) Determine whether the current *definition of crimes and misdemeanours* is sufficient and appropriate so that violent actions against women do not go unpunished. Special attention should be paid to crimes and misdemeanours not codified as such, such as psychological domestic violence, sexual harassment and bullying.

2) Extend and evaluate *measures to guarantee the protection of victims*, such as restricting the perpetrator's proximity as mentioned by several Member States among especially effective measures. Others are those designed to inform the victim of changes in the latter's situation. The limitations found in such an evaluation should be solved as quickly as possible to guarantee the victim's safety, a priority objective of all legal, judicial and law enforcement actions.

3) Generalise *measures designed to prevent revictimisation* during the trial. These measures currently exist in most of the Member States for certain cases and can therefore be used to protect all women who are victims of violence from the risk of such an ordeal.

4) Establish *mechanisms to expedite court proceedings* in cases of violence against women, especially when the situation of perpetrator and victim involves the risk of further aggression from the start of the trial until sentencing.

5) Extend *special units for victim assistance* on both police services and court premises so that the specialisation includes all types of violence against women.

6. SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

6.1. Measures relating to surveys and research proposed at the Fourth World Conference on Women

The need to research into violence against women is underscored in Strategic Objective D.2 of the Platform for Action: *Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures, as only the ongoing promotion of research and monitoring innovations can change the present situation.*

The following specific actions are proposed for implementation by Governments, the United Nations, other international organisations, research institutions, women's organisations and non-governmental organisations: *Promote research, gather data and compile statistics, especially concerning domestic violence, relating to the prevalence of different forms of violence against women, their causes, nature and consequences, as well as on the effectiveness of measures implemented, and assure the findings of such research are widely disseminated, among the public at large.*

The following are specifically targeted for Government action:

- a) *Develop new research in selected areas, including work with groups of women with particular care needs and/or who may have been missed out of previous studies.*
- b) *Provide support to local research.*
- c) *Evaluate new initiatives and programmes.*
- d) *Disseminate research findings nationally and internationally.*
- e) *Identify new needs as they emerge by means of research and monitoring.*

f) *Examine the effects of legislative changes.*

6.2. Surveys and research into violence against women in Europe

The Expert Meeting on *Violence against Women* (Jyväskylä 1999) makes explicit reference to programme research and evaluation.

On the research side, it calls on the European Union to acknowledge the need to conduct broad comparative studies, data gathering and information dissemination on all aspects of violence against women, and to provide sufficient funding to end with this problem. This recommendation should be followed up by a consultative group comprising researchers, politicians and women's non-governmental organisations with extensive experience in the field.

The Council of Europe has also singled out the need for research, as reflected in the conclusions of the 1999 Expert Meeting on Violence against Women, which *stress that research in general and surveys in particular are essential, as there is still some denial about the phenomenon, and can help convince politicians of the real extent of violence against women. They also urge the use of standardised instruments able to provide valid, reliable and comparable data, and generate results faithful to reality. This effort, they continue, should be made at local, regional, national and international level.*

Among the main recommendations put forward by Council of Europe experts at the 1999 and 2000 conferences were:

- 1) Draw up gender-disaggregated statistics and develop a suite of common indicators to achieve a better assessment of violence against women, and evaluate the effectiveness of measures taken to prevent violence and mitigate its effects.

- 2) Bear in mind certain often neglected influences which can distort survey and research results, such as the variations in the ways different types of violence against women are regarded, depending on context and social, cultural or linguistic origin, or the rapid changes of recent years in the mores as of which the problem is conceptualised.

- 3) Improve the standardisation and rigor of surveys by the following measures:
 - Take representative samples with a minimum size of around 1,000 persons, and exercise tighter control of possible sampling errors.
 - Established minutely detailed scales of acts of violence, to be based on direct information gleaned from victims.
 - Provide adequate training to interviewers and researchers, including information on how to handle the following aspects: cultural, ethnic, social and economic differences, and the specifics of marginal groups.
 - Call in language specialists to avoid translation problems in international research projects.

- 4) Conduct surveys and research on matters of priority interest, particularly the following:
 - The economic and social costs of violence against women.
 - The image society has of violence against women.
 - The influence of social change and instability on gender relations and violence against women.
 - Perpetrator and victim checks and risks, as regards both the general risk of violence against women and the specific shape this violence takes.
 - The consequences of domestic violence for children and adolescents.
 - The consequences of violence against women for victims and witnesses.
 - The types of action which can prevent violence, including specific actions for women especially at risk.

5) Foster co-operation at different levels:

- Improving interdisciplinary interaction among staff in the different agencies involved (judicial, police, health, education, social services...), whether public or private including non-governmental organisations, as well as interaction between these agencies and the scientific community.
- Promoting research through national and international networks.
- Contributing set up research centres specialising in the study of violence against women.

6) Establish governmental institutions to co-ordinate evaluation of the effectiveness of measures taken to combat violence against women at national and international level, in consultation with the relevant social agents including non-governmental organisations.

7) Compile and write up the findings of research into violence against women, with a view to its dissemination to the public at large through all available media.

6.3. Good practice in the conduct of surveys and research into violence against women in general and domestic violence in particular in Member States of the European Union

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Fourth World Conference, the majority of European Union Member States have carried out studies to assess the extent or prevalence of violence against women, as a supplement to official records and statistics. These studies are based on reliable, valid data drawn primarily from *population sample surveys*.

Analyses of the relative value of sources tend to set the benefits of one type of data against the drawbacks of another, it should be borne in mind that these are complementary information sources.

The main drawback of official records is the invisibility of unreported cases, and the scant information compiled on the victims. As is later discussed, most Member States are willing to take measures to overcome these limitations.

Among the main advantages of surveys is that they include information on violent incidents not reported to the police; they can be repeated at different times in different places, so offer a better basis for comparison; they allow data to be gathered on victims and on the circumstances and effects of violent incidents, so offer a better opportunity to study the causes and consequences of violence than official records. Conversely, the main defects of surveys are sampling errors, the exclusion of individuals not falling within the sample framework (frequently with some victim groups among their number) or problems related to the memory of respondents.

Questionnaire replies suggest that the conduct of surveys is good practice extensively taken up by European Union Member States.

In eleven Member States (73%) surveys covering large population samples have been conducted exclusively on the subject of violence against women. But the differences between them rule out inter-country comparison of findings.

Studies on recent changes in the surveys conducted on violence tend to refer to four groups of projects, each of which reports different rates of violent crimes against women, which increase with time.

At first, surveys addressed the subject of crimes in general. In a second phase, these polls began to include a special section on violence against women, primarily focusing on domestic violence. This second group includes the so-called *review surveys*, such as the United Kingdom's *British Crime Survey*.

In its reply to the questionnaire, Ireland mentions the *National Crime Council* survey, which would also appear to fall under this second category.

In the third generation surveys, focusing exclusively on domestic violence, the questions posed go into greater detail and are specifically adapted to the nature of the problem. One example is the *Macroencuesta sobre violencia doméstica contra las mujeres (Macrosurvey on Domestic Violence against Women)* (1999) conducted in **Spain** and commissioned by the *Instituto de la Mujer* (Women's Institute), in which a sample of 20,552 women were interviewed. The survey's aim was to gauge the extent of the problem, and its causes and consequences. Another, the mail surveys conducted in **Sweden** on the *Prevalence of Domestic Violence* (1997 and 2001), targeting women aged from 18 to 64 grouped in samples of 10,000. The *National Centre for Battered and Raped Women*, the University of Uppsala and its Hospital participated in the 2001 edition of the survey.

Finally, the latest fourth-generation surveys specifically address the full range of incidences of violence against women. The pioneer study in the respect was the *Statistics Canada Violence Against Women Survey*, 1993, which has served as model and reference for most recent surveys in Europe and the United States. The following surveys fall under this fourth category:

France: Between 1997 and 2000, the *Enquête nationale sur les Violences envers les Femmes (ENVEFF) (National Survey on Violence against Women)* sampled 6,970 women between the ages of 20 and 59. The purpose was to ascertain the frequency and most common types of violence and analyse the consequences for victims. It included specific questions on domestic violence (physical and other), sexual violence and violence in the workplace and in public spaces.

Finland: A survey titled *Faith, Hope and Battering* was conducted in 1998 to establish the frequency and types of violence against women in the domestic, sexual and workplace domains, as well as the causes and consequences of such violence. The survey was mailed to a sample consisting of 7,051 women between the ages of 15 and 74, with a response rate of 70%.

Germany, an officially sponsored survey on violence against women is under way in 2002, *Erhebung zu gewalt gegen Frauen (Survey on Violence against Women)*, with a sample of 10,000 women over the age of 16. The purpose of the survey is to determine the types, causes and consequences of this kind of violence.

Italy: The Italian Statistics Institute (ISTAT) conducted a survey in 1998 geared to assessing the frequency and types of violence against women under three general headings: domestic, sexual and workplace. The sample covered 50,000 families. In its reply to the Questionnaire, Italy reports conducting another survey of 15,000 people living in seven cities with a population of over 500,000, designed to analyse the causes of violence against women.

Aside from the good survey practices described above, other Member States report conducting the following studies:

Belgium (1998): *Prévenir, subir et recourir à la violence (Preventing, Suffering and Reporting Violence)*. The sample comprised 656 men and 783 women between the ages of 20 and 49, selected at random in 23 municipalities.

Denmark (1996): One keynote initiative was the *Violence in the Street, Home and Workplace* survey conducted by the police and based on 26,000 interviews.

Holland: *Violence against Women in Heterosexual Relationships*, conducted in 1989, and *Sexual Abuse of Girls by Relatives* conducted in 1998. Both these studies received funding from the Dutch government.

Portugal (1997): General survey on *Violence*, based on a sample of 1,000 women. The main goals were to determine the types, causes and consequences of violence.

As the above information suggests, the recommendation of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women on conducting surveys to determine the types, causes and consequences of violence against women has been widely taken up by European Union Member States, so may be deemed to constitute good practice.

The 1999 Eurobarometer referred to at several points in this report also stands as good practice in the field of surveys; in this case, an opinion poll taking in the whole of the European Union. Its aim was to assess the degree of awareness and sensitisation regarding violence against women, especially in the domestic sphere. The study takes in the population over age 15 or over residing in each Member State. All interviews were conducted face-to-face in the respondent's home and in his or her vernacular language. Around 1,000 cases were selected from each country.

The inclusion of questions on violence against women in the general surveys conducted on a regular basis by Member States may also be considered good practice.

It may be inferred from the replies to the Questionnaire that only three Member State (20%) include questions about violence against women in more general surveys: Finland, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Surveys constitute an indispensable tool for in-depth analysis of violence against women. But this good practice could be improved if the following guidelines were followed:

1. Increase the comparability of data between countries by standardising data-gathering techniques and participating in common surveys with questions formulated on the grounds of consensus. Twelve Member States (80%) claim to be willing to initiate such a practice.

2. Include a series of common questions in routine nation-wide or Community-wide surveys, as a means to gauge the awareness and sensitisation of the population regarding violence against women. Thirteen countries (87%) replied that they are willing to incorporate certain common questions to allow results integration and comparison.
3. Systematically include data on violence against women in the European Union Countries in EUROSTAT statistics. Several States even believe there is a need to include such figures in their own national statistics.
4. Make certain methodological improvements in data gathering and processing, in particular the following:
 - Eliminate shortcomings in the sample framework to cover persons belonging to marginal groups who do not have a fixed abode because victimisation rates may be high in such communities.
 - Perfect the list of questions and the way they are asked, especially questions referring to sexual abuse or harassment, so they capture all possible variants of such practices.
 - Develop better procedures for recording incidents chronologically, to get a measure of the rate at which violence is rising.
 - Develop statistics broken down by income group, to examine possible links between violence and factors such as poverty, social exclusion and belonging to certain communities, especially where vulnerability is high.

The information provided on the Questionnaire by the fifteen Member States shows that each has funded other research into violence against women since 1995, different from the above mentioned surveys. The following is a list of studies addressing violence against women in general and/or domestic violence in particular:

Austria: Has financed several research projects on the types, causes and consequences of violence against women in general, the three most prominent of which were:

- *Combating Violence against Women and Children.*
- *Offer to Help Inform and so Prevent Violence in Schools.*
- *Study to evaluate the Federal Act on the Protection against Domestic Violence.*

Belgium: Two keynote research projects focused on judicial policy in matters of violence against women in general and intimate partner violence in particular, on the basis of samples of court verdicts. Of the studies listed by Belgium on the Questionnaire, the following two are highlighted:

- *La politique judiciaire en matière de violences sexuelles et de violence au sein du couple (Judicial Policy on Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence).*
- *Prévenir, subir et recourir à la violence (Preventing, Suffering and Reporting Violence).*

Denmark: Reports two major studies conducted since 1995 on violence against women in general and, more specifically, on domestic violence:

- *Violence on the Street, Domestically and in the Workplace, a study conducted by the police force that provides an overview based on the results of a survey that included over 26,000 interviews.*
- *Department for Gender Equality's Survey on EU Countries' Initiatives on Domestic Violence.*

Finland: Mentions the following studies on violence against women, in general. The first of these is an ambitious programme being conducted by the Finnish Academy on *Power, Violence and Gender* in 2002-2003. A second

research programme, sponsored by the Nordic countries, is *Gender and Violence*, under way between 2000 and 2004. Finland is also financing a project titled *The Price of Violence; the Costs of Men's Violence against Women in Finland*, an issue which has begun to draw attention in a number of countries.

France: Highlights the following study in the section on the Questionnaire on research on violence against women in general:

- *Enquête nationale sur les violences envers les femmes en France (National Survey on Violence against Women in France)* referred above.

Germany: The most relevant research studies on this type of violence were *Untersuchung Gewalt (Studies on Violence)*, *Untersuchung Beschäftigungsschutzgesetz (Studies on the Act on Protection against Violence)* and *Evaluation des Gewaltschutzgesetzes (Evaluation of the Act on Protection against Violence)*.

Greece: Notes that the *Research Centre for Gender Equality, KETHI*, has conducted six research studies since 1995; the three most relevant to the type of violence in question are:

- *Speaking of Domestic Violence: Reports of Abused Women on Domestic Violence.*
- *Violence against Women by their Partners.*
- *Victim or Survivor, a Rhetorical Construction of Identity in Consultancy Procedures on Women's Abuse: a Case Study.*

Holland: The two studies considered to be most important focused on domestic violence: one on its definition, extent and aid services; the other on actions to prevent and combat the problem.

- *Domestic Violence: Nature, Scope and Assistance*

- *The Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women*

Ireland: The following are the most prominent projects specifically related to violence on women:

- *Making the Links*
- *Safety and Sanctions*

Italy: Several of the works mentioned are part of the URBA *Violenza contra le donne (Violence against Women)* studies conducted in large cities in 2001. Another endeavour referred in the Questionnaire addresses the institutional response to violence against women: *Violenza alle donne e risposte delle istituzioni. Prospettive Internazionali (Violence against Women and Institutional Response. International Prospective Study)*. Finally, reference is made to the contribution to the struggle against violence towards women: *Le luminose trame. Sistemi de aiuto e modelli d'intervento contra la violenza alle donne (Enlightened Path. System for Assistance and Model for Action to Combat Violence against Women)*.

Portugal: Two studies have been conducted since 1995:

- *Violence against Women*
- *Women Battered by their Husbands: from Victims to Survivors*

Three further studies have been initiated, on the costs of violence, violence detected in hospitals and violence detected by forensic medicine.

Spain: Reports that thirteen studies have been conducted on violence against women since 1995. The most prominent, in the context of the type of violence addressed in this section, were a study of *day-to-day violence with women as victims*, an experimental research project to develop and run a programme favouring *The construction of equality and prevention of violence against*

women through secondary education and the *Macrosurvey on Violence against Women* referred above.

Sweden: Highlights two research projects on violence against women in general:

- *Men's Violence against Women*
- *Prevalence of Male Violence against Women in Sweden*

A third study was also run, under the title *Thoughts of Police Officers on Domestic Violence*. Attention should also be drawn, as an example of good practice, to specific research explicitly commissioned from the *Council for Crime Prevention* on violence against women and to its instructions to incorporate the gender perspective in all other research conducted.

United Kingdom: Mentions three lines of research presently under way: the *Crime Reduction Programme* is presently funding fifty projects on measures against domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment, with an emphasis on the evaluation of the effectiveness of such measures to reduce crimes of this nature. A second line is on Domestic Violence Civil Remedies; it aims to find out if there are any gaps in the current civil remedies and focuses on section 60, Part IV of the Family Law Act, 1996. Accommodation and support for households experiencing domestic violence is the third research issue.

The Member States' responses to the Questionnaire on Good Practice section on priority lines of research into violence against women coincided to a large degree. Listed below are the issues referred, the number of countries mentioning them and, in brackets, the percentage:

- Evaluation of measures to eradicate violence: 11 (73%)
- The consequences of violence in victims: 9 (60%)
- Causes of violence against women: 7 (47%)
- Statistical dimension of the problem; 5 (33%)

- Victim risk factors: 5 (33%)
- Perpetrator traits: 2 (13%)
- Others:
 - The social costs of violence against women: 2 (13%)
 - Nature of the forms of violence: 1 (7%)
 - Cumulative violence (partner, work): 1 (7%)

These responses show the importance attached by European Union Member States to evaluating measures to eradicate violence; a conclusion very much in line with the recommendations drawn up in expert meetings.

6.4. Good practice in surveys and research into sexual violence in European Union Member States

Some Member States have also conducted surveys and research into issues relating to sexual violence. Some of the most relevant are listed below:

Belgium: *La politique judiciaire en matière de violence sexuelle (Judicial Policy on Sexual Violence)*. Also relevant to this section is the study that addresses both sexual and partner violence, referred in the preceding item.

Denmark: Has conducted a study on street violence, domestic violence and workplace violence, referred above.

Holland: *Sexual Abuse of Girls by Relatives*.

Ireland: *Attrition in Sexual Assault Offence Cases in Ireland: A Qualitative Analysis*.

Austria and **Greece** also referred to studies into sexual violence, though their subject matters, trafficking in women and prostitution, respectively, lie outside the scope of this Guide. Austria noted that in its study special attention was given to women with disabilities, considered to be a highly vulnerable community.

6.5. Good practice in surveys and research into violence against women in the workplace in European Union Member States

One example of good research practice would be the European Community's initiative, through DG V, in drawing up two reports on sexual harassment in EC countries. The aim of these studies was to gather valid information on the prevalence, seriousness and consequences of sexual harassment in Member States.

The first study was carried out by M. Rubenstein (1987) *The dignity of women at work. A report of the problem of sexual harassment in the Member States of the European Community.*

The Commission ordered a second study to be carried out reviewing all relevant research projects conducted in Member States between 1987 and 1997 (a total of 74, taking in both surveys and research reports). The study was carried out in the ten northern Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Sweden and United Kingdom), with Timmerman (Holland) as co-ordinator, while another study using the same methodology covered the five southern countries (Spain, France, Greece, Italy and Portugal) with Alemany (Spain) taking on co-ordination functions.

In the responses given to the Questionnaire on Good Practice, four Member States (27%) mention surveys and research into violence against women in the workplace:

Belgium: Conducted a survey on the "confidence counsellor" within companies: *La personne de confiance: Qui?, Statut?, Tâches? Qui sont les victimes qui déposent une plainte? (The confidence counsellor: who?, status?, profession?. What kind of victims report incidents?)*, financed by the Equal Opportunities Service. 456 private companies participated in the survey as did 54 public institutions.

This project identified the main shortcomings of the “confidence counsellor” figure, so providing useful improvement pointers.

Denmark: Conducted a study, referred above, on violence in the street, as well as in the home and at the workplace.

France: Ran research on the evaluation of the Act of 1992 relating to quid-pro-quo sexual harassment in workplace relationships, specifically titled *Evaluation de la loi du 2 novembre 1992 relative à l'abus de l'autorité en matière sexuelle dans les relations du travail*.

Greece: Financed the study titled *Sexual harassment in the workplace: suggestions for the penalisation of the behaviour in Greece*.

As a good practice in detecting bullying in the workplace, mention can be made of the studies conducted, at the initiative of the European Parliament, to gauge the extent of the problem and some of its main effects.

Of particular note are the European Foundation Survey for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Dublin, 1997) and the pilot study on Health and Safety at Work in the European Union, conducted by the corresponding Agency in the year 2000. On the basis of these studies, Andersson states that 8% of employees in the European Union, that is, 12 million workers, have suffered bullying at work in the last twelve months, allowing for the fact that cases are hard to identify and the real figure is presumably much higher (Report presented to the European Parliament, July 2001).

In a Resolution on harassment at work dated 20 September 2001, the European Parliament recommends that more studies should be carried out to gauge the extent and characteristics of the problem in Member States. This recommendation should be taken up to determine whether such harassment can validly be considered violence against women.

The reports presented to the European Parliament suggest there are many aspects of violence against women in the workplace which still need to be studied. From a descriptive point of view, what stands out is the enormous dispersion and variability of sexual harassment incidence rates, which are impossible to compare in the absence of a common methodology.

There are also certain hypotheses with major implications for the prevention of violence which have not been sufficiently verified, such as Canadian and US findings on the importance of the *characteristics and climate of the organisation*. This may explain the differences in harassment rates from one sector to another.

Organisations with a sexualised work atmosphere are more tolerant of and conducive to harassment while those with good labour relations geared more to the person than the post have fewer cases of sexual harassment.

By the same token, it is sometimes reported that work environments with a strong female presence give rise to greater awareness about the problem of sexual harassment, and that women talk more freely about their experiences of violence in the workplace as their numbers increase. Carrying out systematic research into these links should accordingly be considered good practice in combating violence against women.

7. RECORDS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

7.1. Measures relating to records on violence against women proposed at the Fourth World Conference on Women

The Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference addresses the issue of records and statistics on violence against women in the following terms: *the absence of adequate gender-disaggregated data and statistics on the incidence of violence makes the elaboration of programmes and monitoring of changes difficult. Lack of or inadequate documentation and research on domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence against women and girls in private and in public, including the workplace, impede efforts to design specific intervention strategies.*

7.2. Keys to good practice in records and statistics on violence against women

The Expert Meeting of the European Union on *measures to combat male violence against women*, held in Vienna in 1998, proposes the following two recommendations on records and statistics:

- The police should develop a functional documentation system which not only records the number of emergency calls, but also the type of police action, personal details and information on previous arrests, “court appearances” and convictions.
- The police should implement effective, permanent checking mechanisms for using both by police units and experts from outside agencies.

The European Interministerial Conference on Violence against Women, held in Cologne in 1999, debated the need for improvement in record-keeping in order to better define the extent, causes and consequences of the problem. Member States were accordingly called on to constitute groups at European level made up of non-

governmental organisation experts and researchers, which could gather useful *information and generate databases using common criteria, and the design of multidisciplinary research programmes with a particular accent on the relationship between offender and victim.*

At the *Lisbon Conference* of 2000, which analysed the results of the *Zero Tolerance Campaign*, it was stressed that *one of the most neglected areas has been the gathering of data and keeping of statistical records on violent incidents. Only four Member States (France, Luxembourg, Spain and United Kingdom) have made efforts in this direction.*

The Council of Europe has also repeatedly acknowledged the need to improve records and statistics, regretting *that most Member States of the Council of Europe do not yet have precise statistical data to evaluate the extent and social impact of acts of violence against women. States, it is remarked, almost invariably depend on data furnished by associations and use them as the main basis for policymaking, while major statistical agencies both national and European (EUROSTAT) have only scant data on this issue. And European institutions cannot hope to assess needs, apply suitable policies and check their effectiveness without the right statistical tools.*

At the Parliamentary Assembly of 15-3-2000, it was stressed *that States have been going deeper into this matter since the Beijing and Cairo conferences.*

In order to work towards overcoming these problems, the Council of Europe made the following recommendations at its meeting on the issue in December 2000:

- Establish services, which provide accurate statistical information on the extent of violence against women, and the demands, which must be addressed.
- Develop a national framework, which assures statistics are obtained in a consistent manner and its correspondence with European records.

- Systematically gather together national data from all organisations in contact with women suffering violence.
- Publish and disseminate information on the services available nationally to combat violence against women.
- Present regular action plan progress reports and share good practice information among all the parties involved.

7.3. Good practice in recording violence against women in European Union Member States

In line with the conclusions of the aforementioned meetings, Member State replies to the section on records and statistics in the Questionnaire on Good Practice show that significant limitations persist in this field and that the absence of a common framework for collecting data and presenting statistics makes comparison between countries extremely difficult. The systems described by Member States in the Questionnaire are summarised below.

In its crime and misdemeanour recording system, **Austria** includes the age and sex of the victim and perpetrator, the nationality of the latter and the nature of their relationship. The Ministry of the Interior processes the data and releases annual national and regional statistics. Austria notes that this system has been improved since 1995.

The use in **Austria** of official records for research into violence against women constitutes a good practice in this field; for instance, the study of 1,074 police records to select a group of victims and perpetrators for 32 in-depth interviews in order to evaluate the application of the *Act on protection from violence in the family*.

A further study of migrant women and their children was based on 60 interviews with victims, perpetrators and experts and analysed both the law's application and the

causes and consequences of violence against women in this particularly vulnerable situation. The need for priority attention to this group was emphasised both in the Fourth World Conference on Women and in the European Union meetings held on this subject.

Austria does not evaluate its recording and statistical systems when replying to the Questionnaire, but does state its willingness to agree on standardised data with European Union countries and accepted the data proposed for inclusion with just two exceptions: the person filing the incident report and the withdrawal of the incident report.

In **Belgium**, records of the various types of crimes and misdemeanours only include data on the age of the victim and perpetrator, and these are not systematically placed on file. The Ministry of the Interior, which provides national statistics, processes the data on an annual basis. In its replies to the Questionnaire, Belgium gives no appraisal of the quality of its records and expresses its general willingness to standardise data with European Union Member States, without specifying which elements should be included.

Police in **Denmark** gather information on different types of crimes and misdemeanours, but do not take details on the victim, perpetrator or the relationship between them. The Ministry of Justice produces national statistics at quarterly intervals. Records on sentences are much more detailed and relevant information is gathered on the victim (age, gender, nationality, marital status and educational background), but not on the perpetrator. Data on the type and length of the sentence and follow-up are also included. The Ministry of Justice annually prepares national, regional and local statistics based on this information.

Denmark also indicates that its recording system has improved since 1995 and states its willingness to accept an European Union standardised recording system for crimes, misdemeanours and sentences. In the first case, Denmark replies affirmatively to all the elements in the Questionnaire except for those regarding perpetrator details. It approves the use of all the elements regarding sentences.

Finland has one of the most thorough crime recording systems, which includes sample information on both victim and perpetrator: age, sex, nationality and educational background. The nature of the relationship between the perpetrator and victim is also specified in the event of domestic violence and many details are recorded on the place the crime was committed. The sources are the Ministry of the Interior and the Finnish Statistics Institute. The information is compiled yearly at both the national and regional levels. The person reporting the crime and facts about withdrawal of charges are also recorded. Records on sentences include social and demographic data on the perpetrator (age, sex and nationality), but not on the victim. The type of and duration of the sentence are specified, but not whether it is served in full. The sources are the Legal Registry and the Statistics Finland. National figures are presented yearly.

Finland reports that it has improved its recording systems since 1995 and gives its crime records a high score, particularly in connection with updating and their usefulness for taking measures. Records are also scored high in these respects, but not so in terms of the amount of information provided. Finland expresses its willingness to participate in a standardised recording system drafted by consensus among all the European Union Member States and approves of all the items listed on the Questionnaire in this regard.

France keeps very complete crime records, which include all manner of social and demographic information on both perpetrator and victim: age, sex, marital status, nationality and educational background, as well as information on the relationship between them, the place the crime was committed (home, work, in public and any necessary details on other places) and withdrawal of charges. The sources are characterised by their diversity: Ministry of the Interior, Courts and Ministries of Justice and Defence (Gendarmerie). National, regional and local statistics are published at official request.

Records on sentences are as complete as the ones for the crimes themselves, showing data on the perpetrator, the victim and the nature of their relationship, as well as on the type and duration of the sentence and whether it is served in full. The sources for this information are the courts and the Ministry of Justice. National,

regional and local statistics are readily available at any time, thanks to the computer processing system in place.

France, like other countries, reports that it has improved its recording systems since 1995, granting an average score to the way crimes are recorded. This country expresses its willingness to standardise recording systems among European Union Member States.

The yearly publication in **France**, in the report on activities of the public security services, of two sections on statistics on crimes against women -sexual violence and violence in the family- is an example of good practice.

Germany's crime recording system is among the most elaborate. It includes diverse details on both victim and perpetrator, such as age, sex, nationality and the nature of their relationship, in addition to the type of crime committed, which facilitate more appropriate treatment of the problem of violence against women in its fullest dimension. The Ministry of the Interior processes this information and presents annual statistics.

Systematic data collection in **German** emergency services, shelters and counselling centres is also good practice. Although the data may be biased to some extent, they provide invaluable material with which to advance in the knowledge of domestic violence.

Germany indicates that its recording systems have been improved since 1995.

When evaluating its crime and misdemeanour records, Germany rates updating of the information provided with a high score and its usefulness in combating violence very low. This corroborates the conclusions of the European Women's Lobby report *Dévoiler les données cachées de la violence domestique dans l'UE (Unveiling the hidden data on domestic violence in the European Union) (1999)*.

Aware of the importance of these records, Germany expresses its willingness to agree upon a standardised European recording system and replies affirmatively to all the items suggested on the Questionnaire.

The crime recording system in **Greece** includes data on the perpetrator (sex, age, marital status, nationality and educational background), but not on the victim. The Ministry of the Interior, which draws up national and regional statistics on an annual basis, keeps records. The recording system for sentences also omits data on the victim, and includes the same data on the perpetrator. Information is given on the nature and length of the sentence, but not on whether it is served in full. The Ministry of Justice is the source for data on sentences, which are made up annually into national and regional statistics.

One of **Greece's** good practices, as recommended by the aforementioned European meetings, is to gather data from emergency services, victim shelters and information sources in five cities. Structured questionnaires provide standardised data which can serve to produce statistics with a major impact on public opinion.

Greece does not evaluate the informative quality of its records on crimes and misdemeanours, but rates records on sentences with a low score of less than five. It states that its recording systems have improved since 1995, and likewise asserts its willingness to adopt a standardised recording system common to all European Union countries, responding affirmatively to all the items suggested.

Ireland's crime recording system is very complete, and includes age, sex, marital status and nationality of both victim and perpetrator, place where the crime was committed, relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, the person reporting the crime and, as appropriate, withdrawal of charges. The source is the Garda Síochána (Ireland's national police force), which presents national, regional and local statistics on a yearly basis.

The system for recording sentences is equally complete, and includes the same information on victim and perpetrator and place the crime was committed, as well as

the type and duration of the sentence and whether it is served in full. However, these records do not cover the nature of the relationship between victim and perpetrator. The sources are the Ministry of Justice and the courts. National, regional and local statistics are presented annually.

Although Ireland does not assess its recording systems quantitatively, in the comments it regards them to be complete and elaborate. It reports that they have been improved since 1995 and expresses its willingness to adopt common recording systems, noting, however, that some of the items in its GARDA system that it finds particularly suitable should be added to those suggested.

In **Italy**, the recording system is also very complete and updated frequently, with respect both to crimes and sentences. The social and demographic information on the victim and perpetrator includes age, sex, marital status, nationality and educational background. Data on the relationship between victim and perpetrator as well as a detailed account of the place the crime was committed are recorded, along with the identity of the person reporting the crime and whether or not charges are withdrawn. Many different sources are used: Ministry of the Interior, courts of justice, Ministry of Justice, health centres and anti-violence centres. National, regional and local figures are compiled annually.

Records on sentences, also very complete, contain similar social and demographic data on victims and perpetrators, their relationship and place of the crime, along with information on the type and duration of sentence and whether or not it is served in full. The sources are the Ministry of Justice and the courts. Periodicity is yearly and national, regional and local data are shown. Figures on shelters are also compiled.

Despite the availability of all this information, Italy rates its recording system as average, noting that data gathering it is not sufficiently standardised and indicating the need for systematic collection by the ISTAT (Italian Statistics Institute). It reports that its recording systems have improved since 1995 and it expresses its willingness to reach a consensus on common records throughout the European Union, replying affirmatively to all the items suggested on the questionnaire in this respect.

Italy implements good practice in the presentation of specific statistics at the beginning of each judicial year, identifying violence against women in the framework of crimes against people, domestic violence, and sexual violence perpetrated outside the family environment and at the workplace.

Luxembourg provides no information on its crime and sentence recording systems, but does indicate that data on violence against women are systematically gathered in emergency services and victim shelters. It also refers to new draft legislation to make data collection mandatory in incident reports on violence against women.

Luxembourg states that its records have improved since 1995, and indicates its willingness to agree on a unified recording system with the other European Union countries. It replies affirmatively to the majority of the elements suggested, except for some personal details of the victim (marital status, nationality and educational background) and the identity of the person filing or withdrawing the report.

It would also exclude, in addition to the aforementioned data, the place of occurrence and the victim-perpetrator relationship, when recording sentences.

Portugal includes information in its recording system for crimes and misdemeanours on the sex and marital status of victim and perpetrator, their relationship and the identity of the person filing the report of the crime. The same data are gathered about sentences, together with the type and length thereof. The Ministry of the Interior uses this information to prepare annual national statistics and also systematically records the cases handled by emergency services and victim shelters.

Portugal also states that it has improved its recording systems since 1995 and that it is willing to agree upon a standardised recording system with other European Union Member States for all the elements included in the Questionnaire.

Spain's recording system is one of the most complete, and provides fairly detailed information, including the age, sex and nationality of the victim, the perpetrator's sex, their relationship, the identity of the person filing the incident report and the place where the crime occurred. This last detail is extremely useful for classifying the type

of violence and developing a definition of risk factors and contexts. The Ministry of the Interior compiles the data and produces national, regional and local statistics on a monthly basis.

Spain states that it has improved its recording system since 1995. Current plans are to implement a new statistical module in 2002, whose main innovations would be to extend the information collected on domestic violence to include *de facto* partnerships and *ex de facto* partnerships, as well as boyfriends and girlfriends.

In its appraisal, Spain gives the highest score to information and updating, and a much lower scores (5 out of 10) to the effectiveness of records.

Spain expresses its willingness to join with other European Union countries in a standardised recording system including all the elements mentioned, and adds some interesting data that provide background for more detailed studies on violence against women and risk factors, including drug consumption at the time the crime was committed, child abuse and the number of times charges have been filed. The need for standardised records has been recognised by Spain in its "Integral Action Plan against Domestic Violence 2001-2004".

In **Sweden**, in certain cases the crime and misdemeanour recording system includes data on the sex and age of victim and perpetrator and their relationship (whether or not they know one other). Sentence records include similar data on the perpetrator but not on the victim alongside type and length of sentence and whether or not it is served in full.

Gathering this last type of information constitutes good practice in **Sweden**, as it can help evaluate the impact of certain judicial measures. The National Council for Crime Prevention incorporates it into national and local statistics presented monthly and yearly. Specific publications, a web page and different educational projects and activities are the vehicles for the important task of disseminating this information.

Sweden reports that it has improved both its documentation and the system used for classifying crimes since 1995, indicating that the updated information provided proves to be useful for taking measures. This country also expresses its willingness to reach a common protocol with other European Union nations, while noting that it is not in an optimum position at this time to specify what kind of items should be included.

The **United Kingdom** keeps fairly complete crime records, including the following social and demographic information on victim and perpetrator: age, sex and marital status, as well as the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, whether the crime was committed at home or at the workplace, the person reporting the crime and whether or not charges are withdrawn. No sources are specified, but statistics are reported to be published quarterly and annually, at the national, regional and local levels.

Records on sentences, in turn, are similar as far as the social and demographic information and perpetrator-victim relationship are concerned, and include specific details on whether the crime took place at home and on the type and length of sentence and whether it was served in full. The source is the Ministry of Justice and the frequency and break-down of information are the same as for crime records.

The United Kingdom regards its records to be average in terms of quantity of information and their usefulness for adopting measures and very good in terms of updating. It reports that the main problem encountered is the lack of a uniform nation-wide format, making it difficult to compare data. It has improved its records since 1995 and would be willing to standardise them Europe-wide, although it feels that it should first standardise its own systems.

The following conclusions can be drawn as good practice in records on violence against women on the basis of the Questionnaire replies received from European Member States:

- 1) With one exception, all countries (93%) report having made improvements in their records, as far as updating is concerned, since 1995: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.
- 2) Twelve Member States (80%) stated that they were willing in principle to agree on a standardised European Union recording system: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.
- 3) Crime and misdemeanour records seem to be more detailed than those compiled on sentences. Account should be taken, in this regard, of the fact that data on crimes and misdemeanours are fundamental for determining the magnitude and extension of the problem of violence against women; in turn, an indispensable requisite for analysing needs and planning services.

Police stations usually collect reliable, updated information, but it is often insufficient.

Data on sentences for the specific crime of violence against women tend to be scant, a limitation that hinders the gathering of information needed to evaluate the implementation of judicial measures.

Several countries report problems in connection with standardising information gathering.

- 4) Official data issue from government bodies and institutions such as the statistical and research departments of ministries or official agencies; in other words, those institutions in charge of gathering data based on precise criteria as

to what constitutes a crime. Replies to these questions are essential since they are the first step in the formulation, in the long term, of a system to gather information on violence against women in the European Union.

- 5) In general, similar methods are used for gathering and processing statistics on the crimes or misdemeanours considered in the Penal Code. Most of the countries evaluating the quality of such records are aware that there is room for improvement, since the information they provide is fairly ineffective in responding to violence against women.
- 6) Questionnaire replies advise developing the following as good practice regarding recording crimes and sentences:
 - Establish a standardised system or one with a large number of common items for all European Union Member States. Willingness to accept this is almost unanimous.
 - Increase information gathering on sentences and their follow-up, a practice which is not very common among European Union Member States.
 - Increase collection of relevant social and demographic information on victims and perpetrators, both in police reports and sentences, in order to obtain data breakdowns by different variables and gain a deeper understanding of the conditions that increase women's vulnerability to violence.

Information on age, sex, educational background, nationality and the victim-perpetrator relationship seems to be particularly important.

Other data would also be useful in building knowledge about risk factors (such as whether drugs were consumed when the crime or misdemeanour was committed and the place in which the aggression occurred).

The systems for recording police reports in **France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain** and **United Kingdom** constitute good practice as regards the detailed nature of the information gathered. **Austria's** experience using police records of crimes and misdemeanours is also noteworthy, and shows the usefulness of in-depth analysis of records and selecting the cases to be included in qualitative studies.

- Supplement national analyses with others broken down by region as is currently the practice in most Member States. This facilitates more detailed knowledge of the scope of the problem.
- Supplement information from official records and statistics with data from other sources, such as non-governmental organisations working with victims or the social services involved in the problem (information and emergency centres and shelters). This is a practice reported by very few Member States.

These bodies usually gather abundant information both on victims and perpetrators, including age, nationality, profession, marital status, type of abuse or maltreatment undergone, the victim's first reaction, people with whom the victim has had contact (police, doctors, social workers...), the relationship between victim and perpetrator, place in which abuse occurred, etc. Unfortunately, this information is rarely used to the full due to time and resource constraints on the people working with victims, although such organisations are usually willing to share their data with other institutions.

Greece's standardised questionnaire constitutes good practice in this field, as it enables information to be gathered systematically, so avoiding some of the aforementioned limitations. In the **United Kingdom**, the Government could draw on the information routinely gathered and surveys conducted in shelters by the Women's Aid Federation of England.