

# Strategy for Preventing Violence for 2015–2020

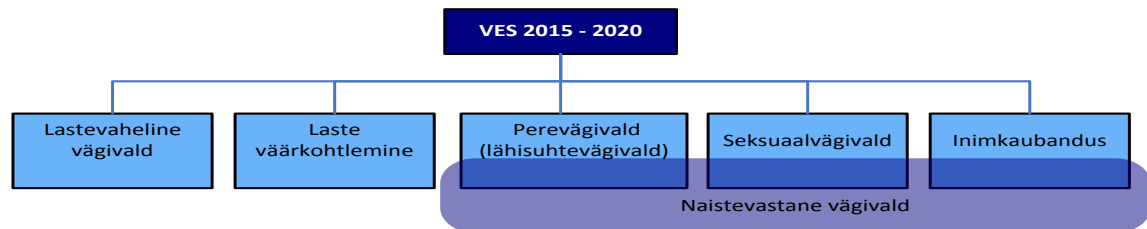
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## Introduction

1. Violence is a problem harming human rights, restricting the people's right to life, freedom, security, dignity, mental and physical integrity and non-discrimination. Violence causes much suffering to the victim and his or her next of kin; violence harms the society (through increased medical expenses, people having lower capacity for work, reduction of people's quality of life, etc.). Studies indicate that violence tends to repeat and it is difficult to exit a cycle of violence. Children becoming victims or witnesses of violence will more probably encounter violence as adults – either as a victim or a perpetrator of violence.
2. This Strategy is a continuation of the Development Plan for Reducing Violence in 2010–2014<sup>1</sup>. The Strategy for Preventing Violence in 2015–2020 addresses violence between persons<sup>2</sup> and does not discuss violence against oneself<sup>3</sup> or collective violence<sup>4</sup>. The Strategy encompasses violence between children, abuse of children, domestic violence (intimate partner violence), sexual violence and trafficking in human beings. People may become victims of violence regardless of their social and cultural background, age or gender. The prevalence and consequences of violence differ by types of violence and by gender of victims. For example, a large share of victims in registered domestic violence cases are women – eight victims out of ten. In domestic violence, sexual violence and trafficking in human beings, the violence experienced by women is often more severe and has worse consequences. It is therefore important to pay attention to violence against women in the Strategy for Preventing Violence.



VES 2015 - 2020 – VPS 2015 – 2020

*Lastevaheline vägivald* – Violence between children

*Laste väärkohtlemine* – Abuse of children

*Perevägivald (lähisuhtevägivald)* – Domestic violence (intimate partner violence)

*Seksuaalvägivald* – Sexual violence

*Inimkaubandus* – Trafficking in human beings

*Naistevastane vägivald* – Violence against women

**Figure 1. Topics handled by the Strategy for Preventing Violence**

3. In the future, readiness will have to be maintained to focus also on topics not yet discussed widely in the society: violence committed against the disabled, violence committed against ethnic, racial and religious minorities (e.g. hate crimes<sup>5</sup>, forced marriages,

<sup>1</sup> Violence reduction development plan for 2010-2014, approved with Government of the Republic Order No. 117 dated 01.04.2010.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. violence caused by another person or small group.

<sup>3</sup> I.e. violence where a person harms oneself.

<sup>4</sup> I.e. violence called for by larger groups of people, i.e. the state, an organised political group, a militant group or terrorist organisations.

<sup>5</sup> Hate crimes are considered acts driven by prejudice. Hate crime is not a separate type of criminal offence; it may constitute a threat, an act against property, a physical attack or any other crime; hate crimes differ from other crimes precisely by the motive of prejudice.

genital mutilation, so-called “honour killings”), violence against sexual and gender-variance<sup>6</sup> minorities.

4. The Strategy for Preventing Violence discusses violence prevention in its wider meaning, at three prevention levels encompassing universal prevention, victim protection and work with consequences of violence. First, the Strategy addresses awareness-raising and educating of the general public; second, the Strategy focuses on people at risk of becoming a victim or committing an offence; and third, the Strategy is used for working with consequences of violence, offering support measures to victims as well as interventions concerning perpetrators of violence. The solutions proposed in the Strategy are guided by the World Health Organisation’s understanding that risk factors for violence are related to the society (e.g. norms favouring violence, gender inequality), the community (e.g. lacking victim support services), relationships (e.g. domestic conflicts, poor parenting skills) and persons (e.g. history of abuse as a child, psychological and behavioural problems, addiction problems).
5. The Strategy for Preventing Violence was prepared in co-operation of several ministries, sectoral experts and other interested parties (see Annex 1), led by the Ministry of Justice and based on comprehensive discussions.

## Definitions

6. **Violence** is the intentional behaviour of threatening, attempting or actual causing of health damage to another may result in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or other negative consequences.<sup>7</sup>
7. **Violence against women** means all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes, the phrase “gender-based violence” is used to denote violence against women. **Gender-based violence** is violence that is directed against a person because of that person’s gender, gender identity or gender expression or that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. It may result in physical, sexual, emotional or psychological harm, or economic loss, to the victim.<sup>9</sup> Gender-based violence reflects and reinforces inequality between men and women and includes violence in close relationships, sexual violence, trafficking in human beings, slavery, and different forms of harmful practices, such as forced marriages, female genital mutilation and so-called “honour crimes”.<sup>10</sup>
8. **Domestic violence** (also called intimate partner violence) encompasses all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or

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<sup>6</sup> Gender-variance minorities are considered people whose gender identity does not correspond to their biological sex (e.g. a man identifying as a woman or a woman identifying as a man).

<sup>7</sup> WHO (2002). World Report on Violence and Health.

<sup>8</sup> Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

<sup>9</sup> Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.

<sup>10</sup> Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.

between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.<sup>11</sup>

9. **Intimate partner violence** is behaviour by a current or former partner, entailing psychological aggression, controlling behaviour, physical abuse or sexual coercion and causing the victim psychological and physical suffering. Intimate partner violence can occur in both heterosexual and homosexual couples. **Situational intimate partner violence** is expressive, it may occur as an unexpected reaction to emotional stress or unresolved conflict. Violence can be driven by anger, frustration, an attempt to draw the partner's attention or to control the situation. **Systemic intimate partner violence** (instrumental violence, intimate terrorism) is based on a need to establish power and control. Violence is an instrument of control and power. In intimate relationships, instrumental violence is rarely mutual and it may escalate over time, causing the victim fear, depressive symptoms and injuries.<sup>12</sup>
10. **Sexual violence** is any unwanted sexual act or attempt at a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or sexual attention or any other acts directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting including but not limited to home and work.<sup>13</sup>
11. **Trafficking in human beings** means placing a person in a situation where he or she is forced to work under unusual conditions, engage in prostitution, beg, commit a criminal offence or perform other disagreeable duties, or keeping a person in such situation, if such act is performed through deprivation of liberty, violence, deceit, threatening to cause damage, by taking advantage of dependence on another person, helpless or vulnerable situation of the person.<sup>14</sup>
12. **Violence between children** encompasses bullying behaviour in its various forms as well as other direct and indirect violence in schools, the public space and cyberspace and the home environment.
13. **Abuse of children** is any behaviour that reduces the child's physical and psychological wellbeing, endangering his or her age-appropriate development and state of health. Emotional abuse means creating a state of tension that can cause severe or irreversible damage to the child's emotional development. Physical abuse means wilful use of physical force towards the child that can cause moderate, severe or life-threatening physical and psychological damage. Sexual abuse means an act with sexual content, involving or not involving contact, committed by an adult or another child being in a relationship based on responsibility, trust or power with the child due to their age or level of development and being committed for the purpose of exercising power or satisfying their sexual needs or other needs. Neglecting a child means a situation where a child's parent, a parent's cohabitee, a grandparent or other close relative or legal guardian does not perform their obligations to care for the child's physical, mental, emotional and social development where this can harm the child's age-appropriate development and mental and physical health. Seeing or hearing violence between other family members is also damaging to a child.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

<sup>12</sup> Soo, K. (2010). *Paarisuhtevägivald Eestis – levik ja tagajärjed. Lõppraport*.

<sup>13</sup> WHO (2010). Preventing Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence against Women. Taking Action and Generating Evidence.

<sup>14</sup> § 133 of the Penal Code.

<sup>15</sup> Linno, M., Soo, K. Strömpl, J. (2011) *Juhendmaterjal perevägivalda vähendamiseks ja ennetamiseks*.

## What we want to achieve by 2020: vision and goals of the Strategy

**14. Vision of the Strategy for Preventing Violence for 2020:** The Estonian society does not tolerate violence. Violence is noticed and intervened in. Violence victims are protected and supported. In order to prevent further violence, effective work is performed with perpetrators of violence and for prevention of violence among children and youths.

**15. The Strategy's overall goal:** Violence in Estonia has decreased by 2020. The fulfilment of this goal is assessed by the level of falling victim to violence, based on studies and statistics.

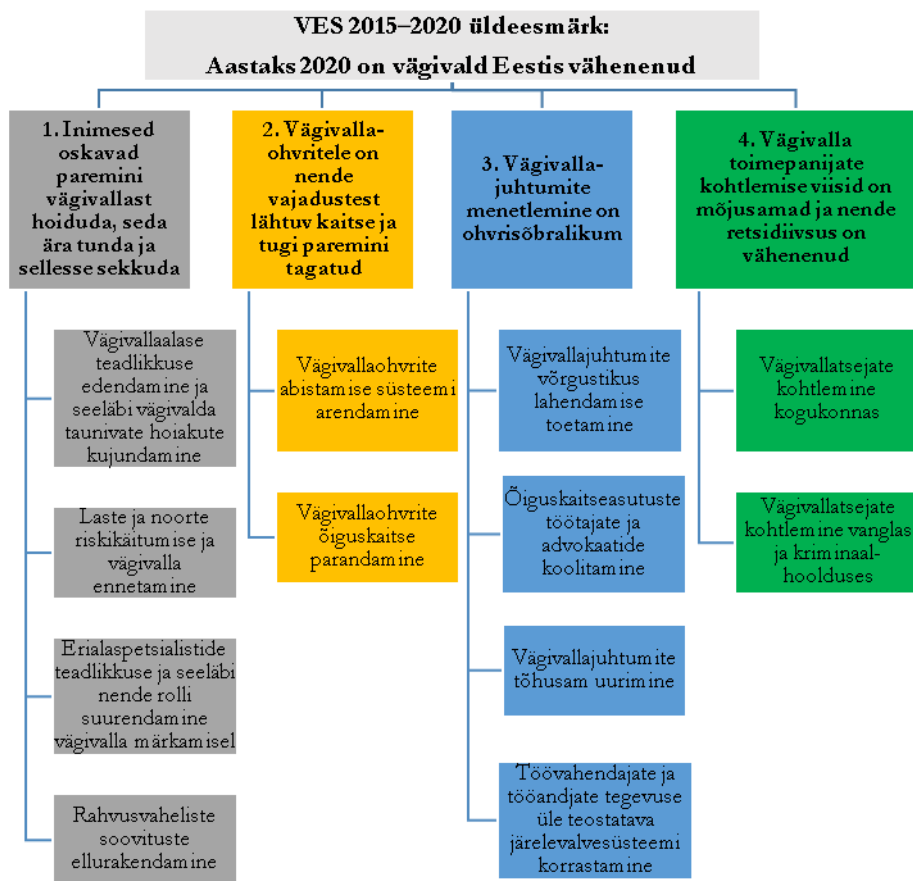
Overall goal's impact indicators	Starting level	Target level 2018	Target level 2020	Source; measurement frequency
Proportion of people falling victim to violence during the year <sup>16</sup>	2.3% (2014)	≤ 1.9%	≤ 1.4%	Victim survey of the Ministry of Justice: every year <sup>17</sup>
Deaths due to violent assaults	40 (2014)	< 35	< 25	Register of causes of death: every year
Deaths due to domestic violence	10 (2014)	< 8	< 5	Crime statistics: every year
Proportion of children falling victim to sexual abuse	TBD 2015	TBD 2015	TBD 2015	Study of prevalence of sexual abuse of children: 2015, 2020.
Proportion of children falling victim to school bullying	22% (2014)	< 20%	< 18%	Study of children's deviant behaviour (ISRD-4): 2019 <sup>18</sup>

**16.** In order to achieve the Strategy's overall goal, 4 sub-goals have been set.

<sup>16</sup> This means the proportion of people who have been assaulted in the public, at home or elsewhere so that they have been caused pain.

<sup>17</sup> Falling victim to violence will also be assessed in the victim study planned by the Statistics Estonia.

<sup>18</sup> Falling victim to school bullying is assessed in the police and border guard's yearly study of awareness of risk behaviour and in the international study of student health behaviour (HBSC) conducted every four years.



VES 2015-2020 üldeesmärk... – Overall goal of VPS 2015-2020: Reduced violence in Estonia by 2020

1. Inimesed oskavad paremini... – I People's skills in avoiding, recognising and intervening in violence have improved  
Vägivaldalaalse teadlikkuse edendamine... – Promoting awareness of violence and thereby shaping attitudes condemning violence

Laste ja noorte riskikäitumise... – Prevention of risk behaviour and violence among children and youths

Eriaspetsialistide teadlikkuse ja... – Increasing the awareness among sectoral specialists and thereby increasing their role in noticing violence

Rahvusvaheliste soovitude ellurakendamine – Following international recommendations

2. Vägivaldaohvritele on nende... – II Protection and support of violence victims corresponding to their needs is better ensured

Vägivaldaohvrite abistamise süsteemi... – Developing the support system for violence victims

Vägivaldaohvrite õiguskaitse parandamine – Improving the legal protection of violence victims

3. Vägivaldajuhtumite menetlemine on... – III Proceedings of violence cases are more victim-friendly

Vägivaldajuhtumite võrgustikus lahendamise... – Supporting the resolving of violence cases in a network

Õiguskaitse asutuste töötajate ja... – Training the staff of law enforcement authorities and attorneys

Vägivaldajuhtumite tõhusam uurimine – More effective investigation of violence cases

Töövahendajate ja tööandjate... – Correcting the supervision system concerning labour mediators and employers

4. Vägivalda toimepanijate kohtlemise... – IV Treatment of perpetrators of violence is more effective and their repeat offending has decreased

Vägivaldasejate kohtlemine kogukonnas – Treatment of perpetrators of violence in the community

Vägivaldasejate kohtlemine vanglas... – Treatment of perpetrators of violence in prisons and under probation

## Sub-goals

**17. Sub-goal 1:** People's skills in avoiding, recognising and intervening in violence have improved.

Tolerance of violence is assessed through the population's attitudes of physical punishment of children, physical "calling to order" of a spouse, intervention into domestic quarrels and the accusing of the victim.

Impact indicators of sub-goal 1	Starting level	Target level 2018	Target level 2020	Source <sup>19</sup> ; measurement frequency
Proportion of people considering physical punishment of children to be sometimes unavoidable	28% (2013)	< 25%	< 22%	Gender equality monitoring: 2016, 2020
Proportion of children having committed an act of violence	12% (2014)	< 10%	< 8%	Study of children's delinquent behaviour (ISRD-4): 2019
Proportion of people considering physical "calling to order" of a spouse or cohabitee be sometimes unavoidable	10% (2013)	< 8%	< 6%	Gender equality monitoring: 2016, 2020
Proportion of people favouring intervention by onlookers/-hearers to end a violent domestic fight	77% (2013)	> 80%	> 85%	Gender equality monitoring: 2016, 2020
Proportion of people agreeing that the victim is partly guilty of domestic violence	54% (2014)	< 50%	< 45%	Study of Estonian population's awareness in the field of gender-based violence and trafficking in human beings: 2016; victim survey of the Ministry of Justice: 2018, 2020
Proportion of people agreeing that women bring raping on themselves with their clothing	47% (2014)	< 40%	< 35%	Study of Estonian population's awareness in the field of gender-based violence and trafficking in human beings: 2016; victim survey of the Ministry of Justice: 2018, 2020

18. **Sub-goal 2:** Protection and support of violence victims corresponding to their needs is better ensured.

Support to violence victims is assessed through the number of persons having received the support and protection measures intended for victims, through the level of people's awareness about possibilities to help victims, and through the feedback of victims having received the services.

Impact indicators of sub-goal 2	Starting level	Target level 2018	Target level 2020	Source; measurement frequency
Proportion of violence victims having contacted victim support services	TBD 2016	TBD 2016	TBD 2016	Victim treatment study <sup>20</sup> : 2016, 2020
Proportion of women being aware of victim support services	67% (2014) <sup>21</sup>	> 75%	> 80%	Victim survey of the Ministry of Justice: 2018, 2020
Number of temporary restraining orders imposed for	15 (2013)	> 20	> 25	Crime statistics: every year

<sup>19</sup> Additional information about the impact indicators of sub-goal 1 is also available from the following studies: the Police and Border Guard Board conducts an annual study of awareness about risk behaviour, assessing the parents' attitudes towards physical punishment of children, the population's attitudes towards the use of violence against a spouse or cohabitee and towards intervention into a violent situation (a man beating a woman or vice versa); the Ministry of Social Affairs conducts a monitoring of parenting and the children's rights every four years, assessing the parents' attitudes towards physical punishment of children.

<sup>20</sup> The proportion of violence victims having turned to victim support services will also be indicated in the victim study planned by Statistics Estonia.

<sup>21</sup> FRA (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Main results. Annex IV.



the protection of violence victims				
Level of satisfaction of victims with crime victim support services	TBD 2016	TBD 2016	TBD 2016	The satisfaction measuring system will be developed in 2016
Number of beds guaranteed in women's support centres	134 (2013)	140	140	Annual statistics of support centres

**19. Sub-goal 3:** Proceedings of violence cases are more victim-friendly.

Victim-friendly proceedings are assessed through the level of satisfaction of violence victims with proceedings, through the duration of proceedings, and through the level of respecting the requirements prescribed in the EU directive on Victims' Rights<sup>22</sup>.

Impact indicators of sub-goal 3	Starting level	Target level 2018	Target level 2020	Source; measurement frequency
Level of satisfaction of violence victims with proceedings	TBD 2016	TBD 2016	TBD 2016	Victim treatment study (2016; 2020)
Duration of pre-trial proceedings of violent crimes with child victims	54.2 months (2013)	< 3 months	< 2.8 months	Crime statistics: 2016, 2018, 2020
Duration of pre-trial proceedings of domestic violence cases	4.7 months (2013)	< 4.2 months	< 4 months	Crime statistics: 2016, 2018, 2020

**20. Sub-goal 4:** Treatment of perpetrators of violence is more effective and their repeat offending has decreased.

The success of treating violence offenders is assessed through repeat offending indicators<sup>23</sup>.

Impact indicators of sub-goal 4	Starting level	Target level 2018	Target level 2020	Source; measurement frequency
Number of children in special schools and prisons	89 (2013)	75	60	EHIS; crime statistics: every year
Repeat offending rate (in two years) of minors released from prison	68% (2010)	< 65%	< 60%	Analysis of repeat offending: 2018, 2020
Repeat offending rate (in two years) of violent perpetrators released from prison	60% (2010)	< 57%	< 55%	Analysis of repeat offending: 2018, 2020

**21. Violence prevention is guided by the following principles:**

- Violence is a multifaceted problem, the solving of which requires a cross-sectoral approach and active co-operation between various authorities; specialists of the education, social, healthcare, and legal field in state authorities, local governments and non-governmental organisations must co-operate more. The co-operation must be regular and effective. It is important that all participants accept responsibility for the tasks undertaken.

<sup>22</sup> Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.

<sup>23</sup> The indicator for the rate of repeat offending is the interrogation of the person as a suspect after releasing from prison.

- It is important to shape a common understanding among specialists encountering violence concerning the nature, risk factors and impact of violence, as well as the importance of prevention. It is equally important to ensure a high level of professionalism of specialists working in law enforcement authorities, the victim support system, local governments, health care and education institutions as well as non-governmental organisations upon preventing violence, supporting violence victims, treating perpetrators of violence and proceeding with violence cases.
- Of equal importance is the responsibility of the society's members upon preventing violence. Parents must create a safe and violence-free growth environment for their children. Friends and acquaintances must take care of the safety of their next of kin. Neighbours must support each other. Safety of all people and a violence-free environment must be ensured in public institutions e.g. in schools, welfare institutions and prisons. The community must start honouring attitudes that condemn violence.
- A victim-centred approach is a recurring trend in all the Strategy's activities. This requires understanding the reasons for the victims' behaviour and choices as well as a supportive attitude towards the victims and a quick provision multi-faceted help to victims in order to prevent secondary victimisation and discrimination. The provision of support and protection measures intended for victims must be guided by the victim's needs and focussed on the victim's safety, taking account of the gender-based aspect of violence.
- Services must be formed so that the victims are reached by support suitable for them. First of all, it must be ensured that the victim does not need to look for suitable services and instead specialists know to refer him or her to the right services. Also, the services must be mobile so that they are available in the periphery as well.
- The direction in prevention activities, in supporting victims and in working with violent perpetrators must be towards formation of systematic integrated solutions. An interrupted, inconsistent system cannot provide victims with sufficient protection or support; it is also unable to effectively stand up to and handle perpetrators of violence.
- Neither violence victims nor perpetrators are discriminated<sup>24</sup> on the basis of their actual or assumed citizenship, nationality, race, looks, state of health, disability, age, gender, language, origin, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, proprietary status or social status.
- For people who wish or need help changing their violent behaviour, opportunities for that must be created.
- The work to prevent violence must prefer evidence-based programmes and activities with proven results. The planning of new interventions and the assessment of their impact must be based on study results; international co-operation must be fostered in order to ensure a comparable picture of violence problems. Gender-based statistics must be collected about indicators related to violence.
- The planning of activities must ensure that the information or service reaches the population speaking languages other than Estonian and if necessary then additional services must be ensured.

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<sup>24</sup> Positive special measures needed to prevent gender-based violence and to protect women against gender-based violence is not considered to be discrimination pursuant to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Article 4).

- Fostering gender equality is an important part of violence prevention. By reducing gender inequality, it is possible to prevent violence and reduce the harm resulting from it. Gender equality concerns both men and women, therefore violence prevention and reduction measures must be directed towards both genders in order to change stereotypical thinking, behaviour and gender roles at home, at work, at school and in the community.

## Overview of the current situation

### Overall prevalence of violence

22. A large part of violence is hidden and does not reach the view of the police or other authorities; therefore, most violence victims remain away from the law enforcement system and other support services. For example, the data of the 2014 victim study indicate that the police was not informed about nearly 60% of violence cases. The data of the 2014 study of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (hereinafter the FAR)<sup>25</sup> indicate that only a tenth of women have reported their latest major case of physical and/or sexual violence to the police; somewhat more women turned to healthcare institutions (25%), less than 1% of victims reached shelters. Reasons for not reporting violence are many: little legal awareness, unfavourable personal and cultural beliefs and low trust towards the police and other law enforcement authorities.<sup>26</sup>
23. The number of severe violence offences – manslaughter and murders – in Estonia has decreased by more than two times over the past ten years (2004: 127; 2014: 55), reaching the lowest level of the new independence period. Yet with those indicators, Estonia has one of the highest violence levels among European countries.<sup>27</sup> While the 2007 – 2010 data of Eurostat indicate that there were on average 1.4 manslaughters and murders per 100,000 residents in European Union countries, the indicator for Estonia is 5.9 – the second worst. In the past ten years, two to three times more men than women on average have been killed due to violent assaults in Estonia.<sup>28</sup> Most manslaughters take place among acquaintances and family members.<sup>29</sup> In 2013, 20 registered manslaughters/murders were committed in intimate partnerships<sup>30</sup>; 15 women were killed by their cohabitees<sup>31</sup>. In 2014, 10 registered manslaughters/murders were committed in intimate partnerships; compared to previous years, the proportion of manslaughters connected to domestic violence has decreased.<sup>32</sup>
24. The number of lives lost due to violence, having also decreased significantly in the past ten years (2004: 109; 2014: 40), reflects the most severe part of the consequences of violence. Violence causes injuries that often require intervention by healthcare institutions. For example, more than 4,000 people end up in emergency medical care due to caused by violence every year – this is nearly one fifth of all ambulance cases.<sup>33</sup> In 2013, 6,545 people needed medical care due to violence and their medical costs were in total a little over EUR 910,000.<sup>34</sup> The FRA study of 2014<sup>35</sup> indicated long-term consequences of violence: 42% of

<sup>25</sup> FRA (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Results at a glance.

<sup>26</sup> Crime victim survey, 2009. Ministry of Justice's criminal policy studies, vol. 14, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Salla, J. (2014). *Vägivallakuritegevus*. The collection *Kuritegevus Eestis 2013*.

<sup>28</sup> Data of the Register of Death Causes, years 2003–2013.

<sup>29</sup> Salla, J., Ceccato, V., Ahven, A. (2011). Homicide in Estonia. Handbook of European Homicide Research. 2012, page 421–435.

<sup>30</sup> Surva, L. (2014). *Perevägivald*. The collection *Kuritegevus Eestis 2013*. Criminal policy studies. Tallinn

<sup>31</sup> Police and Border Guard Board's data of 2013.

<sup>32</sup> Surva, L. (2015). *Perevägivald*. The collection *Kuritegevus Eestis 2013*. Criminal policy studies. Tallinn

<sup>33</sup> Health Board (2013). Ambulance reports of 2013.

<sup>34</sup> Government Office (2014). *Vigastuste ja vigastussurmade ennetamise poliitika koordineerimise rakkerühma aruanne*.

women mentioned relationship problems, 35% mentioned depression, one third mentioned anxiety, loss of self-confidence and a feeling of vulnerability as consequences of violence committed by a partner.

25. A fifth of women aged 15-74 in Estonia have been victims of physical and/or sexual violence committed by their intimate partner within the past 12 months, which is similar to the European average indicator (22%); in Estonia, women have encountered markedly more psychological violence committed by their intimate partner (in Estonia: 50%, EU average: 43%).<sup>36</sup> Nearly a third of all people living in Estonia know a woman among their friends and family who has been victimised by any type of domestic violence.<sup>37</sup> The number of registered domestic violence offences has increased year by year (the trend slowed down in 2014) and this indicates that the people's awareness and the rate of informing the police have improved. In domestic violence cases registered in 2014, 88% of perpetrators were men and 82% of victims were women. At least every fifth domestic fight involved a child as a witness or victim of violence.<sup>38</sup>
26. Children before their teens are more frequently victims of domestic violence; in adolescence they are more frequently victims of abuse by peers and strangers. According to the FRA's data <sup>39</sup>, 10% of women aged 15 – 74 in Estonia experienced sexual violence and a little more than 40% of them experienced physical violence in their childhood (until 15 years of age). According to an Estonian study of men's health, a little more than one half (55%) of all men aged 16–55 have experienced physical violence in their childhood (until 18 years of age) and 3% have experienced sexual violence.<sup>40</sup> In 2014, 142 sexual offences against a child with a physical contact were registered; in nearly 90% of those cases, the victim was a girl; additionally, 125 sexual offences against a child without a physical contact were registered, most of them committed through e-means.
27. Violence committed by children is mostly directed towards their peers, is usually expressed as fights, school bullying and carrying cut-and-thrust weapons, and due to the children's lifestyle is more frequent at school and in relation to the youths' recreational activities. According to a 2014 study of deviant behaviour of children<sup>41</sup>, 12% of students in grades 7-9 had committed an act of violence at some point in their life. The data of a 2012 study indicate that a little less than a third of children aged 11, 13 and 15 had participated in fights during the past year, whereas that prevalence is higher among children with lower social skills and more conflicts with parents and friends.<sup>42</sup> Every fifth student of grades 7-9 has been a victim of school bullying in the past year; the bullying relationships also carry over to cyberspace – 16% of children in grades 7-9 have been victims of cyber-bullying. 6% of children admitted that they have been threatened with or subjected to violence in the past year because of their religious beliefs, language, skin colour, social position, etc. (hate crimes).<sup>43</sup> In 2014, Estonia's first school shooting took place, claiming a teacher's life.

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<sup>35</sup> FRA (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Results at a glance.

<sup>36</sup> FRA (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Results at a glance.

<sup>37</sup> *Kriminaalpoliitika arvudes: võrdlusi statistikast ja uuringutest*. Ministry of Justice, 2013.

<sup>38</sup> Surva, L. (2015). *Perevägivald*. The collection *Kuritegevus Eestis 2013*. Criminal policy studies. Tallinn.

<sup>39</sup> FRA (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Results at a glance.

<sup>40</sup> RAKE (2015). *Eesti meeste hoiakute ja käitumise uuring: tervis, haridus, tööhõive, ränne ja pereelu*. Unpublished

<sup>41</sup> Markina, A., Žarkovski, B. (2014), *Laste hälbiva käitumise uuring*.

<sup>42</sup> TAI (2012). *Uimastite tarvitamine koolinoorte seas: 15–16aastaste õpilaste legaalse ja illegaalse narkootikumide kasutamine Eestis*.

<sup>43</sup> Markina, A., Žarkovski, B. (2014), *Laste hälbiva käitumise uuring*.

28. Offences of trafficking in human beings have thus far been mainly of the type of sexual exploitation of women. 28 offences of trafficking in human beings were registered in 2014; among them, more cases of compelled labour and compelled offences (thefts and narcotics trafficking) than before were registered. According to a HEUNI study<sup>44</sup>, trafficking in human beings in Estonia is also committed for the purpose of labour exploitation; people have encountered it but forced labour cases are not yet reflected in criminal statistics. More attention to labour exploitation enables to prevent e.g. people going to work abroad from becoming victims of trafficking in human beings.
29. Experts assess that alcohol abuse does not unavoidably cause violence behaviour but is one of its risk factors.<sup>45</sup> World Health Organisation has confirmed that alcohol affects a person's cognitive and physical functions, reducing self-control and thus increasing the risk of committing violence or falling victim to it.<sup>46</sup> In violence cases registered with the police, one or both of the parties have often been consuming alcohol.<sup>47</sup> Estonian studies indicate that sexual violence cases in teen age have often occurred after consuming alcohol. Yet the studies do not provide grounds for a belief that drinking causes violence.<sup>48</sup>
30. Over the past five years, a significantly better overview of the prevalence and nature of violence has been obtained<sup>49</sup>; this makes it easier to develop measures to solve the related problems. Yet there is no detailed overview of the prevalence of sexual and other physical abuse of children and violence committed against the elderly and the disabled; there are few studies of the need for new specialised services to support victims; there are few studies enabling to assess any changes occurring over time. The statistics concerning violence victims and perpetrators are incomplete and neither easily available nor comparable. There is a shortage of information about more detailed characteristics of victims. There is also no systematic case-based overview of cases of severe violence.
31. The society has become more and more aware of the importance of the topic of violence, and domestic violence, violence related to children and trafficking in human beings are set as priorities in combating of crime; a new important topic being highlighted is violence against women. In practise, it has caused an increased workload in the police, prosecutor's offices and support organisations. Announcing the topic as a priority has not brought about a systematic change in violence prevention: there have been few long-term, evidence-based prevention programmes directed at prevention of violent behaviour; few awareness-raising and prevention activities have been directed towards the population speaking languages other than Estonian and those activities have not sufficiently accounted for gender-based specifics in violence; the involvement of healthcare and educational institutions in violence prevention has remained modest; only partial changes have taken place in violence-condemning attitudes. In order to reduce violence in the society as a whole, a change of attitudes must be achieved concerning all types of violence and all target groups.

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<sup>44</sup> HEUNI and the University of Tartu (2014). *Tööjõumigratsiooni varjatud pool: Eesti inimeste tööalaseärakasutamise kogemused välismaal*.

<sup>45</sup> Peter D. Donnelly, Catherine L. Ward. Oxford Textbook of Violence Prevention: Epidemiology, Evidence, and Policy, lk 241.

<sup>46</sup> WHO (2014). European facts and the Global status report on violence prevention 2014.

<sup>47</sup> Police and Border Guard Board's overviews; introduction of the statistics for 2014.

<sup>48</sup> RAKE (2015). *Noortele suunatud lähisuhtevägivalda ennetavate tõendus- või teadmispõhiste programmide võrdlev uuring*.

<sup>49</sup> For example, studies have been conducted on children's deviant behaviour and victimisation, children's and parents' attitudes towards children's rights and corporal punishment, risks and prevalence of domestic violence, accounting for history of violence in assigning parental custody; adults' attitudes towards sexual violence, prostitution and labour exploitation; effective strategies to prevent minors from consuming alcohol.

## Attitudes of the population and specialists

32. The attitude of Estonia's population towards violence is not yet sufficiently condemning, people are hesitant about intervention in violence and the attitude of blaming the victim is widespread.

- Although the majority of Estonia's population condemns violence between spouses and cohabitants, 10% of the population has the opinion that it is sometimes inevitable. The youngest (15–24) and the oldest (65–74) age group are more tolerant towards violence (13% and 16%, respectively); across nationalities, men speaking languages other than Estonian stand out as 21% of them think that physical “calling to order” of an intimate partner is sometimes inevitable. A little above fifth (21%) of Estonia's population finds that domestic violence is internal affairs of a family and others should not intervene. According to the gender equality monitoring of 2013, a positive change has occurred since 2009: the proportion of people favouring an intervention in a violent domestic fight has increased from 63% to 77%.<sup>50</sup>
- Victims are often seen as the guilty party in violence. This attitude is prevalent first and foremost about female victims. For example, more than half the population (54%) consider the victim partly guilty of domestic violence and nearly half the population (47%) thinks that women bring raping on themselves with their clothing. Concerning both domestic violence and sexual violence, there are more people blaming the victim among the older age group and among persons of other nationalities, as well as among men.<sup>51</sup>
- studies in Estonia indicate stereotypical attitudes, misconceptions about violence and behaviours accepting of violence among youths. Such attitudes are more prevalent among young men, younger students and youths speaking languages other than Estonian.<sup>52</sup>

33. Specialists cannot recognise the signs of violence and this hinders the provision of the needed support for victims.

- Earlier studies have shown that nearly 2/3 of specialists (child protection and social workers, teachers, law enforcement employees, etc.) have refrained from notifying of a child who may have been abused. The most frequent reason for the failure to notify was that the person working with the child was unsure about the problem's severity (45%) or did not know where to turn to (29%).<sup>53</sup>
- Also, not all specialists are aware of the specifics of various forms of violence or the gender-based specifics in violence and they are therefore unable to recognise the signs of violence and to support the victims adequately. An unclear understanding of possible signs of domestic violence hinders the specialists from conducting a timely and appropriate intervention..<sup>54</sup> This may lead to repeat victimisation.

<sup>50</sup> Salla, J. (2014). *Võim teise inimese keha üle: suhtumine perevägivalda ja seksistusse*. A collection, Roosalu, T. (editor) Gender equality monitoring 2013. Journal of the Ministry of Social Affairs, No. 3/2014.

<sup>51</sup> TNS EMOR (2014). *Eesti elanikkonna teadlikkuse uuring soopõhise vägivalda ja inimkaubanduse valdkonnas*. TNS Emor, Ministry of Social Affairs.

<sup>52</sup> See e.g. TNS Emor (2014). *Riskikäitumise teadlikkuse uuring kolmes sihtrühmas. Uuringu raport*. AS Emor, Police and Border Guard Board; RAKE (2014). *Noortele suunatud lähisuhtevägivalda ennetavate tõendus- või teadmispõhiste programmide võrdlev uuring*; Gender equality monitoring, 2013.

<sup>53</sup> Soo, K., Ilves, K. Strömpl, J. 2009: *Laste väärkohtlemise juhtumitest teavitamine ja võrgustikutöö*, University of Tartu. [http://www.lastekaitseliit.ee/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Lapse\\_vaarkohtlemisest\\_teavitamine\\_uuringu\\_raport-1.pdf](http://www.lastekaitseliit.ee/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Lapse_vaarkohtlemisest_teavitamine_uuringu_raport-1.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> Linno, M., Soo, K. Strömpl, J. (2011) *Perevägivalda levikut soodustavad riskid ja perevägivalda ulatus praktikute hinnangutes*.

- The skills of healthcare employees in recognising domestic violence are different in different sectors, being also weak in some of them.<sup>55</sup>
- There are grounds to believe that there are many more victims of trafficking in human beings in total, compared to those who receive support. The initial contact parties are not sufficiently aware and sensitive to recognise victims and to present the relevant information to the Estonian National Social Insurance Board and the police for further proceedings. The awareness of bodies conducting proceedings needs to be increased concerning the ability to recognise offences of trafficking in human beings.

## Helping the victims

34. The services intended for violence victims have not been developed in an integrated way; there is no clearly understood system of services – who provides what services and where.

- 10 years ago, a state victim support system was created under Estonian National Social Insurance Board to help victims. At least one victim support employee is working in every county, mostly in the same building as the police, a total of 29 in all of Estonia. they provide victims with initial victim support services, arrange for psychological assistance and if necessary then also arrange state compensation for offence victims. Since 2013, special services are offered to victims of trafficking in human beings and to minor-age victims of sexual offences. As of now, the state victim support system has not used the opportunity to involve volunteers to support victims.
- Women's shelters are used to provide services to victims of violence against women. The service of women's shelters is organised by a total of 13 centres operating as NGOs, providing victims with a free service package: initial, case-based and psychological counselling, psychotherapy, legal counselling and if necessary then housing. Also, an around-the-clock support hotline 1492 is available for victims of violence against women and their next of kin.
- Abused children are provided with services by both the victim support system and healthcare providers, as well as NGOs. Free advice is also offered by children's help hotline. The system of helping abused children needs to be reviewed as a whole and developed so that the child victim is provided with the needed support before, during and after proceedings.
- The role of healthcare employees in detecting and hindering of violence cases may be more important than assumed. Issues of co-operation with other authorities must be solved and matters of confidentiality requirements need to be addressed, in order to make sure that victims ending up in healthcare institutions are not left without support.

35. Besides a few exceptions (women's support centres, victim support services), the insufficiency of special services by target groups and violence types is apparent; services are not based on the victim's individual needs, instead being rather generic and the funding of some of the services is not sustainable.

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<sup>55</sup> Surva, L., Tamm, K. (2012). *Tervishoiutöötajate kokkupuuted perevägivallaga*. Criminal policy analysis No. 5/2012. Ministry of Justice: Criminal Policy Department.

- Individual needs are not systematically assessed, including in criminal proceedings. The system of support persons for victims needs correcting as it should motivate victims to turn to the services and should also support them in criminal proceedings.
  - Special attention needs to be paid to violence victims entering the healthcare system as e.g. psychosocial crisis assistance has to be ensured for them.
  - There is also an absence of integrated services or service packages for both female and male victims of sexual violence who, being vulnerable, need a specific approach.
  - Separate attention needs to be paid to methods of helping and protecting a child whose abuser is his or her parent or other family member or who has become a witness to violence.
  - Services for counselling a victim and his or her family as an integral unit need expanding, even if a criminal proceeding is not initiated.
  - There is a problem with lack of sustainability in funding the services of support centres and support hotlines; too much emphasis is on project-based funding.
36. There are problems with low flexibility of services and non-uniform availability of services across Estonia.
- The volume limitations of the counselling service provided through the victim support system are too strict – in more severe cases, longer counselling is needed.
  - There is a shortage of counsellors with the training and willingness to work with victims of violence offences.
  - The service provider may be located too far from the victim's home (under another local government or in another county), therefore mobile counselling services are also needed.
37. Victims are not always aware of the opportunities to obtain help and thus not all people needing help may reach the services that would enable them to cope with the incidents.
- According to a 2012 study conducted among victims and witnesses, the majority (74%) of victims and witnesses having responded to the questionnaire did not know that the state would compensate the costs of giving statements, half the respondents did not know about the victim support opportunity, and 44% were unaware that people with low income can apply for state legal assistance.<sup>56</sup>
  - According to the FRA study of 2014, 15% of the questioned women aged 15–74 in Estonia had not heard of any organisations supporting violence victims. As a comparison, there were less than 5% of such women in Denmark and Sweden. The women who had heard of support organisations were more frequently aware of women's shelters (82%) and notably less frequently the victim support system (67%) and the women's help hotline (38%).<sup>57</sup>
  - There is little data about the victims' level of satisfaction with the services. Yet, this is important information for assessing whether the services conform to the victims' real needs and for finding ways to improve victim support.

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<sup>56</sup> RAKE (2012). *Kannatanud ja tunnistajad süüteo menetluses*.

<sup>57</sup> FRA (2014). *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Results at a glance*.



## Treatment of violence victims in criminal proceedings

38. There is a shortage of extrajudicial measures for children having committed offences, like social and educational programmes to achieve their better treatment and wellbeing. Also, the measures of restorative justice are used too infrequently concerning children.<sup>58</sup>
39. For a child, contact with the justice system is often an unpleasant experience (e.g. discouraging surroundings, lack of age-appropriate information and explanations, little attention to families, long proceedings), therefore it is important to support children in their participation in proceedings, using an approach guided by the principles of child-friendly administration of justice.<sup>59</sup> Significant progress has been achieved in durations of proceedings concerning minors; as a result, the rights of children participating in proceedings are better protected.<sup>60</sup> Yet, the analysis of questioning child victims of violence crimes revealed shortcomings in organising the questioning, indicated an unclear role and differing regional practices of specialists involved in the questioning, and too low proportion of using free and guided remembering in interviewing children; it recommended focussing more on establishing a trusting relationship when communicating with a child victim and on explaining the rules of the questioning.<sup>61</sup>
40. Based on studies conducted in other countries, important elements of victim-friendly proceedings are considered to be sufficient information about the progress of the proceeding, reasonable duration and cost of the proceeding, as few occurrences of giving testimonies as possible, proper attitudes of the officials, equal treatment, avoiding contacts with the accused during the proceeding, and perceivably fair procedural decisions. For adult victims in Estonia, problems related to secondary victimisation are the time-intensity of proceedings, the lack of information about the proceeding, and the bodies conducting proceedings having negative attitudes toward the victim.<sup>62</sup>
41. There is a shortage of alternative understandings of how to support the parties of violence cases where the elements of an offence are not identified or the possibilities to proceed with the case are exhausted. Little use is made of the principles of restorative justice in compensating for the damage caused, and there are no opportunities to ensure a solution to the conflict simultaneously with the criminal proceeding, through e.g. community-based conciliation or therapies.
42. Until now, little attention has been paid to victim- and witness-friendly treatment in criminal proceedings and relevant specialised training for bodies conducting proceedings. To ensure better treatment, the bodies conducting proceedings must be guided first and foremost by the victim's vulnerability and the offence's type and circumstances, and must also take account of gender-based specifics in violence.

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<sup>58</sup> Statistics Estonia, 2013. *Laste heaolu*.

<sup>59</sup> Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 November 2010. [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/childjustice/Source/GuidelinesChildFriendlyJustice\\_ET.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/childjustice/Source/GuidelinesChildFriendlyJustice_ET.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> Performance reports on the Development Plan for Reducing Violence.

<sup>61</sup> Kask, K. (2015). *Alaealiste kannatanute videosalvestatud ülekuulamiste analüüs*.

[http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/sites/www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/files/elfinder/dokumendid/alaealiste\\_kannatanute\\_videosalvestatud\\_ulekuulamised\\_kristjan\\_kask\\_2015.pdf](http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/sites/www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/files/elfinder/dokumendid/alaealiste_kannatanute_videosalvestatud_ulekuulamised_kristjan_kask_2015.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*.

## Treating perpetrators of violence

43. The current practice of treating perpetrators of violence is focussed mainly on penal measures. Yet the practice of the rest of the world shows that changes in attitudes and behaviour are brought about by alternative or parallel measures to imprisonment, with the purpose of re-socialising the offenders.
44. Although the number of children in specialised schools has decreased (2005: 143; 2013: 56), as well as their number in prisons (2005: 90; 2013: 33), there are still too many children in closed institutions and efforts to reduce their numbers must continue.<sup>63</sup> In case of children, penal measures are expensive and ineffective. For example, the rate of repeat offending is the highest among persons having been imprisoned in their minor age; more than 2/3 of minor-age prisoners committed a new offence within two years after being released from prison.<sup>64</sup> There are too few alternative intervention programmes for children with severe behavioural, psychological and addiction problems; there are almost no family-based and multisystem interventions provided in the community. Yet, research has shown that family is one of the key factors in solving children's violence problems.
45. There is no long-term programme provided outside the prison and the probation system, intended to reduce the violent behaviour of adults. The existing programmes intended for perpetrators of domestic violence do not include parallel co-operation with counselling and other services offered for violence victims.
46. There is a shortage of voluntary treatment and counselling opportunities for persons who require timely and need-based help in order to prevent violent acts. There is no information and counselling hotline for sexually deviant persons; there are also no counselling services for risk groups, e.g. minors with problematic sexual behaviour, perpetrators of situational domestic violence, persons with special needs and their next of kin. There is no multifaceted overview of the effectiveness of the complex treatment practice established for sexual offenders as an alternative to imprisonment. There are problems with ensuring the sustainability of providing the complex treatment, and with developing and preserving the competence needed for it.
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<sup>63</sup> Statistics Estonia (2013). *Laste heaolu*.

<sup>64</sup> Ahven, A., Salla, J., Vahtrus, S. (2010). *Retsidiivsus Eestis*. [https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/TOF/TOF\\_uuringud/26\\_retsidiivsus\\_l6ppraport.pdf](https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/TOF/TOF_uuringud/26_retsidiivsus_l6ppraport.pdf).

## How we achieve the change: ways to achieve the sub-goals

### Sub-goal 1. People's skills in avoiding, recognising and intervening in violence have improved.

48. In order for everyone living in Estonia to be able to communicate without violence, understand the nature of violence, recognise violence and correctly intervene in it, attitudes must be changed in the entire society. Violence is largely a learned behaviour that the person acquires by monitoring his or her surroundings (family, home, work) or a wider environment. The social and cultural norms prevalent in the society have a significant effect on people's behaviour; they may protect against violence but may also facilitate violent behaviour. For example, the society's acceptance of violence as a way of settling conflicts or its views that domestic violence is a family's internal affair reduce the opportunities of victims to feel courageous enough to talk about violence as well as hinder victimised people from seeking help.<sup>65</sup> By changing the attitudes of people, their behaviour and everyday habits can be influenced. In order to reduce violence against women, gender stereotypes need to be broken and prevalent gender roles must be changed. Campaigns and violence-sensitive media space have an important role in changing the overall attitudes, educating the population and increasing awareness about the prevalence and nature of violence.
49. Special attention must be paid to prevention of violence among children and youths; preventive activities organised through schools are effective here because many forms of violence are connected to relationships between students (school bullying, date violence, sexual harassment) in the territory of schools and elsewhere. As a large proportion of children's social learning takes place in the school, such preventive activities help shape violence-free behaviour and attitudes among children and youths.<sup>66</sup>
50. A bigger role in prevention of violence must be given to social and healthcare institutions as these are the places where violence victims more frequently turn to with their worries. Specialists must be able to recognise signs of violence and must be courageous enough to react to them.

### To achieve sub-goal 1, the following topics must be addressed:

#### 1.1. Promoting awareness of violence and thereby shaping attitudes condemning violence

51. Violence-related awareness-raising activities are needed among the wider public as well as the narrower target groups, paying increased attention to those target groups where studies have pointed out larger problems: violence-favouring attitudes of youths and Russian men; little awareness of specialists about the nature of violence, main signs of violence and typical characteristics of violence victims and violent perpetrators. All planned activities are necessarily well designed and regular, to prevent the topic from "dying out" and to facilitate reinforcement of knowledge attained.

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<sup>65</sup> WHO (2009). Changing cultural and social norms supportive of violent behaviour.

<sup>66</sup> RAKE (2015). *Noortele suunatud lähisuhtevägivalda ennetavate tõendus- või teadmis põhiste programme võrdlev uuring*.

52. Awareness-raising campaigns must draw attention to the impermissibility of violence, its long-term negative effect, as well as violence-related myths and stereotypical attitudes towards gender roles. Also, awareness about the nature and consequences of violence against women must be increased. People must be encouraged to notice violence and intervene in it; for that, they need to be provided practical information about how to protect themselves or their next of kin in case of violence, where to turn for help and what the risks can be when not intervening (e.g. repeated violence, its effect on the next of kin, incl. children) and when intervening (e.g. escalation of violence, turning down help, etc). Formation of attitudes must be supported that favour people themselves and their next of kin seeking help in case of violence-related problems.
53. Professional coverage of violence-related topics in the media helps increase overall awareness about violence. This requires proactive work with journalists concerning violence-related topics, in order to facilitate victim-friendly coverage of violence cases and the shaping of correct attitudes among the population.

#### 1.2. Prevention of risk behaviour and violence among children and youths

54. In order to reduce children's risk behaviour, the focus must be on developing children's social skills and violence-free communication skills. Their knowledge about violence, personal inviolability and gender equality must be increased. Continual attention must be paid to the topic of children's e-safety, in order to protect children from Internet dangers, incl. cyber-bullying, sexual abuse committed via e-means and other such violence. It is also important to focus on developing relationships between children and their parents as well as parental skills; this takes place in the framework of the Children and Families Development Plan for 2012–2020. The national study programme must support safe mental and physical development of children, in order to ensure violence-free development of children; this takes place in the framework of the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020.
55. Instead of fragmented project-based prevention activities, the focus should be on implementation of evidence-based prevention programmes in schools and on ensuring that the programmes yielding good results are subsequently used in all of Estonia; if possible then integrating them into curricula and teacher's trainings. More attention must be paid to ensuring bullying-free education and preventing violence in relationships among youths.

#### 1.3. Increasing the awareness among sectoral specialists and thereby increasing their role in noticing violence

56. 50. In order to make sure that sectoral specialists are able to recognise signs of violence and provide adequate help to the victims, the specialists must be informed and trained. The role of healthcare employees in working with violence victims must be clarified, their skills in identifying and helping a violence victim must be improved and their co-operation with other organisations helping violence victims must be facilitated. This is most relevant for family physicians, paediatricians, gynaecologists, ambulance medics, midwives, family nurses and school nurses. The increase of the role of healthcare employees is favoured by the attitude of the women themselves. According to the data of a study by the FRA, 90% of women in Estonia said that they would accept it if the physician would routinely ask about causes of violence if encountering severe injuries.<sup>67</sup> In-service training for addressing violence-related topics must be ensured for teachers of kindergartens and schools; they

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<sup>67</sup> FRA (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Results at a glance.

must be supported in preparing their study materials. A need for in-service training has been recognised among the social workers and child protection employees of local governments; attention must be paid to specialists working with special needs children and adults and to providers of services to violence victims. It is considered necessary to provide joint trainings and network trainings in order to ensure a common information space of specialists of various fields working together on violence cases.

#### 1.4. Following international recommendations

57. In addition to awareness-raising and educating of people, attitudes can also be changed through shaping of norms. At the beginning of 2015, the Act to Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings entered into force. During the Strategy's period, Estonia will transpose the EU directive on Victims' Rights and plans to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation (the so-called Linarite Convention)<sup>68</sup> and Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the so-called Istanbul Convention).<sup>69</sup>

### Sub-goal 2. Protection and support of violence victims corresponding to their needs is better ensured

58. In order to ensure the safety of victims and to avoid their further suffering, attention must be paid to providing violence victims with comprehensive support and help in the social welfare, healthcare and justice systems. Like in the society, so also in the provision of services and support, an important role is played by attitudes towards victims and violence. Attitudes of blaming the victim, misconceptions about the causes of violence, and overlooking the needs of victims hinder the provision of high-quality services. Services provided to violence victims must be high-quality, victim-friendly and needs-based, comprehensive, effective and available. Poor cohesion of services may lead to a situation where a victim does not reach the help that he or she needs.

To achieve sub-goal 2, the following topics must be addressed:

#### 2.1. Developing the support system of violence victims

59. For a high-quality support to victims, it is important to correct the state system of victim support and the system of services provided by healthcare institutions, local governments and non-governmental organisations, by preparing a quality framework for the services – descriptions of the services, requirements for service providers – and regularly analysing the need for additional services. The shaping and provision of services must take into account the needs of various target groups, on the basis of assessing the victim's individual needs. A new emerging topic is the need for special services intended for sexual violence victims and for supporting women exiting from prostitution, as well as the need for sustainability of the services intended for victims of violence against women. Upon helping a minor-aged victim, the focus must be on helping the child and the family as an integral system. Non-governmental organisations have an important role in providing services to victims.

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<sup>68</sup> Estonia signed the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse on September 17, 2008.

<sup>69</sup> Estonia signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence on December 2, 2014.

60. Fast, professional and child-friendly detection and proceeding of child abuse cases as well as provision of help to violence victims must be ensured. To do so, the Estonian system of supporting abused children must be analysed and consideration must be given to the use of the child house model of Nordic countries if necessary.
61. It is important to ensure the flexibility of the victim support system as well as the mobility of the services. It is also important to regularly collect feedback from the service recipients. This enables to maintain and increase the quality of services.

## 2.2. Improving the legal protection of violence victims

62. Violence victims are a vulnerable target group, therefore, sufficient legal counselling and comprehensive protection and support by applying *inter alia* restriction orders must be guaranteed for them. Minor-aged violence victims need special treatment due to their vulnerability. For that, an option is being considered to automatically appoint a mandatory representative for them in criminal proceeding; also, protection is ensured for children with a violent relationship between their parents in disputes of custody right and access to the child.

## Sub-goal 3. Proceedings of violence cases are more victim-friendly

63. How the victim is treated immediately after a violence incident or after reporting earlier incidents and what support is provided to the victim in the proceeding determines the subsequent process and the possibility of the victim's recuperation. In order to prevent secondary victimisation, it is important that the proceeding's overall arrangement, the environment and the communication style of the bodies conducting proceedings are supportive of the victim. The victim must have guaranteed access to information that is important for him or her about the proceeding, the victim's rights and the services being offered.

## To achieve sub-goal 3, the following topics must be addressed:

### 3.1. Supporting the resolution of violence cases in a network

64. Often a prerequisite for successful solution of a violence case is a network involving law enforcement authorities, the local government, victim support, support centres, healthcare institutions, etc. It is important for the co-operation of specialists with different backgrounds that they have common knowledge and a similar understanding about violence. This requires training of specialists and facilitation of co-operation. In addition to that, regular *ex post* analysis of severe cases is important, in order to improve work practices and increase the quality of proceedings.

### 3.2. Training the staff of law enforcement authorities and attorneys to prevent secondary victimisation

65. In order to ensure treatment of victims that is based on their needs, respectful to them, discrete, professional and non-discriminative, as well as their sufficient protection, police officers, prosecutors, probation officers, prison employees, judges and advocates must be trained. The staff of law enforcement authorities must be trained according to the types of violence victims encountered by them, addressing possible specifics, incl. special treatment of minors, sexual violence, violence against women, and other topics. The initial and in-



service training programmes of specialists must be reviewed and if necessary then separate training programmes must be developed. The trainings must pay more attention to gender-based specifics in violence. In all trainings, the main focus must be on the victim's wellbeing and physical and psychological safety.

66. The trainings ensure the attainment of specialised knowledge and skills by parties conducting proceedings and facilitate their specialisation. To prevent burnout of specialists, a system for supervision and psychological counselling of parties conducting proceedings is developed.

### 3.3. More effective investigation of violence cases

67. The transposing of the EU directive on Victims' Rights brings about new requirements to proceedings and a systematically different approach by way of individual assessment of victims. Regular analyses are conducted to monitor and assess the quality of proceedings, incl. paying attention to the suitability of using conciliation procedures in solving domestic violence cases. Special attention is paid to the revision of the system of treating children having had contact with the legal system; this brings about new solutions in reacting to offences committed by minors. For better proving of violence cases, co-operation with healthcare institution is used, taking up specialised means to record injuries.
68. The police receive many cases where the necessary elements of an offence are not identified but the parties still need support. To support them, it is necessary to develop alternative approaches in e.g. the social welfare system and to conduct informative activities about which cases one should report to the police and where alternative support can be obtained.<sup>70</sup>

### 3.4. Correcting the supervision system concerning labour mediators and employers

69. For prevention of incidents of trafficking in human beings, the supervision system of labour mediators and employers, incl. rental labour mediators is to be corrected. The purpose of the supervision is on the one hand, to protect jobseekers and employees against labour mediators and rental labour mediators under the private law who violate the requirements set forth in the law, ensuring more efficient detection of violations, and on the other hand, to detect possible incidents of trafficking in human beings upon conducting inspections in work environments.

## Sub-goal 4. Treatment of perpetrators of violence is more effective and their repeat offending has decreased

70. 64. In order to prevent repeat commission of acts of violence, the attitudes and behaviour patterns of violent perpetrators must be changed, while seeing the perpetrators of all types of violent offences as a heterogeneous group. Evidence-based programmes, individual counselling and other interventions must be taken into use. The programmes must be available both in the prison and the probation system and outside those; it is important to provide follow-up support after leaving the prison. If necessary, mental health services and addiction treatment must be ensured for a perpetrator of violence.
71. The choice of interventions must be guided by the best known evidence, and a high professional level of the bodies conducting the interventions must be ensured. For minors,

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<sup>70</sup> Surva, L., Ahven, A. (2014). *Perevågivalla menetluspraktika: 2011 ja 2013*.

interventions outside prison must be preferred and the effect of the surrounding environment on shaping a minor's behaviour must be taken into account (incl. family-related factors). Work with violent perpetrators in closed institutions must be directed first and foremost towards reduction of repeat offending and towards re-socialising.

72. 66. In parallel to referring a violent perpetrator to a programme, proactive work with the victim must be performed and supporting services must be provided to him or her if necessary. Also, the violent perpetrator's next of kin must be involved more in order to stop the violence, providing them with counselling if necessary; the next of kin may be important in rehabilitation of the violent perpetrator.

#### To achieve sub-goal 4, the following topics must be addressed:

##### 4.1. Treatment of perpetrators of violence in the community

73. Deprivation of liberty must be applied in cases of dangerous habitual offenders only; community-based measures and measures with proven effect must be preferred. Community-based measures ensure changing of the perpetrators' behaviour in a manner that does not alienate them from the society, while protecting the victims' safety as a first priority. A prison sentence increases the risk that the perpetrator of violence will not be able to cope lawfully in the society later, in turn increasing the risk of new offences being committed.
74. For systematic perpetrators of violence in intimate relationships, an evidence-based programme to prevent new acts of violence must be provided, providing the victim simultaneously with support services. Counselling of possible perpetrators of violence must be made available to those who are themselves motivated to address their problem. It must be analysed whether the complex treatment of sexual offenders, established as an alternative to imprisonment, is available to all target groups needing it or whether the regulation of the complex treatment needs correcting.
75. Minor-aged offenders must be provided first and foremost with support and a safe living environment, and consideration must be given to applying restorative justice (e.g. mediation<sup>71</sup>, damage compensation, etc.) in all cases where it is possible and appropriate. Prison is an extreme sanction and an environment unsuitable for children. Youths who have a supportive environment outside closed institutions or who can be provided with such, must be offered e.g. multidimensional family therapy (MDFT) in the community. For those youths who must be separated from their current living environment in order to address their problems, and who need more intensive intervention, other interventions intended for children with behavioural and psychological problems must be preferred, applying those as shortly as possible and accounting for the youths' interests and needs.

##### 4.2. Treatment of perpetrators of violence in prisons and under probation

76. Considering that perpetrators of sexual violence and domestic violence sentenced to prisons and probation have widely varied risk levels, behaviour patterns and social backgrounds, the provision of programmes must be ensured that correspond to each target group's needs and would rehabilitate them with the highest probability. Co-operation between prisons and victim support institutions must be facilitated if the victim's needs require that. Effective

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<sup>71</sup> In Estonia, the term "conciliation" is also used instead of "mediation".



conducting of programmes, treatment and counselling in prisons and under probation help avoid markedly higher costs of repeat offences of violence. Consideration must be given to making probation programmes available also to a wider target group.

77. The main goal of imprisonment and probation in working with perpetrators of violence is to support their abandonment of criminal behaviour. To achieve that, not only risk-based approach is needed but also more attention must be paid to the convict's criminogenic needs, accounting for individuality in client work and also accounting for factors facilitating the abandonment of criminal activities.
78. For more efficient reduction of repeat offending by high-risk probationers, a model of treating an offender as well as co-operation and information exchange between authorities must be prepared. Information exchange between various authorities and specialists ensures an earlier and more objective identification of risk factors for a new offence, in turn enabling to intervene earlier and more effectively to control the situation. The co-operation network includes first and foremost the prison, the probation system, the police, local government's social workers or child protection employees, and victim support organisations.

## How we know the Strategy works: implementation and assessment

79. The Strategy's implementation is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Justice. Seven ministries are responsible for the Strategy's implementation; their representatives make up the lead group of the Strategy. The Strategy's implementers are the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with their subordinate authorities (the Estonian Forensic Science Institute, prosecutor's offices, the Police and Border Guard Board, the Estonian National Social Insurance Board, the National Institute for Health Development), as well as local governments, educational and healthcare institutions, and non-governmental organisations. Implementation of the Strategy takes place in co-operation with non-governmental organisations, local governments and their representative organisations, healthcare and educational institutions and their employee associations, as well as entrepreneurship organisations and others.
80. The Offence Prevention Council discusses the matters of the Strategy's implementation once a year at the level of a government committee.
81. In order to realise the Strategy's operational programme and develop the sector, the sectoral networks created with the previous development plan will continue and if necessary then other networks are created. The networks include experts and practitioners from state authorities, local governments, non-governmental organisations, research institutions and entrepreneurship organisations. Representatives of those networks meet two or three times a year to discuss the developments in the sector, the issues requiring a solution, and the Strategy's reports as well as amendments to its operational programme. The meetings are summoned by the Ministry of Justice, but also by other participants if necessary or wished for.
82. In order to implement the Strategy for Preventing Violence, the Strategy's measures and activities together with the responsible parties and the budget are presented in its operational programme. The operational programme's activities must be reflected in the work plans of the ministries and other governmental authorities. The Strategy's first operational programme is prepared for the period of 2015–2018; each year the operational programme is extended by one year. Amendments to the operational programme are discussed in the Strategy's lead group and in the networks.
83. In order to get an overview of achievement of the goals set with the Strategy, the status of implementing the Strategy is continuously assessed. The Strategy's status of implementation is monitored annually by the main impact indicators: each year the operational programme is extended by one year, presenting the Government of the Republic with an executive summary of the Strategy's implementation in the preceding year; in 2018, an intermediate report for is prepared for the first three years of the Strategy's period, and a final report with an impact analysis is prepared when the Strategy ends. All authorities participating in the Strategy present the Ministry of Justice with an input about the Strategy's implementation; the Ministry of Justice prepares annual summaries and the final report with the impact report.

84. The Strategy's estimated total cost for the years 2015–2020 is nearly 14 million euros, whereas the cost for the first four years is nearly 9 million euros. This amount is supplemented by the operational expenses of the ministries, their subordinate authorities and part of the expenses of external projects; some of the expenses are reflected in other development plans.

**Table 1. Forecast of the Strategy's cost in 2015–2018**

<b>Measures</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
1.1. Promoting awareness of violence and thereby shaping attitudes condemning violence	201,690	103,070	89,500	114,500
1.2. Prevention of risk behaviour and violence among children and youths	153,950	204,150	74,150	4,150
1.3. Increasing the awareness among sectoral specialists and thereby increasing their role in noticing violence	97,842	29,000	31,000	29,000
1.4. Following international recommendations <sup>72</sup>	0	0	0	0
2.1. Developing the support system for violence victims	1,559,705	1,239,050	1,274,050	1,239,050
2.2. Improving the legal protection of violence victims	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
3.1. Supporting the resolving of violence cases in a network	40,450	25,250	25,250	25,250
3.2. Training the staff of law enforcement authorities and attorneys to prevent secondary victimisation	0	15,000	0	0
3.3. More effective investigation of violence cases	7,000	33,500	8,500	3,500
3.4. Correcting the supervision system concerning labour mediators and employers	0	18,224	19,135	20,092
4.1. Treatment of perpetrators of violence in the community	812,200	280,000	420,000	475,000
4.2. Treatment of perpetrators of violence in prisons and under probation	33,500	20,000	120,000	20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,909,337</b>	<b>1,970,244</b>	<b>2,064,585</b>	<b>1,933,542</b>

<sup>72</sup> The cost is reflected in the budgets of other measures.

## Annex 1. Partners involved in the Strategy's preparation

AS Medicum  
Estonian Forensic Science Institute  
Estonian Association of Kindergarten Teachers  
Association of Estonian Cities  
Association of Municipalities of Estonia  
Estonian Gynaecologists Society  
Estonian Women's Shelters Union  
Estonian Women's Associations Roundtable  
Estonian National Youth Council  
Estonian Sexual Health Union  
Estonian Association of Teachers  
Ministry of Education and Research  
Estonian Institute of Human Rights  
Estonian Human Rights Centre  
IOM Estonia  
Ministry of Justice  
Ministry of Culture  
Crime Prevention Foundation  
Southern District Prosecutor's Office  
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications  
NGO Estonian Help Centres (MTÜ Eesti Abikeskused)  
NGO Estonian Institute for Open Society (MTÜ Eesti Avatud Ühiskonna Instituut)  
NGO Lifeline (MTÜ Eluliin)  
NGO Association to Protect Mothers and Children (MTÜ Ühendus Emade ja Laste Kaitseks)  
NGO Child Welfare Union (MTÜ Lastekaitse Liit)  
NGO Living for Tomorrow (MTÜ Living For Tomorrow)  
NGO Men's Crisis Centre (MTÜ Meeste Kriisikeskus)  
NGO Cooperation Council of Women's Shelters (MTÜ Naiste Varjupaikade Koostöökogu)  
Police and Border Guard Board  
Northern District Prosecutor's Office  
Ministry of Finance  
Government Office  
Foundation Free of Bullying (SA Kiusamisest Vabaks)  
Foundation Tallinn Children's Hospital (SA Tallinna Lastehaigla)  
Foundation Tartu University Hospitals (SA Tartu Ülikooli Kliinikum)  
Estonian Academy of Security Sciences  
Ministry of the Interior  
Ministry of Social Affairs  
Estonian National Social Insurance Board  
Tallinn Health Care College  
Tallinn University  
Tartu Children's Support Centre  
University of Tartu  
National Institute for Health Development  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## Annex 2. Connections to other sectoral development plans and horizontal topics

### Development plans

Violence prevention is affected by several other fields and therefore, the Strategy for Preventing Violence is related to many other development plans. This part describes those development plans that have a larger overlap and common effect of measures for the prevention of violence. The activities of other development plans that support the achievement of the goals of the Strategy for Preventing Violence are also added as related activities to the relevant measures of the operational programme of the Strategy for Preventing Violence.

- The framework document for the Strategy for Preventing Violence can be considered the **Estonian Guidelines for Development of Criminal Policy until 2018, adopted by the Riigikogu**, which reflect the principles and long-term goals of policymaking. One of the high-priority areas highlighted by the Guidelines is the prevention of crime against persons, first and foremost the need to address crimes involving child victims and domestic violence. The Guidelines also mention crimes with racial ethnical and religious background as possible future risks that the criminal policy must take into account as we go forward.
- **Estonian Guidelines for Security Policy until 2015** is also a parliament level document, stating among the rest the measures to increase the citizens' feeling of security and to shape a more secure living environment. The Guidelines prescribe activities to decrease people's fear of falling victim to an assault at a public place and to reduce the number of crimes against persons.
- **Estonian National Strategy for Sustainable Development (Sustainable Estonia 21)** sets out the goals of developing the Estonian state and society until 2030 and connects the developments of the economic, social and environmental sector in compliance with global guidelines (*Agenda 21*) and European Union guidelines. The Strategy for Preventing Violence has important connections to the *Sustainable Estonia 21* developments in order to achieve a cohesive society, primarily by the indicators of equal opportunities and security.
- The general objective of the development plan **Integrating Estonia 2020** is a socially cohesive Estonian society, in which individuals with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds actively participate in society and share democratic values. From the viewpoint of violence prevention, it is important that successful integration helps prevent risk behaviour and various social problems.
- Among the objectives of the **Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020**, those supporting the objectives of the Strategy for Preventing Violence are primarily activities to ensure knowledge-based child and family policy, support positive parenthood and create a functioning and strong child protection system; also, equal opportunities of men and women for combining work, family life and private life facilitate the reduction of gender-based violence.

- The overall objective of the **Youth Strategy 2014–2020** is to provide youths with more opportunities for developing their creativity and for using their own initiative and organising joint activities, to increase the youths' active participation in the community and in decision-making, and to improve the employment rate of youths as well as the quality of the youth policy and the youth work. Among the activities of the operational programme for the Youth Strategy, the achievement of the objectives of the Strategy for Preventing Violence is supported e.g. by youths actively participating in hobby education and in youth work in a wider sense, by preventing the risk of youth exclusion, and by supporting the work of juvenile committees.
- One of the sub-goals of the **Cyber Security Strategy for 2014–2017** is to improve the effectiveness of combating cyber crime. The Strategy's goals also support the increasing of wider awareness about the risks of information technology and the level of knowledge about ICT; this is connected to the prevention of violence against children via the Internet.
- **Estonia's Security Policy 2015–2020** has its most important connections to the Strategy for Preventing Violence primarily through the following factors: the community based security model, the changing of people's attitudes towards security (noticing violent crimes), wider involvement of volunteers (volunteers as one of the target groups for acting as support persons for victims) and the development of police services (victim-friendly proceedings).
- The overall objective of **Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy for 2014–2020** is to establish learning opportunities for all Estonian people throughout their life, corresponding to their needs and abilities. For the Strategy for Preventing Violence, it is important that the Lifelong Learning Strategy pays attention to the development of the curriculum for the basic school and upper secondary school, teacher training and support services for participation in learning according to one's abilities. The most important connections are with the general education programme and the programme *Competent and motivated teachers and heads of educational institutions* prepared for the purpose of implementing Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy.
- Concerning the **National Health Plan 2009–2020**, the most important connection is with the measures to prevent risk behaviour, first and foremost the reduction of the health harm and societal harm from alcohol, the prevention and reduction of the consumption of narcotic substances and the health harm and societal harm from narcotic substances, and the prevention and reduction of injuries.
- Concerning the proposal to prepare the **Social Security, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Development Plan for 2016–2023**, the most important connection to the Strategy for Preventing Violence is entailed in measures to reduce the negative impact of gender stereotypes, provided under sub-goal 3 (equal rights, obligations, opportunities and responsibility of women and men). Under that measure, activities are planned for reduction of the negative impact of gender stereotypes in the media and the education, for an increase of the awareness of target groups about indicators of gender inequality and for shaping attitudes supporting gender equality.
- The **Guidelines for Development of Legal Policy until 2018**, adopted by the Riigikogu, prescribe wide-scale impact assessment and involvement of stakeholders in the public debate. The principles are also respected in preparing the Strategy for Preventing Violence.

## Connections to horizontal topics

Horizontal areas	Impact on the achievement of horizontal goals
Equal opportunities	Positive. The Strategy helps reduce the societal and gender-based inequality. Special attention is paid to the addressing of violence against women and the avoidance of established gender stereotypes and gender roles. The Strategy's measures are guided by the needs of various social groups, for example separate activities are planned for the prevention of risk behaviour and violence by children and youths, the prevention of abuse of elderly people, and ongoing attention is paid to ensuring that the Strategy's activities and information about the services reach people who do not speak Estonian as their native language.
Regional development	Positive. The Strategy sees the need to decrease the regional differences in violence prevention programmes and perpetrator services. Where possible, the goal is set to implement and provide the prevention programmes and services in all of Estonia. Concerning the solving of violence cases, much attention is paid on community networking, acknowledging that the regional specifics must be taken into account. Thus, the activities have an impact on the regional development because long-term programmes are implemented in all of Estonia, thereby improving the opportunities of people living in the periphery. Therefore, a need may appear in the periphery to establish additional services in order to ensure the protection of victims and the proper treatment of perpetrators of violence.
Information society	Positive. The Strategy discusses the development of ICT skills both among children and youths and among specialists, in order to ensure the Internet safety of children. While developing several services discussed in the Strategy, attention must also be paid to the need to create the relevant IT solutions (e.g. crime statistics development, information exchange between various parties, risk assessment, etc.).
Public governance	Positive. The Strategy foresees more effective co-operation between various parties and their active involvement in the prevention of violence, and presents the whole picture of the activities of the state and other parties upon violence prevention. Through its sub-goal 1, the Strategy materially contributes to knowledge-based policymaking. An increase of informed awareness about violence requires both the correction and the active dissemination of crime statistics as well as the conducting of studies about the prevalence of violence and about the feasibility and impact of new violence prevention measures. The Strategy's sub-goal 2 fosters the user-friendliness of service provision. Under the Strategy, the system of services for violence victims is corrected, in order to avoid the services becoming fragmented and the system of services remaining unclear to victims. In order to improve the quality of the services, regular feedback will be collected from the recipients of services; also, the assurance of victim-friendly proceedings is addressed in order to avoid secondary suffering of victims.
Environmental protection and climate	Neutral. The activities of the Strategy for Preventing Violence have no notable impact on environmental protection.