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Policies on Family Violence in Europe: Developments and Challenges

Mihaela Robila, Ph.D., CFLE

Professor

Human Development and Family Studies
Queens College, City University of New York

Mihaela.Robila@qc.cuny.edu

<http://qcpages.qc.edu/~mrobila/>

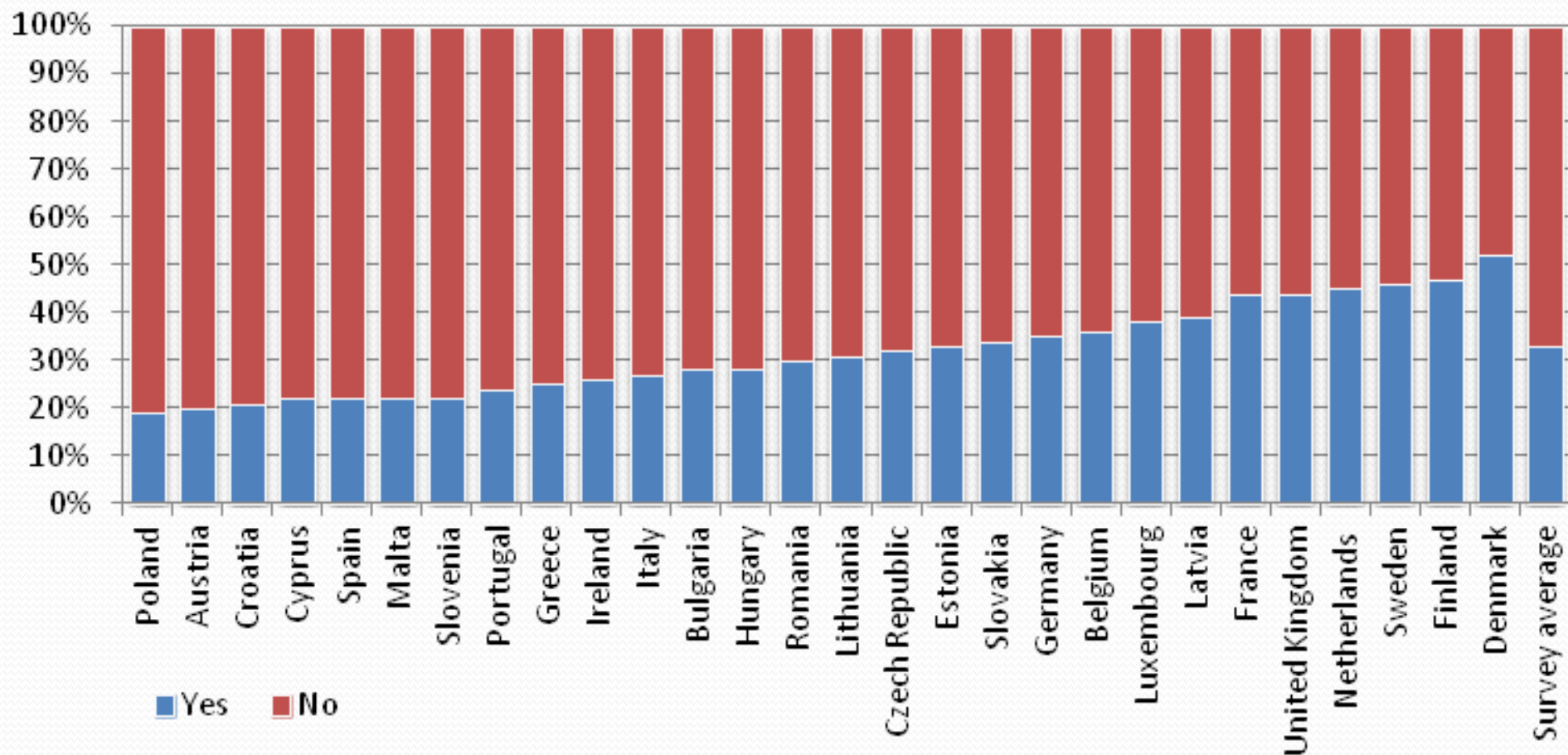


Research and Data on Violence

- Gathering data on this phenomenon and developing and implementing sound policies to address
- Data on violence come from studies that sometime vary in design across countries making the cross-national comparisons difficult
- Data sets - provide data that allow for comparisons
 - International Crime and Victim Survey (2004-2005)
 - International Violence against Women Survey (IWAWS) (2003)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EUFRA) - *“Violence against Women Survey”* (2012)
 - in response to a request for data from the European Parliament
 - Used a fundamental rights approach to violence against women - 42,000 women from all EU Member States



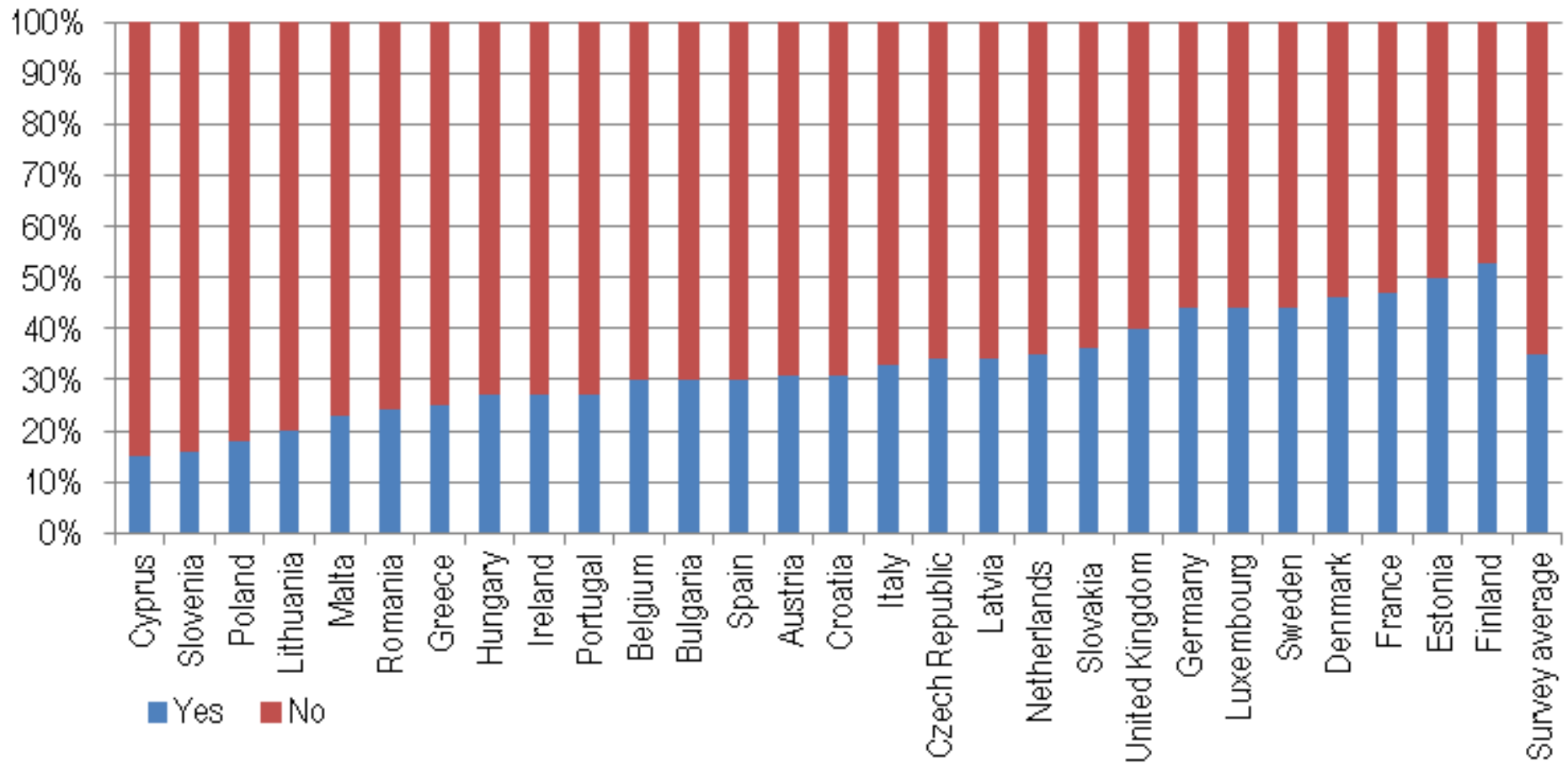
All forms of violence experienced since the age of 15



Note. Data Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Gender-based violence against women survey dataset (2012)



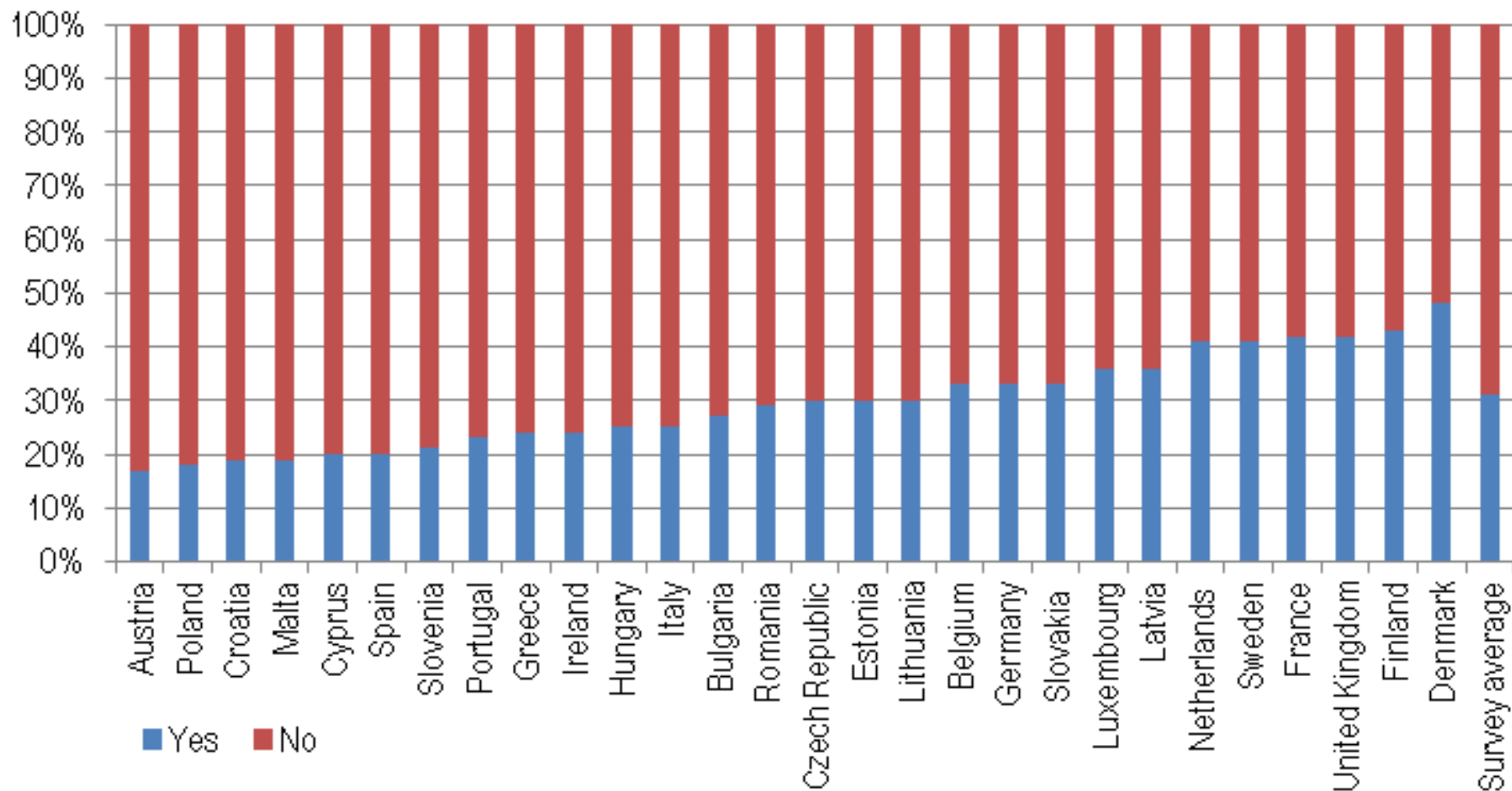
Violence experienced in childhood before the age of 15



Note. Data Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Gender-based violence against women survey dataset (2012)



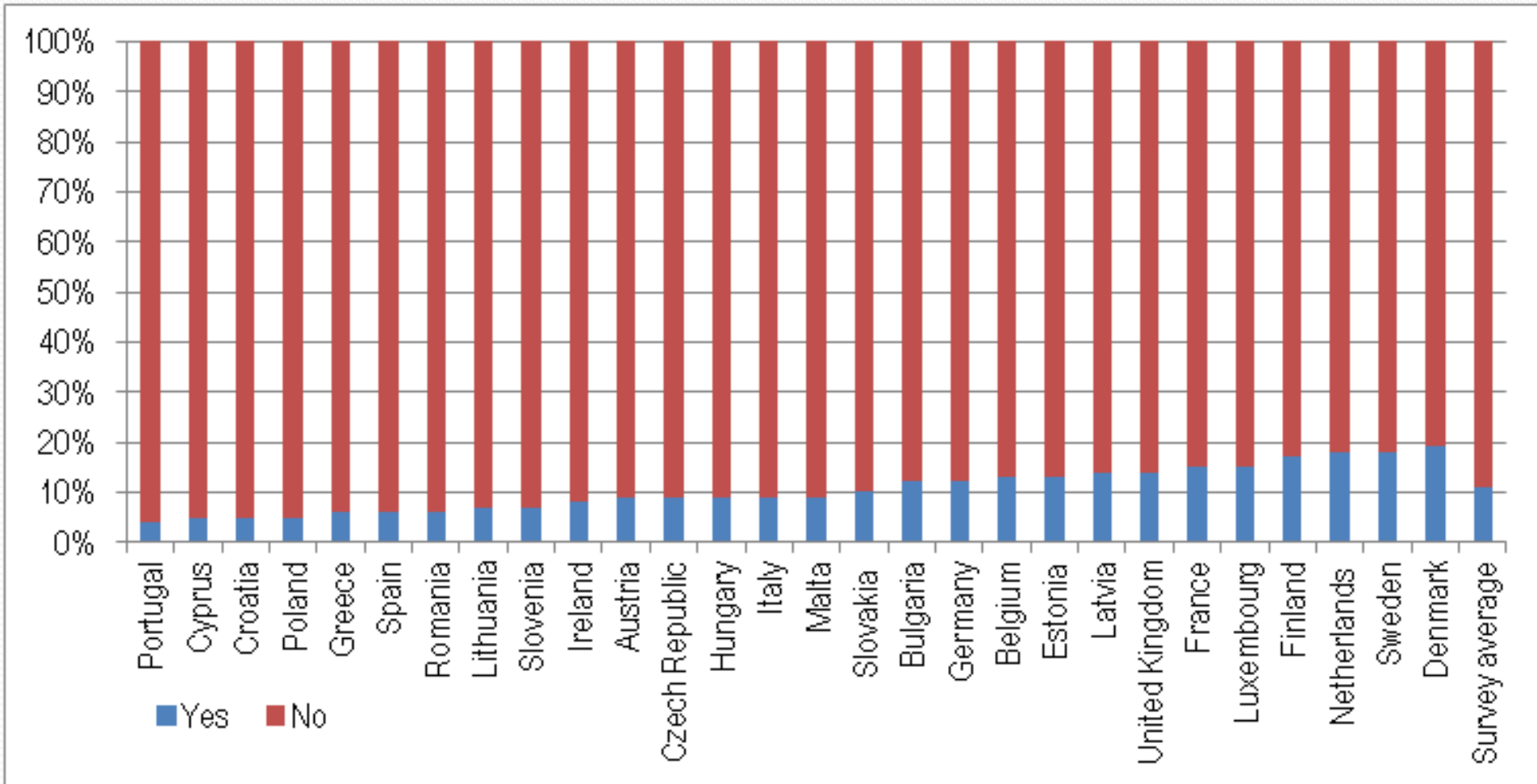
Physical violence experienced since 15 years old



Note. Data Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Gender-based violence against women survey dataset (2012)



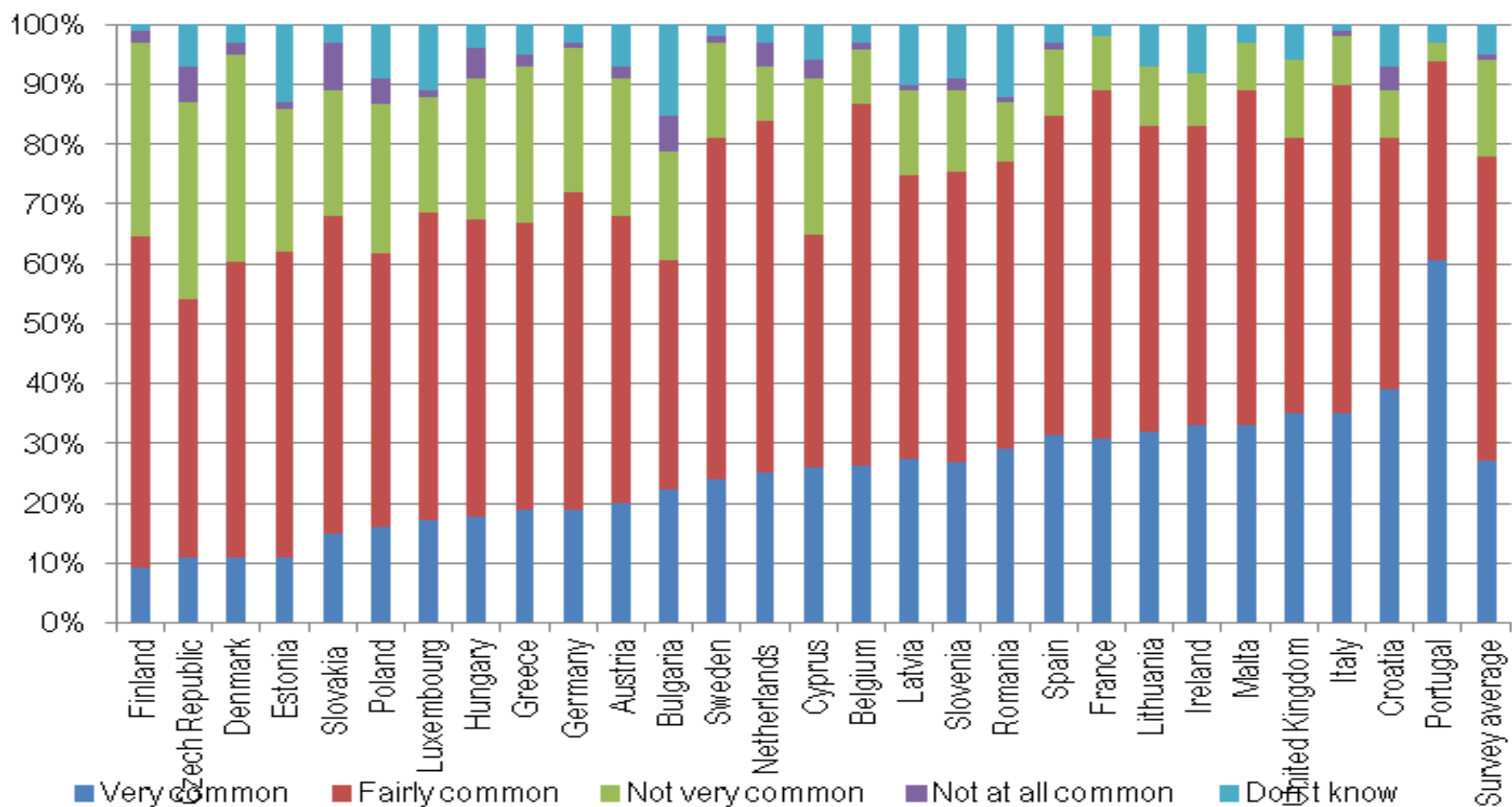
Sexual violence experienced since 15 years old



Note. Data Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Gender-based violence against women survey dataset (2012)



Perception of frequency of violence against women



Note. Data Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Gender-based violence against women survey dataset (2012)



Causes of Violence

- Eurobarometer (2010) - alcoholism, drug abuse, poverty, unemployment
- Alcohol - related harm to oneself: health damages, traffic accidents, violence, damaged family relations
 - The alcohol related harm to others - deaths, hospitalizations, child abuse and neglect due to caregiver's drinking, domestic violence (CNAP, 2014)
- Europe's per capita alcohol consumption - the highest in the world for the past 30 years (COWI Consortium, 2012)
 - 266 million adults drink alcohol up to 20g (women) or 40g (men)/ day
 - 58 million (15%) consume above this level, with 20 million of these (6%) drinking at over 40g (women) or 60g (men) / day

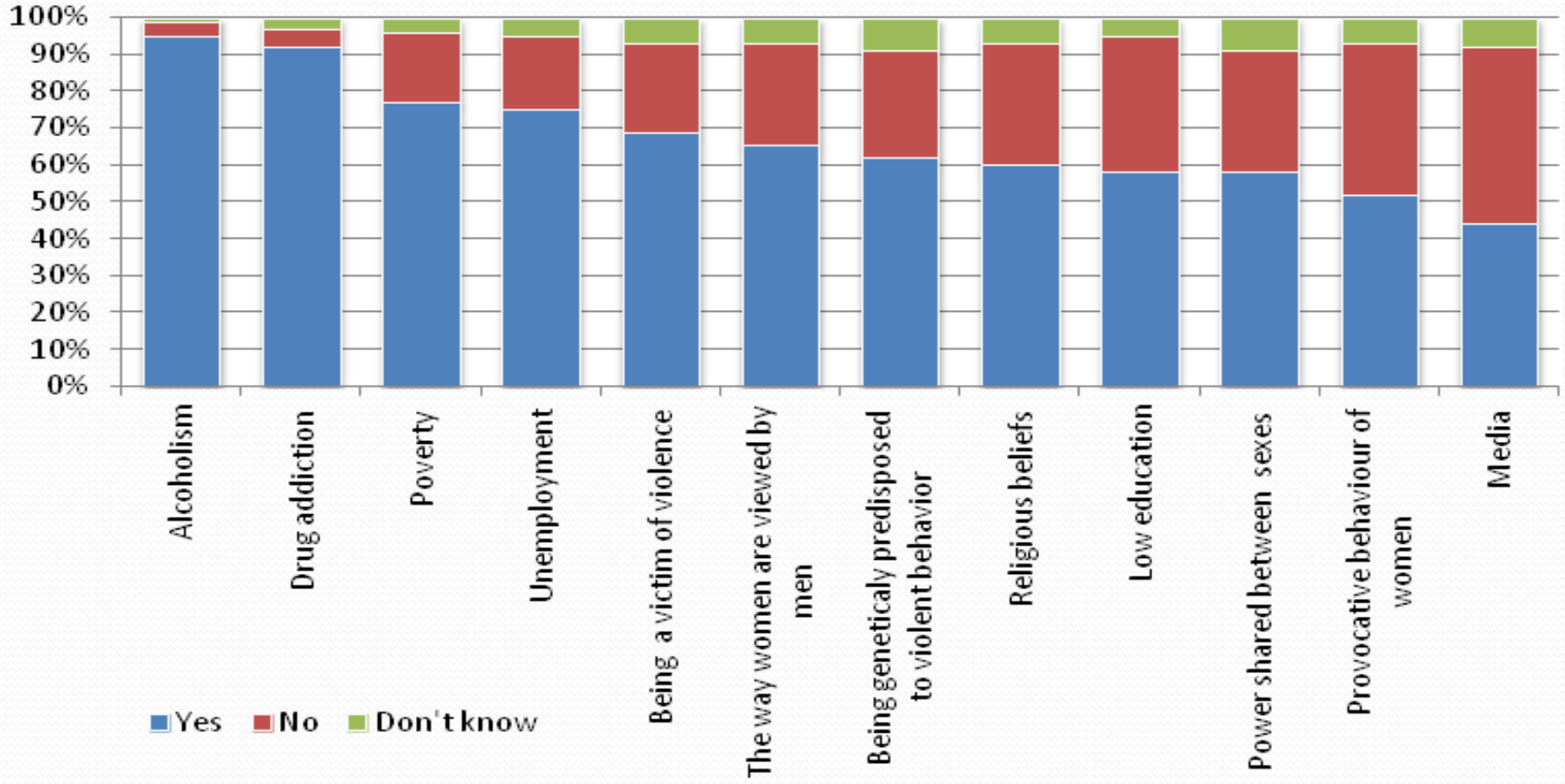


Alcohol Consumption

- 2006 EU Alcohol Strategy
 - a single uniform alcohol policy for all Member States is not possible
 - the role of EU policy is to complement national actions, by increasing exchanges of information, in order to identify and disseminate best practice (COWI Consortium, 2012)
- implemented through
 - Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action (CNAPA) - coordinates actions and policy development among Member States
 - European Alcohol and Health Forum (EAHF) - stakeholder-driven actions to reduce alcohol- related harm
- despite the progress achieved, the aims of the alcohol strategy have not yet been fully reached



Causes of Violence



Note. Data Source: Eurobarometer (2010)

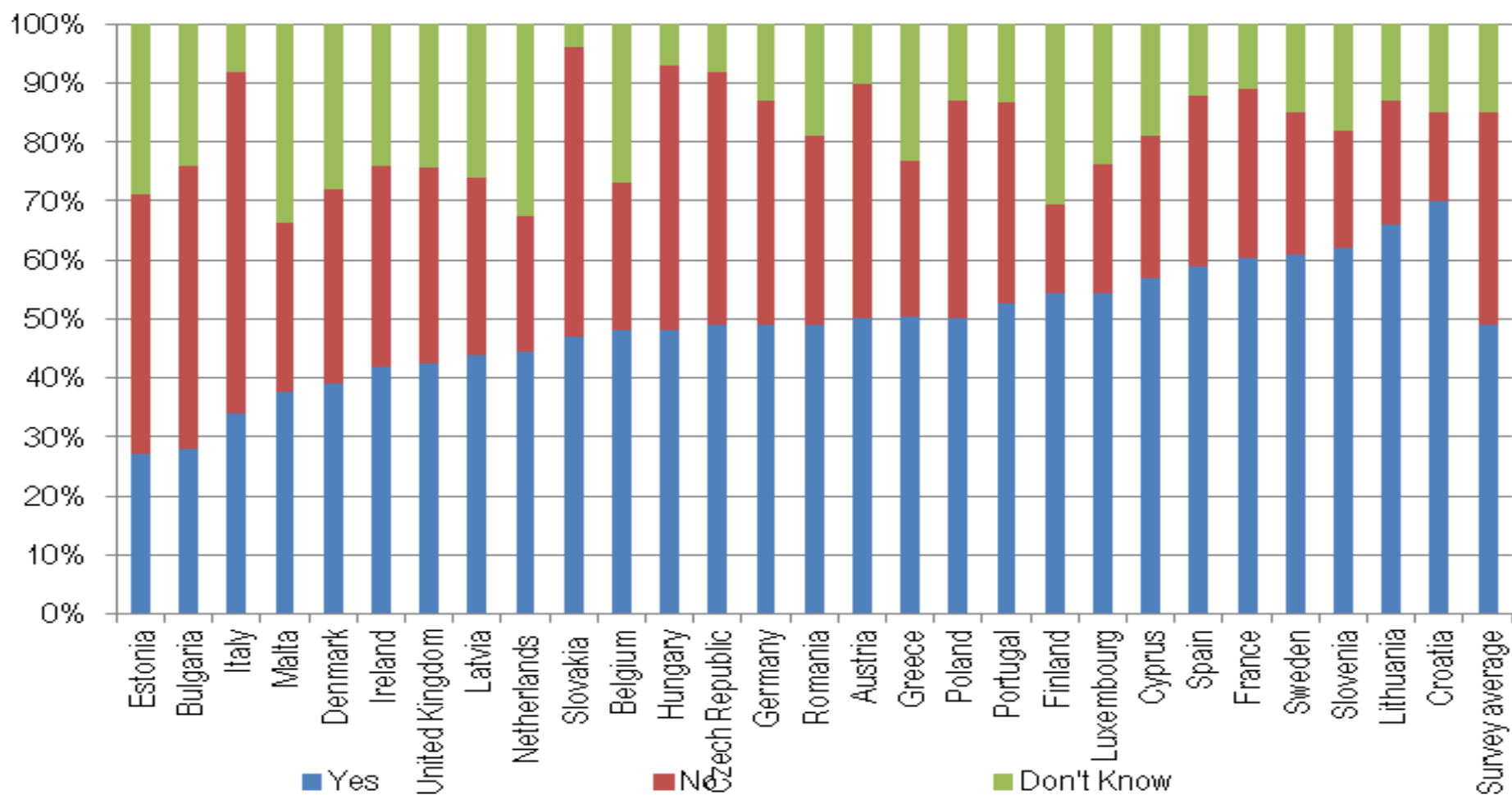


Gender Equality and Violence

- Violence against women - an extreme manifestation of gender inequality & a serious violation of fundamental human rights
- Gender equality policy - promoted in several areas (e.g., employment) inequalities are still significant - a gender pay gap - 16.4%; pension gap - 39%
- Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (2011)
 - Annual cost of violence against women - EUR 33 billion
 - New comprehensive *policy approach*
 - a criminal-law instrument against gender-based violence
 - measures to ensure punishment of perpetrators
 - measures to address the “6-P” framework of violence: policy, prevention, protection, prosecution, provision and partnership



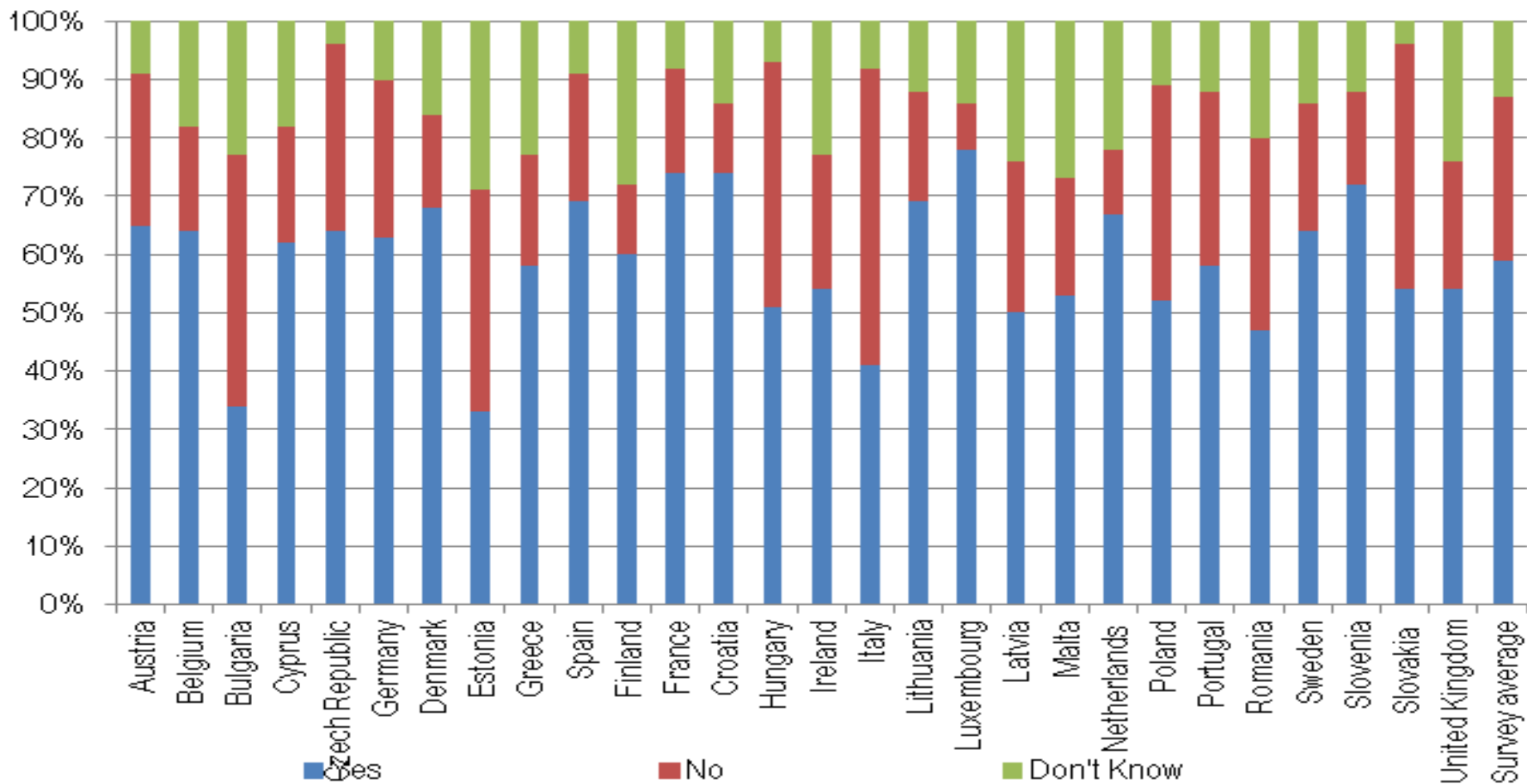
Awareness of policies/programs to *prevent* domestic violence



Note. Data Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Gender-based violence against women survey dataset (2012)



Awareness of policies to *protect* women in cases of domestic violence



Note. Data Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA) Gender-based violence against women survey dataset (2012)



Policies Addressing Violence

- Ascension to European Union of countries from Central and Eastern Europe - opportunity to align the local legislation to the EU standards and to develop and enact domestic violence laws
 - Law of protection from domestic violence adopted
 - Bulgaria, Romania and Poland in 2005
 - Hungary and Croatia in 2003
- In other countries (e.g., Russia), violence acts occurring in intimate relationships - penalized under the Criminal Code (Kravchenko, & Grigoryeva, 2014)



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- FGM - a violation of human rights and children's rights
 - considered a crime in all EU Member States (a principle of extra-territoriality is included, prosecuting FGM when is committed abroad as well) (European Commission, 2015)
 - severe consequences on women's health: pain, infections, complications at childbirth
- 125 million victims of female genital mutilation worldwide; 500,000 victims in Europe (Mogherini, et al. 2015)
- European Commission & the European Institute for Gender Equality
 - develop methodology and indicators to improve the FGM estimates
 - no tradition, or culture or custom can justify any form of violence against women and girls
 - European Commission (2015) – funds a variety of NGOs - the activities at the grassroots - among the most effective in changing people's beliefs and attitudes



Child Maltreatment

- Child maltreatment - defined as the physical, sexual, mental abuse and/or neglect of children younger than 18 years (Sethi, et al, 2013)
- In Europe
 - sexual abuse - 9.6% (18 million) of children (5.7% boys; 13.4% girls)
 - physical abuse - 22.9% (44 million)
 - emotional abuse - 29.1% (55 million) of children (Sethi, et al, 2013)
- Few countries - regularly collect reliable data on the prevalence of child maltreatment
 - information should be gathered and shared so that interventions can be developed and implemented



Child Maltreatment

- Child maltreatment - a serious health and societal concern
 - Although recognized as a priority, the resources invested in dealing with it - limited (Sethi, et al, 2013)
- The *European child maltreatment prevention action plan 2015-2020*
 - reduction of the prevalence of child maltreatment and homicide by 20% by 2020
 - developed three objectives to reach this goal
 - 1. Make health risks such as maltreatment more visible by setting up information systems in Member States;
 - 2. Strengthening governance for the prevention of child maltreatment through partnerships and multi-sectoral action by developing national plans;
 - 3. Reduce risks for child maltreatment through prevention by strengthening health systems in member States (Regional Committee for Europe 64th Session, 2014b)



Child Maltreatment

- *Investing in children: The European child and adolescent health strategy 2015-2020* (Regional Committee for Europe 64th Session, 2014b) - violence can be prevented using a *public health approach*, instead of a criminal justice one
 - Responses to child maltreatment and interpersonal violence tend to be approached by the criminal justice system as an intervention strategy to deal with their consequences
- Children living in violent environments - at risk for physical and emotional abuse and health problems (e.g., depression, anxiety)
 - Investing in prevention and creating healthy environments prevents violence and is more effective



Sexual Violence

- Data - 1 in 5 children in Europe - victims of sexual violence
 - 70-85 % of cases the abuser - somebody known and trusted by the child (Council of Europe One in FIVE Campaign, 2015)
- Council of Europe's *Convention on Protecting of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*
 - criminalization of all kinds of sexual offences against children
 - adopted and opened for signature in 2007 in Lanzarote Spain ("Lanzarote Convention")
 - entered into force in 2010
 - Signed by all 47 Council of Europe member states and ratified by 35 states



Recommendations

- Develop systematic and comprehensive data collection mechanisms on violence occurrences, determining factors, services available to address violence and usage
- Use methodology and develop datasets so that international comparisons can be conducted
- Develop evidence-based comprehensive policies to prevent and address different forms of violence
- Develop thorough policy evaluation mechanisms to examine components that work and the ones that need revisions and improvements; communicate these evaluation results to different stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, NGOs, general public)
- Design effective informational campaigns to alert the general public about policies and prevention and intervention programs and services; evaluate these campaigns and revise them to increase effectiveness
- Improve procedures for reporting and addressing abuse/violence so that the process is easy to follow and effective
- Develop coordinated mechanisms to address violence at multiple levels –family, school/work environment, and the community at large