

**An inter- and multidisciplinary approach of tackling domestic violence:  
European interactive training programme with phased entry plan and universal  
applicable scenario (JLS/2009/ISEC/FP/C2-400000579)**

## **SUMMARY**

This summary gives a quick retrospective of the 'Form a chain, break the circle' project and a sneak preview of the project outcomes.

Why did we submit this project? These were the main **motives**.

- Need for scientific evaluation of the Limburg approach of domestic violence and of several European good practices
  - Need for additional expertise for an effective multi-agency collaboration
  - Need for additional preventive and curative offer
- ... in order to optimize the Limburg and European domestic violence approach, to ensure that families get the help they need.

So, now let's go into some **facts & figures**:

- We started and finished this project with 15 partners.
  - Project proposer: Federal Public Service Home Affairs (BE)
  - Project coordinator: Province of Limburg (BE)
  - Partners:
    - BELGIUM: local police, offices of public prosecutor, centres for general welfare, mental health care, Ministry of Justice, Federal Institute for the Equality of Women and Men
    - THE NETHERLANDS: the Mutsaersstichting in Venlo
    - SWEDEN: Integrated Domestic Violence Programme / Project Karin in Malmö
    - SPAIN: Spanish National Police
    - HUNGARY: Ministry of Interior
- The duration of the project was 27 months. We started on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010. The end date was September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

These were our main **objectives**:

- To develop, promote & implement...  
through scientific evaluation and research and through the exchange of European good practices...  
a European (universal applicable) scenario (on the basis of process steps), an interactive training programme and website...  
according to the optimization of the multi-agency approach of domestic violence...  
in different European Member States

- To develop a European preventive game...  
in which teenagers, through a positive approach and several methods...  
will be informed on how they can keep their relationships healthy and prevent violence
- To develop and implement a curative offer...  
for couples and perpetrators

How did we go about it? The right key words were: **evaluation, research, exchange of experiences and good practices and bringing in external expertise (by Inflecto & the research group Education & ict of the Catholic University College Limburg) .**

- The scientific evaluation & research was done by:
  - The Catholic University College Kempen (in cooperation with the Leuven Institute for Criminology)
  - They had 2 main assignments:
    - Evaluation of the Limburg approach
    - Literature study of good practices in Belgium and abroad
- One of our biggest sources of information was the exchange of experiences and good practices through research visits / expert meetings
  - We went to Venlo (NL) in November 2010 where we talked about the guiding principles of our project. We were very impressed by the Multifocus-approach
  - In February 2011 we visited the University of Western Ontario (CA) where we learned more about the Canadian evidence-based school project the Fourth R. That project would later on form the basis of our prevention project Mood City
  - The research visit in Malmö (SE) was in March 2011. There we lay the foundations for the scenario and the training
  - In Madrid (ES) in October 2011 we were completely on the right track and we had a further discussion about the content and structure of the scenario
  - In Budapest (HU) in April 2012 we had a discussion about the first almost complete draft version of the scenario & the phased entry plan

On that basis we were able to successfully develop the **project outcomes**. So, what can we hand over to the European Commission?

- First of all an evaluation report (in EN & NL):
  - It used the theoretical model of the effect ladder of Van Yperen and Veerman
  - Improvement proposals for the short- and long-term
- Secondly, reports on our curative offer (EN):
  - Good practice: Relief points domestic violence
    - For individuals, children and couples who are confronted with domestic violence
  - Good practice: Perpetrator project:
    - Group training for perpetrators of domestic violence

- Thirdly, our preventive offer: Mood City (EN & NL):
  - It is a school-based serious game for 14-15 year olds that wants to prevent adolescent violence and promote healthy relationships.
  - It uses positive youth development: what do they WANT their relationships to look like, not merely what they have to avoid. The project builds resilience for future stressful situations
  - Skill development is another main feature: the focus lies on helping teens keep themselves safe in potentially dangerous situations.
  - Based on the evidence-based curriculum The Fourth R
  - Consists of 7 lessons
- Finally and most importantly, this project offers guidance and training in effective multi-agency working
  - The final report / phased entry plan (EN, FR, DE, NL) gives
    - A conceptual and strategic framework for multi-agency collaboration in tackling domestic violence
    - It translates that framework into practical and operational information for practitioners
    - Consists of:
      - Three different multi-agency scenarios
      - A phased entry plan, with 5 process steps: the phases, that consist of background information, concrete guidelines and recommendations, are based on practice, empirical findings, international measures and a comprehensive literature review
      - Several examples of good practice
    - It is meant for coordinators and participants in domestic violence and other partnerships
  - The e-learning module (EN) is a
    - Accessible tool based on the phased entry plan
    - It's main goals are:
      - Getting acquainted with organizational concepts to organize a multi-agency approach
      - And creating a multi-agency approach in a methodological and phased manner

So how have we **disseminated** these outcomes:

- The final EU-seminar that took place on the 27th of September in Hasselt (BE) was a great success. Several European good practices, the main project outcomes and 4 European recommendations specific to multi-agency working in tackling domestic violence were presented to an audience of 155 attendants from 6 Member States.
- All project outcomes can be consulted via the website: [www.formachain.eu](http://www.formachain.eu),

- And we have a press release, an electronic newsletter, the help of the EUCPN and a leaflet to distribute at conferences.
- We will also offer some consultancy to European partners who want to get started with the phased entry plan.

**To conclude**, what is the importance of this European project in the European context, in the Belgian context and in the context of the province of Limburg?

- In the European context we can conclude that:
  - The international exchange of experiences is an important driving force and source of knowledge
  - And that the European Commission can play a crucial role in combating domestic violence
  - We have also formulated 4 European recommendations, specific to multi-agency collaboration in tackling domestic violence
  - The project outcomes can give guidance and training to coordinators and participants in domestic violence and other partnerships
- In the Belgian context we can note that:
  - Several cities and provinces are starting to experiment with more integral forms of collaboration (e.g. Antwerp & Limburg); the project outcomes will be used to give guidance and training on a federal level
  - And that there is a need for more government support and commitment.
- In the Limburg context finally, we will work on a:
  - Short-term optimization: the Limburg approach will be adapted from March 1<sup>st</sup> 2013
  - We are also working on a long-term optimization: then we will be evolving towards a phased approach, with a more intensive and integral form of collaboration in complex cases
- Good processes and procedures and how well they have been carried out are indeed very important. But in the end what is most important, is that they contribute to a good end result for families living with domestic violence. We hope that this phased entry plan will support the development of new partnerships in interested European communities and will strengthen existing partnerships, resulting in an improved life for families experiencing violence and abuse.