

# **4** **Integrated housing, income, and child-related supports: Addressing acute needs while preparing for a future free from violence**

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Women experiencing IPV face a range of long-term challenges to living a life free from violence, including securing affordable housing, ensuring their economic security, and supporting their children's needs. OECD governments therefore need to provide a continuum of supports, over time, across a range of sectors to help those experiencing violence. This chapter explores how OECD countries have integrated service delivery for victims/survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) in the following domains: emergency, transitional and longer-term housing; temporary income supports; and child-related services like counselling and out-of-school care. The supply of most of these services falls short of demand, and better integration is needed in most countries.

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## Key findings of this chapter

While many resources are devoted to addressing emergency and acute needs, a sustainable, integrated, and victim/survivor-centred response to intimate partner violence (IPV) must incorporate an additional critical dimension: time. Governments must integrate medium- and long-term considerations to support victims/survivors in building independent lives free from violence. This chapter discusses how OECD countries have integrated service delivery for IPV survivors in the following domains: emergency, transitional and longer-term housing; temporary income support; and child-related supports like child counselling.

- Women often remain in abusive relationships because they do not have a safer place to live. Related to this, IPV is a leading cause of homelessness among women cross-nationally. To reduce housing insecurity caused by IPV, national governments in the OECD generally focus on funding and providing women with emergency shelter, often administered by subnational governments or non-governmental service providers. This is an important first step, but in most countries the number of available beds is not sufficient to meet demand.
- Fewer efforts are made to support victims/survivors transitioning to longer-term affordable housing. A handful of OECD governments offer rent subsidies or priority access to social/public housing to women who have experienced violence, often those exiting emergency shelters. While these policies show good potential to promote long-term safety and independence from an abuser, in practice few victims/survivors benefit from these provisions because there is an inadequate supply of social housing in most countries.
- In light of the known costs associated with both violent victimisation and leaving a violent relationship, OECD countries have implemented a number of income support provisions for women experiencing IPV. These include crisis payments, housing subsidies, health care reimbursements and adapted tests for various benefit payments. Some income subsidies are facilitated/accessed through case workers (e.g. advocates in shelters help women navigate financial assistance). In other cases, the GBV-lens is integrated across general sectors and services (e.g. refunds for health care expenses due to IPV).
- In cases of family violence, child welfare service providers and providers of IPV-related services do not always align strategies. This can complicate the treatment of different family members' needs. Nevertheless, several OECD countries report dedicated policies or programmes aimed at making the help-seeking process more supportive of children while helping to alleviate the needs of victims/survivors who are mothers. These most commonly come in the form of counselling for child witnesses of violence. There are also occasionally education-related supports like out-of-school care helping children with homework, or transport to and from school. These services are often delivered through women's shelters, meaning that essential child-related supports may be interrupted when families exit emergency shelters.

### 4.1. Housing as a foundation for building a life free from violence

It can take months or years for a victim/survivor to escape intimate partner violence (IPV). Abusers often deploy coercive strategies that make it harder for women to leave, for example by becoming more violent or threatening, or by becoming temporarily remorseful and apologetic. In many cases, IPV also includes acts of economic violence, financial coercion or forced debt, leaving few resources for women to re-build a life free from their violent partner. Where poverty and violence co-occur, women may lack the financial, informational and social resources to escape a violent relationship, instead being forced to choose between

continued violence and, for example, homelessness. In a recent review of policies offered by Istanbul Convention signatories, GREVIO finds that both public housing and financial assistance are the two least accessible services for women escaping violence (Council of Europe, 2022<sup>[11]</sup>).

Most women fleeing violence do not only need support during emergencies but must also consider whether and how to build a new life free from the perpetrator (Chapter 2). For many women, this means completely redefining “home”. Often they must find ways to ensure the well-being of their children, secure reliable income that enables them to live independently of their abuser, and afford to maintain their current home or establish a new one. More often than not, victims/survivors bear the costs of leaving a relationship.

A vertically- and horizontally-integrated service delivery response (Chapter 1) to support women experiencing IPV must therefore consider an additional critical dimension: time. A sustainable, trauma-informed response to VAW must incorporate medium- and long-term supports to mitigate the risk of continued harm for women experiencing violence; to re-assert their safety and independence in a timely manner; and to curb the repeated use of limited and costly emergency services.

This chapter explores how OECD countries have integrated service delivery for IPV survivors in the following domains: emergency, transitional and longer-term housing; temporary income supports; and child-related supports, like assistance with school and child counselling.

## 4.2. A continuum of support: Emergency, transitional, and longer-term housing for women escaping IPV

Women experiencing IPV may remain in violent relationships as a result of economic co-dependence, limited housing alternatives, and/or complications and liabilities related to home co-ownership, joint leases and rental arrears (potentially caused by economic abuse). Women with children bear these challenges all the more.

Domestic violence has been found to impact negatively a woman’s ability to remain in a formerly-shared dwelling (if the abuser has left) or to secure alternate housing. Landlords may discriminate against survivors for fear of police interventions, damaged property or unpaid rent. In some cases, subnational governments may develop eviction policies that may not align with – or may actually undo – national-level action plans to mitigate GBV (see Box 4.1).

### Box 4.1. Policy incongruence between national and subnational governments in the United States

#### Local nuisance property laws in some US municipalities conflict with national goals to address GBV

*“Amy was getting fed up with the abuse from her long-term boyfriend. His violence was getting worse, her children were getting old enough to start asking questions about it, and she was thinking seriously about ending their relationship. She had called the police for protection five times in the last two years, and their usual response had been to tell him to leave the house for a few hours. After her last 911 call, though, they took a very different approach: the police told her that if she called them again, both she and her boyfriend would be charged with violating the city’s nuisance property ordinance, arrested, and their children taken into custody by the state’s child protective services. In addition, they would report Amy’s repeated 911 calls to her landlord and she would be evicted from her home.” (Arnold, 2019<sup>[2]</sup>).*

Increasingly, municipalities across the United States are implementing nuisance property laws in an effort to curb criminal activity in rental properties, and to recuperate policing costs by fining or evicting people who repeatedly call for emergency police services. For example, in East Rochester (New York),

the nuisance law requires landlords to evict a tenant after a third call to emergency services within a 12-month period; moreover, where a landlord fails to evict a tenant, the municipality can revoke their permit to lease their apartment at all.

Studies from municipalities in Missouri and New York show that these laws are often enforced against women experiencing IPV or family violence, as with the anecdote above, and have been found to disproportionately affect women of colour and low-income households. Such local-level laws can be particularly harmful when applied to cases of IPV – which are already known to be underreported – by portraying a potential victim of violence as complicit in a new crime, while also notably increasing an abuser’s power.

More importantly, nuisance property laws also compromise access to immediate and future housing for people seeking help to escape violence, which runs counter to national-level housing protections in the US Violence Against Women Act (1994), as well as other housing-related financing provisions that seek to boost access to shelter.

Source: (Arnold, 2019<sup>[3]</sup>; Arnold, 2019<sup>[2]</sup>; Cais, 2008<sup>[4]</sup>).

Violence is a leading cause of homelessness and housing instability for women and their children (Yakubovich et al., 2022<sup>[5]</sup>).<sup>1</sup> This holds across countries. The numbers are striking: a recent survey of homeless populations in Germany found that nearly eight out of ten (79%) of women experiencing homelessness without shelter had experienced some kind of violence (Brüchmann et al., 2022<sup>[6]</sup>).<sup>2</sup> In Ireland, where homelessness rates among women are among the highest in Europe, two-thirds of homeless women report experiencing IPV (Mayock and Bretherton, 2016<sup>[7]</sup>). In Australia, 50% of adult women clients accessing Australia’s Specialist Homelessness Services in 2021-22 had experienced family and domestic violence (AIHW, 2022<sup>[8]</sup>).

Some government frameworks acknowledge IPV is a strong determinant of homelessness. For example, Australia’s National Housing and Homelessness Agreement considers “women and children affected by family and domestic violence” to be a priority homelessness cohort for which subnational governments are required to report investments (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019<sup>[9]</sup>). Australia’s “Keeping Women Safe in their Homes” (KWSITH) programme is therefore an important and complementary initiative which allocates central funding to state and territorial governments, and select NGOs, to help women *remain* in their homes rather than uproot their lives in the wake of IPV (see Box 4.2). The initiative focusses, instead, on holding perpetrators of violence accountable for their actions by shifting the onus of rehoming on the abuser.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, the Domestic Violence Housing First Model in the United States recognises that domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness and has combined housing-related advocacy with flexible financial assistance to those who need them, with successful results (see Box 4.2).

While emergency shelters can provide essential temporary housing support, the importance of longer-term solutions in the form of transitional shelter and affordable housing cannot be overstated (Mantler and Wolfe, 2016<sup>[10]</sup>). Emergency shelters, though critical to crisis response infrastructure, do not constitute viable, long-term housing solutions for women who may otherwise be faced with homelessness if they want to leave a violent relationship.

## Box 4.2. National initiatives promoting stable housing for victims/survivors

### Keeping Women Safe in their Homes (KWSITH) in Australia

Women who are forced to leave their home to flee violence suffer additional hardships. Aside from the time, energy and other resources required to change locations – sometimes with children – a move can compromise proximity to employment, to children’s school or day care, and access to support networks.

KWSITH was deployed in 2015-16 as part of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2010-22*. The Australian Government funds state and territory governments, along with select service providers, to deploy the programme according to an operational framework. Principle supports include assessing whether a woman and her children can safely remain in her home by way of risk assessments, safety planning, case management and home security audits. The programme also finances home security upgrades, such as installing or changing locks and security screen doors, installing alarm systems and security cameras, and for women at higher risk, providing technology such as monitored personal safety devices, surveillance cameras, dashboard cameras, and electronic sweeping and de-bugging of homes and cars.

Since its start in 2015-16, KWSITH has assisted 13 838 women and their children nationally. KWSITH aligns with related national planning for perpetrator accountability and interventions.

In October 2022, the Australian Government committed USD 51.9 million to continue funding the KWSITH programme and ensure continued and consistent service delivery. Implementation will be monitored via the Department of Social Services Data Exchange.

### Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) Model in the United States

Recognising that domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness and unstable housing, the DVHF Model in the United States aims to support women who leave an abusive home to achieve safe and stable housing. The Model works with victims/survivors experiencing unstable housing by, first and foremost, getting them into stable housing and then working to support them in other ways. This concept is based on the longstanding “Housing First” model used for other vulnerable populations with complex needs, such as mental illness.

A quasi-experimental, longitudinal evaluation study of DVHF followed women over two years after they sought services from one of five participating Domestic Violence agencies in the state of Washington. The evaluation considered the effectiveness of two pillars of the model: mobile housing-related advocacy and flexible funding. The evidence indicates that after 24 months, the DVHF model is more effective than services as usual in helping survivors achieve housing stability, safety, and improved mental health. Positive results were visible immediately after the initial six months, and then persisted over the two full years.

Source: (Australian Department of Social Services, 2022<sup>[11]</sup>; Breckenridge, 2021<sup>[12]</sup>; Chen and Sullivan, 2022<sup>[13]</sup>; OECD, 2015<sup>[14]</sup>).

### 4.2.1. Emergency shelters are common, but there are still not enough beds

To address IPV, national governments in the OECD have historically focused on funding and providing women with emergency shelter, with fewer efforts made to provide transitional shelter (from emergency to long-term housing) or access to longer-term affordable housing. This may be linked to the phrasing of the Istanbul Convention, which stresses the need for emergency shelters. Yet despite this focus on emergency housing, a recent review by the monitoring body of the Istanbul Convention, GREVIO, finds emergency

accommodation sorely lacking among signatories, including in the OECD. Austria is the only OECD country to have achieved the Istanbul Convention target of *one family place in shelter per 10 000 population* (Council of Europe, 2022<sub>[11]</sub>). This comes in the context of a broader environment of not enough space in emergency shelters for people in need (OECD, 2020<sub>[15]</sub>).

Shelters are infrequently managed by the national government. The national governments of Costa Rica, Greece and Türkiye do report operating some – or most – of the women’s shelters in their countries, all of which offer multidisciplinary support services. Until recently this was also the case in Mexico, though shelter services are now co-ordinated by the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (CONAVIM), a decentralised administrative body of the Ministry of the Interior that works alongside local-level organisations. In Türkiye, the national government in 2022 mandated all 81 Provincial Governorships and municipalities with a population of over 100 000 to open women’s shelters, with guidance from specialists from the General Directorate on the Status of Women.

Shelter services are otherwise generally provided at the national and subnational levels through policy and funding commitments and are delivered by a network of organisations at the local level who then often compete for government resources (Chapter 6). For example, in Korea, women’s shelters are funded by both national government and subnational governments and operated by non-governmental organisations. In Japan, too, national government funds are used by non-governmental service providers. In Canada, some of these efforts consider intersectional needs: the Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative earmarks funds to create at least 50 transitional homes and 38 shelters for Indigenous women, children and 2SLGBTQQIA+<sup>4</sup> people escaping gender-based violence. The funds are allocated to service providers who submit service delivery proposals through an open call, and who are selected according to pre-determined evaluation criteria.<sup>5</sup> Canada’s “Reaching Home” Homelessness Strategy<sup>6</sup> also fosters housing support for populations such as victims/survivors of GBV.

Central funding rules may also be adapted to ensure central funds are effectively allocated at the subnational level. In the United States, at least 70% of the funding issued by the Department of Health and Human Services through the Administration for Children and Families awarded to sub-grantees working in the field of domestic violence must be used for the primary purpose of providing immediate shelter and supportive services in respective states.

On the ground, dedicated funding for emergency (and transitional) shelter often comes with jurisdictional limitations which can restrict a woman’s ability to re-locate to a shelter in a municipality other than the one of her registered addresses. Despite re-location being a common short-term safety strategy, one service provider explains, “further barriers arise when, for example, women escape to a women’s shelter in [more distant] municipality for reasons of safety. These women will often be rejected there, since the compensation of costs among municipalities is complicated” (OECD Consultation, 2022) (see Chapter 1, Box 1.5).

The private sector can take on useful roles as providers of emergency housing, too. For instance, building on their initiative during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide emergency shelter at cost price, the hospitality company Accor has put in place a new platform. The platform “Emergency Shelter” aims to provide temporary accommodation to women and children leaving abusive partners. Between March and October 2022, 148 women and children benefited from the programme (Falstaff, 2022<sub>[16]</sub>; Accor, 2022<sub>[17]</sub>).

#### **4.2.2. Transitional shelters are infrequently used**

Women experiencing IPV often need time and support when moving from emergency shelters to long-term housing, which may imply high upfront costs and organisational resources. Shelters therefore often provide both emergency beds and transitional apartments, though the latter is markedly less common. The recent OECD Consultation with 27 non-governmental service providers (Chapter 1) revealed that respondents were more than twice as likely to offer emergency shelter as transitional shelter (56% to 22%).

Hungary offers a novel example of transitional housing for victims/survivors. Transitional housing services in Hungary are designed to provide longer-term housing for victims/survivors leaving abusive relationships. Women can move to these houses following crisis situations. By law, transitional houses can be operated in conjunction with crisis centres as well as secret shelters. In practice, transitional housing services are self-contained flats close to sheltered accommodations, for which there is no rent and the utilities are only gradually, over time, taken over by the victim/survivor. The services of the transitional home are available for five years, and in addition to housing, the survivor receives free psychological and legal counselling, as well as the guidance of a social worker who helps with reintegration into society. Hungary reports that “the period spent in a transitional house is about rebuilding a life; the survivor starts working, becoming more independent in their day-to-day life, which oftentimes includes taking care of their children. Survivors typically leave the care system after 2 years. Following time spent in such a transitional house, survivors can become so empowered, that there are virtually no examples of someone going back to their abuser.” (OECD QISD-GBV, 2022).

#### **4.2.3. Access to long-term, affordable housing remains a challenge**

Awareness of – and access to – stable and affordable housing is a key determinant of help-seeking and restitution of personal safety for women experiencing IPV. Unfortunately, women fleeing violence do so in the broader context of a widespread housing affordability shortage in OECD countries, which leads many lower-income households to be overburdened by housing costs and/or live in poor-quality dwellings that are ill-suited to their needs (OECD, 2022<sup>[18]</sup>).

To support women and mothers in accessing long-term, affordable housing solutions, national governments most commonly offer rent subsidies or priority access to social housing. These benefits and programmes are often linked – either administratively or in terms of priority access – to emergency shelters as a way to support women leaving shelters.

##### *Rent subsidies for women experiencing violence*

Some countries offer rent subsidies to women escaping violence. The Chilean Ministry of Housing and Urbanism, in co-ordination with the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality and the National Service for Women and Gender Equality (SERNAMEG), provides women experiencing GBV with a subsidy to access rented or owned housing (OECD ISD-GBV, 2022). In the United Kingdom, recent amendments give housing support to people who have experienced domestic violence to claim a higher level of support as of 1 October 2022. The additional provision is available for people who already live independently, and who have written attestation of violence by either a health care professional, police officer, registered social worker, their employer, or a GBV-specific service provider. Notably, there is no time limit to claim this additional benefit; for example, a person who experienced abuse at age 20 can still appeal for the benefit at age 30, so long as they can provide evidence.

Greece offers an example of rent subsidies integrated with other services. The “Housing and Work Project” aims to rehouse individuals and families experiencing homelessness through an integrated approach and considers women living in domestic violence shelters to be one of its three priority groups. The programme provides some women with a two-year rent subsidy; a subsidy to cover costs of household goods and other functional needs; psychosocial support services; referral to other social benefits and services; and training services and support accessing work (OECD QISD-GBV, 2022); (Hellenic Republic, 2022<sup>[19]</sup>).

##### *Priority access to social housing for women experiencing violence*

Several countries have special provisions within existing social housing schemes which prioritise access to victims/survivors who are exiting emergency shelters. These include Belgium, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain (see Table 4.1).

Importantly, while *de jure* priority access to social housing may be promised to women escaping situations of violence, such provisions face challenges in implementation. GREVIO has found in reviews of Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Türkiye that public housing and financial assistance are usually the two types of services that victims find more difficult to access even where the law foresees helpful measures (Council of Europe, 2022<sup>[11]</sup>). The Netherlands, for example, has a law mandating priority access for victims/survivors in social housing, but in practice many women are not placed as there are not enough spaces in the affordable housing stock (*ibid*). In general, there is a shortage of social housing supply in OECD countries, relative to demand (OECD, 2020<sup>[20]</sup>).

Australia offers a noteworthy approach. The underlying concept in recurring national plans is to empower women and their children to *remain* in their home if possible, and when it is safe to do so (Box 4.2). In effect, this places the onus of re-establishing a home on the person who committed violence.

**Table 4.1. Examples of policies facilitating victims/survivors' access to social housing**

Country	Description of services delivered
Belgium	Municipalities are legally obliged to grant priority consideration for social housing to women who have experienced violence and who are exiting shelter services.
Ireland	In 2017, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage issued guidance to housing authorities highlighting the role they can play in assisting women impacted by domestic violence. The guidance makes a number of recommendations, including that local housing authorities provide short-term emergency housing to women exiting emergency shelters, but who are unable to return home due to safety concerns, without having to assess their eligibility for social housing support or include them on the authority's waiting list for housing supports. Importantly, this hinges on availability of housing. Where a woman is party to a joint tenancy agreement with the perpetrator of violence, she may return to the family home if the justice system has ensured the expulsion of the perpetrator. The housing authority can also install reinforced doors and bolts, lighting and a communications point to be funded via housing authorities' standard improvement works programmes.
Japan	Public housing occupants are usually selected through a public lottery system. However, low-income people with especially serious housing problems, including related to spousal violence, can be housed on a preferential basis, at the discretion of housing providers and depending on circumstances in the locality.
Netherlands	The housing law legally obliges municipalities to offer housing, with priority, to women who have experienced GBV and are exiting shelter services.
Portugal	Since 2012, the "Municipalities in Solidarity with Domestic Violence Victims" lays the legal framework wherein municipalities grant priority access to social housing for women leaving shelter services. To date, 42% of municipalities in Portugal have adhered to the programme.
Spain	Organic Law 1/2004 and 10/2022 regulates the priority access of victims/survivors of GBV to housing. Housing assistance programmes such as the "Programa de ayudas a las víctimas de violencia de género, personas objeto de desahucio de su vivienda habitual, personas sin hogar y otras personas especialmente vulnerables" seek to provide an immediate housing solution for GBV victims and vulnerable people. Recipients can access financial aid of up to EUR 600 per month, which can support up to 100% of the rent.

Note: This table presents a non-exhaustive list of policies in OECD countries intended to link victims/survivors with social housing, typically as they exit emergency shelters. Additional comments were incorporated following OECD members' review.

Source: OECD QISD-GBV 2022 (Annex A); (Council of Europe, 2022<sup>[11]</sup>); Government of Ireland (Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, 2017<sup>[21]</sup>); Government of Spain (Ministry for transport, 2022<sup>[22]</sup>).

### 4.3. Income support can offer some financial security to women fleeing violence

Research from throughout the OECD has highlighted the significant link between poverty and intimate partner violence.<sup>7</sup> Domestic violence is not only more prevalent among people living in poverty, it is often more frequent and more severe. At the same time, women earn less and are less likely to be in the labour market than their male partners, on average across the OECD (OECD, 2022<sup>[23]</sup>). This often leaves women experiencing violence at an economic disadvantage when and if they want to leave a violent relationship. Against this backdrop, racial and ethnic minority women – who tend to earn less than white women – face particularly high risks (Gillum, 2019<sup>[24]</sup>).



Even for women with gainful employment and financial security, the personal economic cost of IPV is significant. IPV can compromise wages, employment continuity, or the prospect of career advancement. Though dated, the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control estimated in 2003 that, across the United States, people experiencing IPV lost “nearly 8.0 million days of paid work –the equivalent of more than 32 000 full-time jobs –and nearly 5.6 million days of household productivity as a result of the violence” (CDC, 2003<sup>[25]</sup>). A more recent study in the United States., based on the 2012 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey to estimate “a population economic burden of nearly USD 3.6 trillion (2014 USD) over victims’ lifetimes, based on 43 million US adults with victimisation history” (Peterson et al., 2018<sup>[26]</sup>).

Economic control and financial coercion are also often part of a perpetrator’s strategy of abuse and are nearly invisible facets of IPV which directly impact a person’s ability to leave an abusive relationship. Economic abuse can take many forms, including restricting access to (and use of) personal finances; restricting or blocking access to employment or job training; non-consensual use of another’s personal finances; and forcing debt upon someone (Breckenridge, 2020<sup>[27]</sup>; Postmus et al., 2020<sup>[28]</sup>). Even when an abusive relationship has ended, the consequences of economic abuse can have long-term impacts on affected victims/survivors, for example in the form of debt or tarnished credit.

When leaving a violent relationship, a person may struggle to adapt to new financial dynamics as a single earner at the same time as they face the costs associated with re-establishing themselves. A single earner with children is even more exposed to poverty risks.

In light of the common co-occurrence of poverty and IPV, and the known costs associated with violent victimisation on the one hand and leaving a violent relationship on the other, OECD countries have put in place a number of income support provisions for women experiencing IPV (see Table 4.2). These include crisis payments, additional housing subsidies, health care reimbursement and adapted tests for various benefit payments.

#### **4.3.1. Income support provided by government**

The degree of integration of cash benefits varies, however. Some income subsidies are facilitated/accessed through case workers formally (e.g. in Anti-Violence Centres in Italy) or informally (e.g. advocates in shelters help women navigate financial assistance). In other cases, the GBV-lens is integrated across general sectors and services (e.g. refunds for health care expenses due to IPV, or payments in the wake of crises which include domestic violence).

**Table 4.2. Targeted income/cost support provisions in cases of domestic violence in the OECD**

Country	Targeted income support measure
Australia	<p>Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) (temporary financial hardship) is designed to provide support to qualifying families who are experiencing significant financial stress due to circumstances beyond their control, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a person having to leave their home, and not being able to return due to an extreme circumstance such as domestic violence;</li> <li>• a person still living at home after being subjected to domestic violence by a family member who has left or been removed;</li> </ul> <p>Special exemptions also exist for people who are experiencing, or have experienced domestic violence, including with respect to parental leave and child benefit eligibility tests;</p> <p>A one-off crisis payment is available to existing income support recipients who changed their living arrangement due to domestic violence. In 2020-21, 25,575 Crisis Payments were granted to support customers affected by family and domestic violence. In 2021-22, more than 26,000 Crisis Payments were granted to support customers affected by family and domestic violence.</p>
Costa Rica	The Mixed Institute of Social Assistance (IMAS) offers a temporary subsidy for women in situations of violence, including women at risk of violence. In 2021, 1 274 women benefitted from the provision.
Estonia	Women affected by violence are eligible to receive partial reimbursement for necessary mental health expenses related to treatment in the aftermath of violence.

Greece	Since 2021, special provisions for women experiencing violence have been incorporated into the guaranteed minimum income (GMI) scheme, including extended support for women exiting shelters.
Italy	<p>In 2020, a number of new subsidies were enshrined in law for women who have severed ties with their abusers, as validated by case workers at regional Anti-Violence Centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Income of Freedom” subsidy is equivalent to EUR 400 per month for 12 months, paid by the National Institute of Social Security by way of a one-time payment. Women can apply via municipal social service offices by presenting a certificate issued by their anti-violence centre case workers;</li> <li>• The “Micro-Credit of Freedom” subsidy, which is articulated into two instruments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The business microcredit, designated for women who intend to start a business. Women are referred by Anti-Violence Centres to the National Microcredit Board, where they are followed by entrepreneurial mentors. The aim of the credit is to offset the interest rate on loans granted for entrepreneurial activity.</li> <li>○ The social microcredit, designated to support personal expenses, including rent and school supplies for children.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Both subsidies are compatible with other benefits (e.g. citizenship income, inclusion income, etc).<sup>8</sup></p>
Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOGEF provides a one-time self-reliance benefit for individuals experiencing domestic or sexual violence, and are exiting shelter services. The benefit is automatically paid when they leave the shelter.</li> <li>• Women and their immediate family members are eligible to receive subsidies to cover mental health expenses in the wake of violence. Benefit applications, along with supporting documents, are processed through relevant support agencies, such as counselling centres or integrated support centres. This subsidy is not means tested.</li> </ul>
Latvia	Municipalities are, by law, required to offer social assistance in the form of a crisis payment, including to women and girls in situations of violence. Municipalities determine the amount through their local laws. The benefit is not means tested and is paid out as a one-time sum. In 2021, the crisis payment was received by 1 417 girls (0 – 18 years old) and 7 388 adult women, though administrative data is not disaggregated by nature of the crisis, making it difficult to distinguish between payments disbursed as a result of human trafficking versus IPV, for example.
Portugal	The “Family Restructuring License and Subsidy” initiative was established in 2020 to support unemployed women who are forced to leave their residence due to a crime, such as domestic violence. Applications are processed through the Social Security Institute, and can be accumulated with other social benefits payments, with the exception of unemployment allowance.
Slovenia	<p>In cases of proven IPV, the perpetrator’s income is not considered in the means test related to household income when the plaintiff applies for social assistance.</p> <p>In cases where migrant women experiencing domestic violence have been issued temporary residence permits and lack means of subsistence, they are granted access to social assistance payments like the general public.</p>
Spain	The Government Delegation against GBV within the Ministry of Equality funds a one-time special aid benefit for qualifying women (means-tested) experiencing consequences of GBV. Law 3/2019 aims to improve the situation of orphans who have lost their mother due to gender-based violence and other forms of violence against women, by establishing an “orphanhood provision” for the children whose mother had not previously contributed the sufficient amount to generate the right to an orphanhood pension.
Switzerland	Women affected by violence are eligible to receive additional subsidies to cover necessary physical and mental health expenses related to treatment in the aftermath of violence.

Note: This table presents a non-exhaustive list of income support policies for victims/survivors of violence in OECD countries. In some countries, transfers also come in the form of subsidies for private or social housing rentals (see Table 2.1). Additional comments were incorporated following OECD members’ review.

Source: OECD QISD-GBV 2022 (Annex A); (La Moncloa, 2019<sup>[29]</sup>).

### 4.3.2. Workplace protections to keep victims/survivors in paid employment

Of course, while such subsidies and payments are helpful in the short term, women experiencing domestic violence require more sustainable, long-term solutions that help them preserve, or gain, paid employment. In 2019, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted the “Violence and Harassment Convention” (C-190), which seeks to eliminate violence in the world of work, but also highlights the shared responsibility of employers in mitigating the workplace effects of violence occurring at home (International Labor Organization, 2019<sup>[30]</sup>).<sup>9</sup> The accompanying recommendation suggests countries adopt special job-protected leave or temporary protection against dismissal for people experiencing domestic violence (International Labor Organization, 2019<sup>[30]</sup>).

Some countries, like Australia, Canada, Italy, Spain and the United States, have adopted provisions which guarantee time off for women to recover from violence without jeopardising their current jobs – though the leave is not always paid. In Canada, for example, the Canadian Labour Code entitles employees of federally-regulated workplaces (e.g. air transportation, federal public service, postal and courier services,

radio and television broadcasting) to ten days of leave per calendar year, out of which five days are paid, if the employee is the victim of family violence or is the parent of a child who is the victim of family violence. Employees of other workplaces are subject to provincial and territorial labour codes, all of which have some form of domestic/family violence leave provisions. The United States' Executive Office of the President also recently published the "Memorandum on Supporting Access to Leave for Federal Employees," which calls for job-protected leave for federal workers experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.<sup>10</sup>

In Australia, the National Employment Standards entitle all employees, including part-time employees and casual workers, to 10 days' paid family and domestic violence leave in a 12-month period for employees experiencing family and domestic violence to deal with the impact. The National Employment Standards provide the minimum entitlements for employees in Australia, which means other kinds of employment arrangements such as enterprise agreements and individual arrangements cannot provide lesser conditions. The paid leave entitlement takes effect on 1 February 2023 for employees of businesses other than small business employers (fewer than 15 employees) and on 1 August 2023 for employees of small business.

In Spain, victims/survivors of GBV have extensive rights in the workplace. They are guaranteed reduced or reorganised work hours, geographical mobility, change of workplace, support needed for reinstatement and reserved job in case of temporary leave. Workers are reimbursed via social services when they are absent from work due to GBV, including for reasons including mental or physical recovery (Jefatura del Estado, 2004<sup>[31]</sup>).

France seeks to ensure that people who need to relocate and resign their job due to domestic violence are not excluded from unemployment benefits. However, the administrative burden to "prove" the job resignation was caused by domestic violence may be too high for some victims/survivors to claim the benefit. To be eligible, victims/survivors must show some, or all, of the following: a complaint filed with the public prosecutor, direct citations before the police or correctional court, a complaint with civil action before the investigation judge, a complaint with a police station or a gendarmerie, and proof of address of the old and new place of residence (Pole Emploi, 2022<sup>[32]</sup>). This requires time, effort and self-efficacy that a victim/survivor may not possess when escaping a violent situation.

Community-based organisations also play an important role in supplying women with related, non-monetary supports, such as clothing and footwear, food, or transit fares, in addition to financial counselling, job training and re-skilling opportunities. The consultation shows that 15 out of 26 responding organisations provide in-kind support such as food clothing, while 4 provided this by co-location and 6 by referral to off-site providers.

#### 4.4. Integration with child-related services is necessary to streamline support

Given that intimate partner violence often occurs in the family home, if children are present, they are likely to bear close witness. Mothers require additional supports to respond to childcare needs, which can be a practical challenge when navigating the help-seeking process and working to rebuild their lives. For example, mothers may need support transporting her children to and from school from a new location, such as a shelter, or they may require childcare support in order to continue working. In addition, by-standing children may themselves require counselling or social support after witnessing violence.

Moreover, child abuse and IPV against women often happen simultaneously, though service delivery is inconsistently integrated (Langenderfer-Magruder et al., 2019<sup>[33]</sup>). Failure to holistically integrate IPV and child welfare services contributes to the marginalisation of help-seeking adults in contexts where IPV and child abuse are overlapping (Nikolova et al., 2020<sup>[34]</sup>; Langenderfer-Magruder et al., 2019<sup>[33]</sup>). Opportunities exist to integrate service delivery in this context, particularly where the number of agencies

involved in help-seeking, safety planning and resolution are often multiplied as a result of the presence of children (Olszowy et al., 2020<sup>[35]</sup>).

#### 4.4.1. Integrating child-related supports for help-seeking mothers

Some IPV-oriented service providers, such as specialised police stations (Chapter 5), anticipate the likelihood of children being present during help-seeking. But supportive services which alleviate the needs of mothers seem to be more commonly integrated within housing services (OECD QISD-GBV, 2022). Indeed, state-operated women's shelters in Costa Rica, Greece, Israel and Türkiye report serving as many, if not more, children than they do women escaping domestic violence, offering supportive services to both (OECD QISD-GBV, 2022).

Importantly, when services for children are delivered through state-funded women's shelters, many essential child-related supports are interrupted when women exit emergency or transitional shelters (Council of Europe, 2022<sup>[11]</sup>).

To note, the child services reported in this chapter come from the perspective of *service providers addressing IPV*; OECD GBV-ISD (2022) generally did not capture IPV-related services reported from the perspective of child service providers.

Child services most commonly appear in the form of counselling for children affected by violence, including in Austria, Finland, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand and Norway. There are also practical, education-related supports like out-of-school care, such as helping children with homework or transporting them to and from school, as in Costa Rica and Japan.

**Table 4.3. Child-related services to support mothers experiencing IPV**

Country	Description of services delivered
Austria	The Federal Chancellery funds Family Counselling Centres, 25 of which offer special child well-being support in the context of DV.
Costa Rica	The INAMU temporary shelters for women at high risk of femicide (CEAAM) employ child psychologists to attend to accompanying children aged over four years. In addition, a formal agreement with the Ministry of Public Education provides a teacher in each CEAAM to ensure educational continuity for accompanying children.
Finland	All state-funded shelters include child-centred crisis support for children whose parent experienced DV.
Israel	The Inter-Ministerial Committee via the Ministry of Welfare is responsible for allocating fixed job positions and delineating standards for social workers specialised in working with child witnesses of DV.
Japan	Women's Protection Facilities and other state-operated shelters offer accompaniment services to ensure children staying at the facilities continue to attend school.
Latvia	The Ministry of Welfare provides social rehabilitation services for children (and their mothers) when children and/or mothers have been affected by domestic violence. Children receive either a maximum of 10 psychologist consultations, or through specialised care at local crisis centres over the course of 60 days if criminal proceedings have been initiated for the offence committed against the child, or 30 days if there was no offence against the child. The municipality is able to grant additional aid, if it is determined necessary.
Mexico	In 2021, nearly 38 000 children received specialised counselling through External Care Centres, in addition to over 27 000 children who received social work, psychology and law services through PAIMEF. This is in addition to over 660 000 child-related services delivered to children attending shelters alongside their mothers.
New Zealand	The Ministry of Social Development is funding nine pilot sites via women's refuges which have adopted a <i>tamariki</i> [child] focussed family violence integrated safety response. Tamariki-centred services are provided for accompanying children ranging from 5–12 years old.
Norway	The Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs manages 42 Family Counselling Services, which are increasingly adopting an integrated approach to domestic violence so as to better support the entire family unit, including children.
United States	The Justice for Families Program provides supervised visitation and safe exchange of children and youth by and between parents in situations involving IPV and DV.

Note: This table presents a non-exhaustive list of services for children that are integrated in government responses to intimate partner violence in the OECD.

Source: OECD QISD-GBV 2022 (Annex A).

#### **4.4.2. Child welfare services and IPV services are infrequently integrated**

Children in households where IPV takes place are often close witnesses to violent physical and sexual assault and psychological abuse. In some cases, they may themselves also be direct victims of violence. This means that children in households with IPV are vulnerable to lower well-being and may struggle later in life to achieve their potential. Indeed, exposure to IPV is considered a form of child maltreatment in many OECD countries – whether the children are direct victims, witnesses or simply living in a household where it takes place – which means that child protection services might be expected to intervene to assess harm to children in cases of IPV (OECD, 2019<sup>[36]</sup>).

While there may be benefits to including forms and cases of IPV in child maltreatment assessments, it often means that women are held to account for their partner’s violence, and the children’s exposure to that violence. Thus, abused women may see child welfare interventions as punitive, traumatising and re-victimising (Nixon et al., 2007<sup>[37]</sup>). Indeed, perpetrators may also use the threat of taking children away as a form of psychological abuse and warning against help-seeking (Chapter 2). At the same time, child protection services do not always help improve outcomes for children, but in some cases may add to their burden of physical and psychological harm (Nixon et al., 2007<sup>[37]</sup>).

Internationally, processes and procedures are generally lacking in cases where IPV and child maltreatment are co-occurring. Child protection services are often delivered directly by the government, whereas services for victims/survivors of violence are provided by an amalgam of different institutions – often non-governmental (see Chapter 6 for more on the role of non-governmental provision). This creates an administrative barrier to the successful integration of these two, multifaceted services.

Caseworkers and other related practitioners may also be isolated in professional silos which may fundamentally differ in terms of funding, guiding principles, paradigms and language. Child-welfare caseworkers may lack the necessary training to assess IPV both in relation to women and in relation to child maltreatment. For example, one study of foster care caseworkers in the United States found that many lacked any IPV-related training (Cheng and Lo, 2019<sup>[38]</sup>).

Co-location of industry-specific professionals can create the conditions for cross-training. The co-location of a family violence liaison within child welfare agencies has been shown to improve inter-organisational relationships which have historically borne tensions (Johnson et al., 2019<sup>[39]</sup>). At the same time, co-location may be complicated where service providers are already spread too thin. Co-locating adult services in the child welfare milieu also calls into question who the “primary client” is and how the service delivery approach should change to encompass both without compromising the well-being of either client group (Cheng and Lo, 2019<sup>[38]</sup>; Cleaver et al., 2019<sup>[40]</sup>; Langenderfer-Magruder et al., 2019<sup>[33]</sup>).

Despite these challenges, examples exist where child welfare services have been integrated with adult IPV services (see Box 4.3). The Child Protections Investigations (CPI) Project operating in the United States, which sees IPV as a component of child maltreatment rather than an addition to an existing case, successfully introduces a survivor-centred, trauma-informed approach that lays the organisational framework for inter-agency co-operation and collaboration, as well as client inclusion.

### Box 4.3. Joining up support services for children and adults in the wake of GBV

#### Child Protection Investigations Project, Florida, United States

In 2009, the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV), in partnership with the Florida Department of Children and Families and the Office of the Attorney General, launched the Child Protections Investigations Project (CPI) as a pilot in seven locations.

Their IPV-informed child welfare approach seeks to partner with protective parents to reduce child removals, increase client self-determination and hold offending parents accountable. It is their belief that witnessing IPV constitutes a major threat to child health and safety, and therefore prioritises responses to IPV rather than treating it as a separate, overlapping or burdensome issue.

The CPI Project works collaboratively with government, community-based organisations and other child welfare professionals to provide a co-ordinated response through the co-location of CPI units within certified domestic violence centres. By 2017, 42 certified domestic violence centres across all 67 Florida counties featured co-located CPI units which operate 24/7; some centres also provide linguistically and culturally specific services.

In 2016-17, the CPI Project cumulatively assisted over 14 000 women, children and men seeking emergency shelter; provided nearly 350 000 hours of counselling and advocacy; completed nearly 150 000 safety plans; and performed outreach and training for nearly 130 000 participants of various ages.

#### Operation Encompass, United Kingdom

Operation Encompass was set in in 2011 to help support children affected by violence at home by encouraging the sharing of information between the police and schools. Schools are important because many children first disclose their experience of violence to their teachers, who may be some of the only approachable adults for some children. Having knowledge of pupils' situations at home, teachers can offer special support for children, including accompanying them to class or the playground and have one-on-one conversations with the child as needed.

Information flows from the police to schools. Whenever police officers attend a case of domestic abuse where children live in the household, they report the incident to a trained Key Adult in the child's school. Currently, 43 police force areas across England and Wales have adopted this practice.

Teachers are trained to make the most of the information. Operation Encompass also provides resources for teachers to help them adopt a safeguarding role towards their pupils. Teachers can access a free helpline, including support from clinical psychologists, as well as online training, provided by Operation Encompass. Over 10 000 teaching staff have accessed the online training, according to Operation Encompass.

Practitioners have been supportive of the programme, but stress that the success of the programme will hinge on schools being able to support the children, including by having specialist staff to care for children.

Source: (Langenderfer-Magruder et al., 2019<sup>[33]</sup>; NCJFCJ, 2019<sup>[41]</sup>; Centre for Social Justice, 2022<sup>[42]</sup>).

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> While violence is a cause of homelessness, it is also a *consequence* of homelessness. Women fleeing GBV may be sleeping rough or accessing homelessness services that predominantly serve men and are not equipped to provide safety, security and privacy for women. These challenges are compounded when women suffer from mental health issues or substance abuse, as many facilities are not equipped to offer integrated services to address complex needs (FEANTSA, 2019<sup>[43]</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> While this estimate refers to *all* forms of violence, and not only IPV, it is worth noting the valuable data source – a novel survey of people experiencing homelessness in Germany. The Society for Innovative Social Research and Social Planning and Kantar Public interviewed a representative sample of homeless persons taken in three stages in 151 German cities and municipalities. These estimate the numbers of persons living rough in the streets or in makeshift shelters and of persons in concealed homelessness, staying with acquaintances or relatives. In addition, the study offers insights into the socio-demographic composition of both groups of homeless and on important aspects of their life situation – including experiences of violence (Brüchmann et al., 2022<sup>[6]</sup>).

<sup>3</sup> For more on perpetrator interventions, see Chapter 2.

<sup>4</sup> 2SLGBTQIA+ is an acronym for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual. The plus reflects the countless affirmative ways in which people choose to self-identify (Middlebury Institute of International Studies, 2023<sup>[47]</sup>).

<sup>5</sup> An overview of the evaluation criteria in order to receive grants is available at (CMHC, 2022<sup>[45]</sup>).

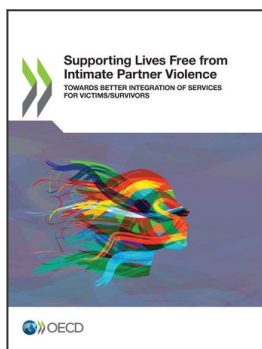
<sup>6</sup> For more details see <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/homelessness-sans-abri/index-eng.html>.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, (Gillum, 2019<sup>[24]</sup>; Slabbert, 2017<sup>[44]</sup>; Fahmy, Williamson and Pantazis, 2016<sup>[46]</sup>).

<sup>8</sup> In 2020, high interest and uptake saw the entire EUR 3 million budgetary allocation paid out. In 2021-22, allocation was increased to triple the number of applications accepted to the programmes.

<sup>9</sup> OECD countries who have ratified C-190 include Greece, Italy, Mexico, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

<sup>10</sup> The Memorandum calls for greater access to paid leave and encourages agencies to expand employee access to unpaid leave, including for those experiencing violence. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/02/02/memorandum-on-supporting-access-to-leave-for-federal-employees/>.



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