



Introduction to the SMEAK project

Researchers from the Law Institute of the Lithuanian Centre for Social Sciences (hereinafter - Institute) are finalizing the study “[Changes in Domestic Violent Behavior: Perspectives for Developing Work with Perpetrators at Institutional and Communal Levels](#)” (SMEAK), which is funded by the Research Council of Lithuania (hereinafter - RCL) under the competitive priority research programme “Welfare Society”. **The aim of the research** is to analyse the possibilities of changing domestic violence behavior through institutional and communal levels.

This research has consistently continued the need-driven research project “[Towards the effective cooperation between police and other stakeholders: model for the identification, support and prevention of domestic violence](#)” (POSIB), which was previously performed by the group of the Institute scientist (Research Leader Dr. I. Michailovič) and funded by the RCL. During it, after the assessment of mechanisms used to recognise the domestic violence and provide support, as well as the existing practices of multi-agency cooperation, the cooperation model of the institutions concerned was developed and offered. The research results were provided in the scientific study, which can be found [here](#).

The National Research Programme “Welfare society” was designed to fund integrated scientific studies of the preconditions for a welfare society and its development in Lithuania.

The team of project researchers are: Dr. Ilona Michailovič (Project Leader), Dr. Svetlana Justickaja, Dr. Rūta Vaičiūnienė and Dr. Vaidas Viršilas.

Project partner – Lithuanian Probation Service.

Duration of the project: 01/04/2020 – 31/12/2021.

Funding was allocated by the Research Council of Lithuania (LMTLT), Contract No. S-GEV-20-4.

Paige Hall Smith, MSPH, PhD, BCC (she/her) is currently a professor of Public Health Education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

She received her doctorate in Health Behavior and Health Education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1993 and her MSPH in Health Policy and Administration in 1986, also from UNC-CH.

From 2004 to 2006 dr. Paige Hall Smith was the Linda Arnold Carlisle Professor of Women's and Gender Studies.

From 2005 to 2020 served as director of UNCG's Center for Women's Health and Wellness.

From 2004 to 2019 was director of the Breastfeeding and Feminism International Conference.

Her research focuses on (1) gender violence prevention and response, and (2) breastfeeding and gender.

Prior gender violence research has focused on various areas including conceptualization and measurement (Women's Experience with Battering Scale), health care response to domestic violence, and prevalence and risk factors for victimization and perpetration of sexual violence.

She is currently collaborating with colleagues at UNCG and across the state on the NC LGBTQ Domestic Violence Response Initiative.

She is currently a certified coach, focusing on life transitions and wellness.



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Holly Sienkiewicz, PhD is Director of Research for Common Ground Health in Boston, MA.

Prior to joining Common Ground Health, Holly Sienkiewicz served in multiple roles at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

She earned her doctorate degree in public health education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

As director of the Center for New North Carolinians (CNNC), she provided strategic leadership and oversaw all program and research initiatives.

As a research scientist at the Center for Social, Community and Health Research and Evaluation, Sienkiewicz conducted mixed-methods research and evaluation studies in the areas of community health.

She is responsible for overseeing research across the organization and for setting the strategy for research priorities.



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Stacy Sechrist, PhD (she/her) is the Director for the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's (UNCG) Program to End Gender-Based Violence, as well as Co-Founder of UNCG's North Carolina Network for Safe Communities.

Dr. Sechrist earned her Ph.D. in Social Psychology UNCG.

Dr. Sechrist was the lead evaluator for the Offender Focused Domestic Violence Initiative in High Point, NC, USA in which the evidence-based model of focused deterrence was adapted to combat intimate partner domestic violence.

Dr. Sechrist also continues to work with the replication site in Lexington, NC, USA where the Offender Focused Intervention is in its seventh year of implementation.

The model uses existing levers available via the criminal justice system to hold offenders accountable for their intimate partner violence and relies on a tiered approach to message to offenders about the swift and certain consequences of continued intimate partner offending behavior while also offering resource assistance for those who wish to use it.



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Alessandra Pauncz, PhD is Executive Director of the European Network of the work with perpetrators (WWPEN) a young vibrant network organization of over 60 organizations from over 30 European countries.

Dr. Alessandra Pauncz has been working in the field of domestic violence for over 25 years covering many areas of expertise.

She has advocated and worked for victims of domestic violence and founded and ran the first Centre in Italy working with perpetrators (CAM – Centre for abusive men), and set up the National Italian Network of work with perpetrators (RELIVE).

Additionally, Dr. Alessandra Pauncz has published articles and books for the general public (Shifting power: CreateSpace, 2014; Da uomo a uomo: Erickson, 2015; Dire di no alla violenza: Franco Angeli, 2016).



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Prof. Amanda L Robinson, Professor of Criminology, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University.

Her research generally includes a strong policy focus, and she is particularly interested in advancing knowledge in relation to how the police and criminal justice system, health and community-based agencies can best respond to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Research shows that the majority of harm can be attributed to a small proportion of perpetrators who are engaged in prolific, serial, and/or high-risk offending.

A new method, the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT), was implemented in three police force areas of England and Wales.

This tool is designed to be used by frontline practitioners (police, criminal justice, and third sector) to make evidence-based decisions as to which perpetrators should be the priority targets for multi-agency monitoring and management.

The development of these new collaborative arrangements represents a step change in the way the most harmful domestic abuse perpetrators are identified and managed within local partnerships.



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Dr. Anna Więcek-Durańska is an assistant professor at the Institute of Psychology of the Maria Grzegorzewska University.

Dr. Więcek-Durańska has published scientific articles on violence, sexual crime, case law and the implementation of protective measures against perpetrators of sexual and dangerous crimes.

She serves as a forensic expert in the field of clinical psychology, works as a therapist, trainer of correctional and educational programs (for aggressive people and perpetrators of violence).

She participated in many national and foreign research projects, such as The State and Prospects of Guardianship in Poland, ICVS (International Crime Victims Survey), ISRD (International Self-Report Delinquency Study).

Her paper presents analyses and research results on the effectiveness of one of the key programs addressed to perpetrators of domestic violence who are serving their sentences in prison.

The results obtained indicate statistically significant differences in return to crime depending on whether the convicted person participated in the program for perpetrators of violence or not.

Among the convicts in the experimental group, i.e., those who had completed the program, the return-to-crime rate was 37 %, whereas in the control group it was 55 % - that is, it was significantly higher among those who had not completed the program.



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Ilona Michailovič – PhD, Lawyer, Assoc. prof. of the Faculties of Law and Communication of Vilnius University, Member of the European Society of Criminology and Lithuanian Association of Criminologists.

With more than 20 years of research in criminal justice, she focuses on domestic violence, stalking, restorative justice and mediation, discrimination and human rights, and other topics in victimology.

By herself or together with her colleagues, I. Michailovič has prepared more than 60 publications in Lithuanian, English and Polish, published in high ranking international scientific journals. For the last 10 years, the researcher has been constantly initiating and leading new research projects funded by the Research Council of Lithuania, as well as being an expert in the European Union “Twinning” Programme projects, and presenting her research findings at national and international scientific conferences.

I. Michailovič is an active member of various working groups, and is currently a member of the Prosecutors’ Attestation Commission appointed on the proposal of the President of the Republic of Lithuania



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***Svetlana Justickaja** – PhD, Lawyer, Lecturer at the Public Security Academy Department of Police Activities of the Mykolas Romeris University, Chief Specialist of the Resocialization Division of the Department of Prisons.*

With more than 20 years of research experience, S. Justickaja has led and participated with other colleagues in crime, crime prevention and criminal justice researches.

Their results have been published in English and Lithuanian in monographs, studies, scientific articles, as well as presented at various international and national conferences. S. Justickaja also has practical work experience and cooperation with criminal justice institutions - she has provided domestic violence prevention training to police and municipal employees.



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Vaidas Viršilas - Doctor of Science, an educator, working intensively with domestic violence perpetrators at the Klaipėda Region Branch of the Lithuanian Probation Service for more than 16 years. Having accumulated more than 9 years of experience in applying the behavior change programs “One-to-One”, “Behavior-Conversation-Change” and “Domestic Violence Intervention Program”, Vaidas was one of the first in Lithuania to start working with behavior change program based on Duluth model.

He completed internships in Germany, Sweden and Norway, prepared joint monographs and scientific articles in English and Lithuanian, and implemented several scientific and lifelong learning projects.

As a practitioner, researcher and educator, V. Viršilas not only enriches each of these areas, but also actively shares his insights by conducting trainings for behavior change programs in various Lithuanian cities.



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Rūta Vaičiūnienė – PhD, sociologist, Head of the Criminological Research Department of the Law Institute of Lithuanian Centre for Social Science, Senior Research Fellow.

Her research interests range from adaptation to imprisonment to offenders' behavior correction and prisoners' re-socialization, as well as broader issues of criminal policy and penal system analysis.

She is also interested in masculinity, gender studies and domestic violence.

R. Vaičiūnienė and her colleagues have not only completed ten international and national research projects in the last decade, but they have also successfully published the results of their research in monographs, scientific studies, and the best European criminology journals.

She is an active member of the Working Group on Prison Life and the Effects of Imprisonment of the European Society of Criminology.



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