

# National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, 2010-2014

## Final Review and Proposals for New Strategy

### Introduction

- ✓ Please complete the questions below which relate to your area of work or experience.
- ✓ Be specific in your answers referring to particular actions under the National Strategy and to data, evaluations and reviews where possible.
- ✓ A key section of the questionnaire asks you to say what you can do under the next strategy. Actions need to be feasible, do-able and ambitious. Any wish lists under this heading should be labelled as such.
- ✓ The questions are purposefully open-ended. Please be as specific and as comprehensive as possible in your answers.
- ✓ Please remember specific developments or actions in relation to vulnerable or high risk groups, including Travellers, people with a disability, older people, migrants, young people, pregnant women and those involved with substance abuse.
- ✓ Do not expect to fill in each and every subheading; the subheadings are meant to prompt your memory.
- ✓ It is better to spend time developing the comment than agonising over which subheading it should go under.
- ✓ Do not get lost with all the subheadings; there are basically five questions:
  - 1. What was good about the strategy?**
  - 2. What was not good?**
  - 3. Have you any evidence either way?**
  - 4. What do you want to do in the next strategy?**
  - 5. What should others do?**
- ✓ Your submission will be published on the Cosc website with the final review.

## Name of your organisation: Cosc

### Positive developments ....

**As a result of actions under the current Strategy what, if any, positive developments have occurred in relation to domestic, sexual or gender-based violence under the following headings:**

- 1.1 Victims' experience of state services
  - Garda strategies on domestic violence and on sexual violence, including sexual abuse of children
  - The development of Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) and the implementation of national standards of practice.
  - The Dublin Family Law Courts at Dolphin House resident support services for victims of domestic violence
  - Improved awareness among gardaí, Courts Service staff, Probation Officers and health professionals of the issues and sensitivities for victims of domestic violence
  - Launch of a revised *Victims Charter* in 2010
  - Probation Service Domestic Violence Practice guidelines
  - Guidelines on making a victim impact statement in court
  - Adoption of the European protection order (civil)
  - Development of material for the Garda intranet, the availability on the Garda website of leaflets in a number of languages on crime prevention, including a leaflet on domestic violence, and the inclusion of contact details of support services on the reverse of the garda business card
  
- 1.2 Victims' experience of voluntary sector services
  - Cosc's funding of ongoing national and local awareness raising of voluntary sector services
  - More consistent and sophisticated messaging
  - Awareness training pack made available to services
  
- 1.3 Accountability of perpetrators
  - Improvements in domestic violence perpetrator programmes, which are funded by Cosc
  - Acknowledgement of Irish domestic violence perpetrator programmes at EU level
  - Extension of safety orders to cover parents of a child in common and civil partners as well as a change to the eligibility period in legislation
  - Increase in the number of domestic violence orders being sought and being granted
  - New sexual violence perpetrator programmes

- Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management (SORAM) office established
- Stable and Acute (2007) and Risk Matrix (2000) established as standard tools on the island of Ireland and in Scotland for use by the police and probation services in relation to sex offenders
- Legislative proposal published to decouple compensation awarded by a criminal court from a perpetrator to an offender and consideration by the judge of a prison sentence

#### 1.4 Awareness and attitudes

- Awareness of services – a lot of work to publicise national helplines and local services funded by Cosc
- Cosc grant scheme provided funding annually to national and local groups to raise awareness and since 2012 a separate funding stream was made available to raise awareness among people with disabilities
- Beginning to engage men in awareness raising – The Other Half, Safe Ireland's Man Up campaign and the White Ribbon campaign
- High quality work on minorities e.g. Travellers and Roma
- Beginning of more coherent focus on national messaging / campaigns with a first set of national campaigns selected for funding in early 2014
- Engagement with third level students working with the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) on awareness raising and research
- Working with the Irish Countrywomen's Association and Muintir na Tíre to raise awareness
- Quarterly Cosc ezine
- Raising awareness among younger population of dating issues with Women's Aid 2n2u campaigns
- Development of awareness raising apps by voluntary sector services
- Highlighting of the issue of domestic violence and later of sexual violence with story lines on the popular RTE soap *Fair City* and the drama series *Love/Hate*
- The development of guiding principles in relation to awareness raising work.
- The development of a communications paper on approaches to promoting and developing understanding of the issues among the general population and specific groups
- Cosc's research into attitudes to domestic violence in 2009 provided base-line data was a useful input into Cosc's own media campaign entitled *Your Silence Feeds the Violence*
- Cohosting of conference by the Bar of Ireland and the Law Society on domestic and sexual violence
- The National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence was itself a useful awareness raising tool.
- Improved information on family law issues generally on the Courts Service website
- Modification of the *in camera* rule to allow media reporting of family law cases, including domestic violence proceedings, first on a pilot basis and then by legislation

- Revision by the Irish Conference of General Practitioners of *Domestic Violence: A Guide for General Practice*
- Victims of sexual violence coming forward to tell their stories and linking in with services to create awareness

#### 1.5 Prevention

- Cosc's research which explored awareness raising of domestic and sexual violence in post-primary schools in Ireland, provided a better understanding of how the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme was working
- Pending the development of second level materials Cosc funded some sexual violence programmes to visit and speak at some schools
- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) junior cycle material developed and being implemented in schools
- Providing relevant third level colleges with course material on domestic violence developed as part of a transnational project by Mary Allen

#### 1.6 Policy making or service planning

- Access to policy making and service planning for the voluntary sector through the National Steering Committees on Violence Against Women and Violence Against Men
- The National Strategy attempted to bring a whole-of-Government perspective to bear on policy making and service planning
- Relationships and trust built and results achieved based on these e.g. the Dublin Family Law Courts at Dolphin House now have resident voluntary sector support services for victims of domestic violence.
- Domestic violence legislation extended the scope of protection orders in 2011.
- Commitment in the Programme for Government to develop reformed and consolidated domestic violence legislation
- Sexual violence legislation general scheme published.
- Review of voluntary sector domestic and sexual violence services
- The HSE national policy and practice guide on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence
- The establishment of the Child and Family Agency with a national funding and coordinating remit for domestic and sexual violence victim services

#### 1.7 Research or data collection

- Inclusion of sexual violence victim data from most support services in the Rape Crisis Network Ireland (RCNI) database
- Domestic violence perpetrator programmes have made strides in relation to data gathering in partnership with Cosc with a view to better demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes, and to find where improvement is necessary

- An Garda Síochána have worked through their sexual violence offence data with the Central Statistics Office and a more robust time series is now available and published regularly
  - An Garda Síochána have commenced a programme of work with the Central Statistics Office in relation to the Garda Síochána domestic violence data
  - Development of a data template with the HSE, Safe Ireland and RCNI for the gathering of data from support services, which was taken over by the Child and Family Agency
- 1.8 Structures or processes to support the strategy (consultation, meetings, six monthly review reports etc.)
- See 1.6
  - Programmes dealing with male domestic violence perpetrators are now represented on the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women
  - Strategy Oversight Group shows ongoing commitment at senior levels of the administrative system to the strategy
  - Publication on the Cosc website of six-monthly progress reports on the National Strategy and of the midterm review of the strategy.
- 1.9 **Outside the Strategy** what, if any, have been the positive developments in relation to domestic, sexual or gender-based violence, generally or under any of the categories above, in the period 2010-2014?
- Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence adopted in April 2011 (Istanbul Convention) and will come into force on 1 August, 2014
  - Widespread support for progress in ending domestic, sexual and gender-based violence in international organisations including the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union
  - Work started with a view to Irish ratification of the Istanbul Convention
  - Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS) has publicised its protocol for granting independent immigration status to non-nationals subject to domestic violence and is processing cases under it.
  - The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) has published guidance on dealing with sexual and domestic violence and harassment in its direct provision accommodation
  - The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre has agreed a protocol on the release of counselling notes in sexual violence cases with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
  - There is a commitment to address the issue of counselling notes in sexual violence cases in sexual violence legislation
  - European Commission exchange of good practice seminar on awareness raising on violence against women and the subsequent Progress funding stream
  - Daphne funding by the European Commission

- The EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) has published the results of an EU wide survey on the incidence of violence against women across all 28 EU member states in March 2014.
- The European Institute for Gender Equality has begun to undertake data work on gender based violence at EU level.
- The EU victims directive was adopted in October, 2012 and Ireland opted in to its negotiation and its terms.
- Work by the Courts Service to improve facilities for victims in court buildings
- The development of a more professional court accompaniment service funded by the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime for victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- Oireachtas Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality invited submissions, had hearings and are preparing a report on domestic violence; there have also been Oireachtas debates and parliamentary questions on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence
- International Conference on Survivors of Rape 2012 hosted by RCNI in Ireland
- Recognition in *Rape and Justice in Ireland* (2009) and speeches by the DPP on the role of alcohol in sexual violence offences
- Publication by the Law Reform Commission of an uncertified restatement of domestic violence legislation

## Undesirable developments ....

**As a result of actions or inaction under the current Strategy what, if any, undesirable developments have occurred in relation to domestic, sexual or gender-based violence under the following headings:**

### 2.1 Victims' experience of state services

- There appears to be a lack of consistency from the judiciary in relation to domestic violence and in relation to sexual violence.
- There appears to be a lack of consistency in relation to housing for victims of domestic violence by local authorities.
- The lack of resources for training in the state sector has probably had a negative impact on services for victims
- Services for victims with particular needs are under-developed.
- Under-reporting of domestic and sexual violence to An Garda Síochána continues to be an issue in spite of an increase in reported sexual violence cases
- Continuing unnecessary attrition in domestic and sexual violence cases
- Continuing lack of understanding of issues among some professionals representing victims.

### 2.2 Victims' experience of voluntary sector services

- Cutbacks in funding have had an impact, but there is no collated evidence of the experience of victims themselves who receive services. See 2.9
- Perceived lack of services in specific geographic areas
- There are no refuge spaces for male victims of domestic violence
- There are sixty separate voluntary sector organisations supporting victims of domestic and sexual violence
- Continuing traumatic experiences reported by victims and victim-advocate groups in the prosecution of sexual violence offences.

### **2.3** Accountability of perpetrators

- There is no research backed international “gold standard” domestic violence perpetrator programme protocol which has been shown to work.
- Failure to implement recommendations of the Cosc-led Justice Committee report on attrition (February, 2011)

### **2.4** Awareness and attitudes

- There needs to be a radical step beyond continuous advertising of existing services for victims of domestic and sexual violence, to begin to address societal attitudes which condone or tolerate domestic or sexual violence, and to begin to engage men much more in preventive actions.
- There is a need to build significantly on the small inroads being made on social media and on the web generally in relation to appropriate messaging in relation to domestic and sexual violence
- A more national approach to getting messages across with limited resources is needed
- The Public Awareness sub-Committee of the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women continued to produce recommendations, which were passed by the Steering Committee and forwarded to relevant actors. However, after the initial substantial work of the committee, there was a definite slowing down in its productivity.

### **2.5** Prevention

- More strategic thinking on how to prevent domestic and sexual violence needs to be undertaken with a broad range of organisations.
- Slow roll-out of SPHE programmes in the second level education system

### **2.6** Policy making or service planning

- The review of voluntary sector domestic and sexual violence services and ongoing funding decisions in relation to RCNI and Safe Ireland and the fall out from this, prior to the establishment of the Child and Family Agency

- The continuing uncertainty in relation to funding for RCNI and Safe Ireland.
- In spite of the best efforts of Cosc there is a tendency to see the National Strategy as the Cosc strategy, which manifests as a reduced commitment to pursuing the actions in the strategy by some.
- From a national perspective there are deep inter-organisational tensions within the voluntary sector which make cooperative working more difficult.

## 2.7 Research or data collection

- State organisations have been slow to commit to improving data collection
- Cosc lost a researcher who was not replaced
- A perception that in straitened economic times research is not a priority use of resources
- Data can be used to support predetermined positions rather than rigorously interrogated to see what it shows
- The identification and dissemination of best practice models in the voluntary sector has been disappointing. The failure to agree even the starting point of further work in this area was not helpful.

## 2.8 Structures or processes to support the strategy (consultation, meetings, six monthly review reports etc.)

- The voluntary sector mostly expressed themselves to be unhappy with the move from four to two meetings a year of the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women; this was unavoidable because of resource pressures on the state side and on the voluntary sector.
- It was necessary to set up an unsustainable parallel structure to deal with male victims of domestic violence because of concern in the violence against women voluntary sector about including a group supporting male victims of domestic violence on the steering committee.
- The Legal Issues sub-Committee of the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women continued to produce recommendations which were passed by the Steering Committee and forwarded to relevant government departments. However, the timing and scope of the recommendations did not always mesh well with the timing and scope of policy and legislative initiatives which were underway. This lessened significantly the chances of the proposals being adopted and implemented.
- At the spring 2014 meeting of the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women there was a palpable sense of exhaustion from the voluntary sector, which may have been building for some time.
- The effective dissolution of the Regional Advisory Committee structures has removed a weak support mechanism, but without any replacement to connect the work of the national strategy with work at local or even regional level.

- 2.9 Outside the Strategy** what undesirable developments, if any, have occurred in relation to domestic, sexual or gender-based violence, generally or under any of the categories above, in the period 2010-2014?
- State funding cutbacks on voluntary sector services to victims must have had an impact, but the story is not necessarily straightforward and universal. Income and expenditure analysis of annual accounts for 2012 did not show a universal decline in resources available to the voluntary sector.
  - The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions decision to actively seek counselling notes in sexual violence cases caused uncertainty and distress for victims, although aimed at preventing the collapse of cases
  - There was a negative perception of seemingly lenient sentencing in relation to some high profile sexual violence cases. However, the DPP can appeal a sentence in the Circuit Court and the Central Criminal Court on grounds of undue leniency.
  - With cutbacks in staffing and resources state employees are much busier and it is harder to get people to engage consistently and energetically with issues they perceive to be outside their core functions
  - Reduced resources meant that training programmes could not be delivered in state agencies
  - With reduced staffing, especially at senior level in Cosc there are less resources to pursue issues; the Executive Director and Deputy Director of Cosc have been replaced by a Director who has other responsibilities in addition to Cosc
  - The Eurostat sexual violence and domestic violence prevalence survey was blocked at European level

## The Evidence .....

- 3.1 What actions did you take to evaluate or review the impact of any of the actions under the National Strategy? Please forward copies of any relevant publications or documents.

### **Cosc Research Work Undertaken**

#### **PUBLISHED REPORTS**

- Attitudes to Domestic Abuse in Ireland: Report of a survey on perceptions and beliefs of domestic abuse among the general population of Ireland (2008)
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Services in Ireland: Service Provision and Co-ordination (2011)
- Awareness Raising of Domestic and Sexual Violence: A Survey of Post-Primary Schools in Ireland (2012)

## UNPUBLISHED REPORTS

- Mapping of and strategy development for domestic violence intervention programmes in Ireland who work with men who use violence against their intimate partners – Thangam Debonnaire (2008)
- The Operation of the Court System in Domestic Violence Cases: A literature Review - Dr Ursula Kilkelly (2009)
- An examination of data collection systems and procedures in relation to domestic and sexual violence/abuse in Ireland – Maureen Lyons (2010)

## UNPUBLISHED PAPERS

- Perpetrator Programme Paper (2010)
- Models of Best Practice Paper (2011)

3.2 Are you aware of evaluations or reviews by others of the impact of any actions under the Strategy? Please forward copies of any relevant publications or documents, or contact details of those who undertook the evaluation.

- Rape and Justice in Ireland – RCNI / Conor Hanly et al. (2009)
- Safety and Change: A National Study of Support Needs and Outcomes for Women Accessing Refuge Provision in Ireland – SAFE Ireland (2009)
- What does the research and data tell us about male victims of rape in an Irish context? – RCNI (2010)
- Lifelines to Safety: A National Study of Support Needs and Outcomes for Women Accessing Domestic Violence Services in Ireland – SAFE Ireland (2011)
- Hearing child survivors of sexual violence: Towards a national response – RCNI (2013)
- Older Women and Sexual Violence: Recognising and Supporting Survivors – RCNI (2013)
- Young People, Alcohol and Sex: What's Consent Got To Do With It? – RCNI (2014)
- RCNI fact sheets on alcohol
- Report on Sexual Violence against People with Disabilities - RCNI (2012)
- "Just Another Day": Annual One Day Census Reports – SAFE Ireland (Annually)
- Annual Reports from SATUs;
- Annual Reports from the RCNI
- Annual Reports from The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre
- Annual Reports from Women's Aid, Dublin
- The Needs and Concerns of Victims of Crime in Ireland, Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime, Shane Kilcommins et al.

## What can be done better in the future?

### By you ....

What specific actions is your organisation proposing to undertake in the context of a new national strategy on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, in the period 2015-2019, under any of the following categories.

ONS = Old (current) National Strategy activity number

IST = section of Istanbul Convention

4.1 State services for victims

4.2 Voluntary sector services for victims

4.3 Accountability of perpetrators

- Continue work to improve domestic violence perpetrator programmes, including follow up of participants after programme completion to monitor effectiveness, and risk assessment of perpetrators to target interventions at the high risk areas for each perpetrator (ONS 16, IST 16.1 and 16.3)
- Endeavour to extend the geographic coverage of perpetrator programmes (ONS 16, IST 16.1 and 16.3)
- Keep the focus on sexual violence perpetrator programmes (IST 16.2)
- Highlight existing voluntary sector approaches to sexual violence perpetrators who are not involved with the criminal justice system (ONS 15.3 and 16.2))
- Support development of consolidated and extended domestic violence legislation

4.4 Awareness and attitudes

- More coherent national campaigns involving local participation, which engage with the media and possibly use celebrity endorsement (ONS 1.1 and IST 13.1)
- Move along the continuum from publicising support services to raising community awareness to challenging myths to encouraging reporting (IST 27 and IST 28)
- Share existing awareness raising materials through web-based library of camera ready copy and text (IST 13.1)
- Allow at least two years to work with a particular minority or vulnerable group (IST12.3)
- Start with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) communities (IST12.3)

- A group for the second half of the strategy might be rural dwellers, through the Irish Countrywomen's Association, Muintir na Tíre, the Irish Farmers' Association and the GAA (IST12.3)
  - Source and disseminate third level curricula on sexual violence (ONS 2.3)
  - Possibly update and disseminate third level curricula on domestic violence (ONS 2.3)
- 4.5 Prevention
- Prepare and disseminate guidance for personal safety (ONS 1.2 and IST 13.2)
  - Work with RCNI and others on messaging about alcohol (IST 13.2)
- 4.6 Policy making or service planning
- Encourage consultation with representative groups in the development of policy and in service planning (ONS 20.2)
- 4.7 Research or data collection
- Continue work of data committee with criminal justice agencies (ONS 19 and IST 10.1 and 11.1a)
  - Continue work on domestic violence perpetrator programmes (ONS 16.1)
  - Coordinate research (ONS 21 and IST11.1b)
- 4.8 Structures or processes to support the strategy (consultation, meetings, six monthly review reports etc.)
- Monitor progress in implementation of the strategy (ONS 22)
  - One national steering committee for the strategy
  - *Ad hoc* task sub-groups
  - Strategy Oversight Committee
  - Mid-term stock-taking to adjust timescales on activities, discontinue activities and add new activities (ONS 23)
  - Review of strategy in its final year (ONS 23)
  - Length of strategy to be decided; five, six or seven years
  - Should the steering committee include a representative from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and/or a representative of the LGBT community?
5. What specific actions is your organisation proposing to undertake for victims generally which will also apply to victims of domestic, sexual or gender-based violence, in the period 2015-2019, under any of the above categories?
- Supporting transposition and implementation of the victims directive by 16 November, 2015

- Work towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention (see separate items with IST number in sections 4 and 6)
- Continue to facilitate state organisations to work together to address specific problems as they are identified, by drawing together relevant organisations.

## By others ....

What other specific actions should be undertaken in the context of a new national strategy on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, 2015-2019, under any of the following categories?

Who should undertake these actions?

Please also state, with your reasons, if you believe that there should be no further action by anyone under any heading.

### 6.1 State services for victims

- Sexual offences legislation (ONS 17)
- Domestic violence legislation (ONS 18)
- Implement European Protection Order (Civil)
- Victims of crime legislation (EU Victims Directive and IST 56 in particular)
- Vetting legislation (ONS 13)
- Changes in criminal injuries compensation scheme (IST 30.2 and 30.3)
- Independent immigration status for non-national with dependant status on perpetrator of domestic violence (IST 59)
- Encourage disclosure in health, justice, education and housing sectors (ONS 5)
- Clear information to victims at all stages of the process
- Clear handover protocols between services to ensure a seamless transfer of the victim from one service to the next
- Service provision for identified groups with special needs (ONS 6.4, IST 18.2 and IST 22)
- Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) to gather forensic evidence where people are not reporting the crime, according to national agreed protocols (IST 18.2, IST 20.2 and IST 22)
- Improve counselling provision (ONS 9, IST 18.2, IST 20.1 and IST 22)
- Housing provision for some victims of domestic violence to ensure that refuges remain as very short-term, emergency accommodation only (ONS 10 and IST 22)
- Training for staff providing services to victims (ONS 2.2 and IST15)
- State services to work together and share information (IST 18.2, IST 20.1 and IST 22)

### 6.2 Voluntary sector services for victims

- Increased voluntary sector cooperation (IST 18.2)

- In particular cooperation and coordination to provide national helplines 24/7 on all forms of gender based violence (IST 24, IST 18.2, IST 20.1, IST 22)
- Support consistent service in the most efficient way (ONS 6.5, IST 18.2, IST 20.1 and IST 22)
- Provide opportunities for voluntary sector organisations to work in court buildings (ONS 11, IST 18.3, fifth indent)
- Working with child victims of domestic violence (ONS 6.7, 6.8, 6.9 and 6.10, IST 22.2 and IST 26)
- Refuge provision (IST 23)
- Provide rape crisis centres (IST 25)

### 6.3 Accountability of perpetrators

- Perpetrator to be removed from home rather than victim (see legislation)
- Continue to work to improve domestic violence perpetrator programmes (see 4.3 above ONS 16, IST 16.1 and 16.3)
- Management of high-risk domestic violence perpetrators (ONS 14.4, IST 16.1 and 16.3)
- Integrate custodial and community intervention programmes for sexual violence perpetrators (ONS 15.2, IST 16.2 and 16.3)
- Sexual violence perpetrator programmes in the community outside the criminal justice system ((ONS 15.3, IST 16.2 and 16.3)
- Look again at actions to reduce unnecessary attrition in sexual violence and domestic violence cases (ONS 12)

### 6.4 Awareness and attitudes

- Work with the LGBT communities (IST 12.1 and IST 12.3)
- Workplace awareness and attitude changes with trade unions and employers (IST17.1)
- Training school professionals (ONS 2.4, IST 12.1, IST 14.1 and IST 17.2)
- Second level education SPHE module for senior cycle and check SPHE compulsory for junior cycle (ONS 3.1, IST 12.1, IST 14.1 and IST 17.2)
- SPHE module for Youthreach (ONS 3.2, IST 12.1, IST 14.1 and IST 17.2)
- Work with third level students including on alcohol (ONS 3.3, IST 12.1 and IST 14.1)
- Information on state services (ONS 4.1 and IST 19)
- Information on voluntary sector services (ONS 4.2 and IST 19)

### 6.5 Prevention

- LGBT communities (ONS 1.2 and IST 12.3)
- Work with men and boys to prevent violence against women (IST 12.4)

- 6.6 Policy making or service planning
- Voluntary sector organisations in conjunction with the Child and Family Agency make commitments to deliver consistent services (ONS 6.5)
  - Consultation with representative groups in the development of policy and in service planning (ONS 20.2)
  - State sector to consult and coordinate in developing relevant policies
- 6.7 Research or data collection
- RCNI continue to gather data in agreement with Child and Family Agency
  - Safe Ireland to extend its data gathering in agreement with Child and Family Agency
  - Criminal justice system continue to improve its data gathering, in particular aggregating data on domestic and sexual violence by gender, age and relationship of victim and perpetrator (ONS 19)
  - Voluntary sector to monitor victim take up, throughput and service outcomes and effectiveness
  - Data sets of the state and voluntary sectors to be shared and made available for research by academics and others
  - Central Statistics Office to undertake regular population based prevalence studies (IST 11.2)
  - Do relevant research to support the national strategy (ONS 21 and IST 11.1b)
- 6.8 Structures or processes to support the strategy (consultation, meetings, six monthly review reports etc.)
- Regional structures (ONS 8.3)
  - The Child and Family Agency, Cosc, the Victims of Crime Office and the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime to hold an annual consultative forum with all victims groups including those in the sexual and domestic violence sectors
- 7.1 What specific actions should be undertaken for victims generally which will also apply to victims of domestic, sexual or gender-based violence, in the period 2015-19, under any of the above categories?
- Supporting transposition and implementation of the victims directive by 16 November, 2015
  - Work towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention (see separate items with IST number in this section)

7.2 Who should undertake the actions mentioned above?

The agencies which should undertake the actions at sections 6 and 7 will be obvious in many cases from the text above and also from those who were responsible for the same actions in the national strategy 2010-2014. In some cases there are overarching aims which will involve a number of agencies. Those responsible will be named more precisely in developing a new strategy.

## **And finally ....**

8. Please make additional comments, if any, here.

The above material was completed without sight of the questionnaires of any other organisation and represents the initial views of Cosc, which it is including for consideration by the University of Limerick team, along with all other submissions. Cosc will reconsider its initial views in the light of that review and in light of its own reading of the submissions from other organisations, both state and voluntary.