



# 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Ageing

## Policy Brief on Abuse of Older Persons

**Viviane Brunne**  
**UNECE Population Unit**





# Policy Framework

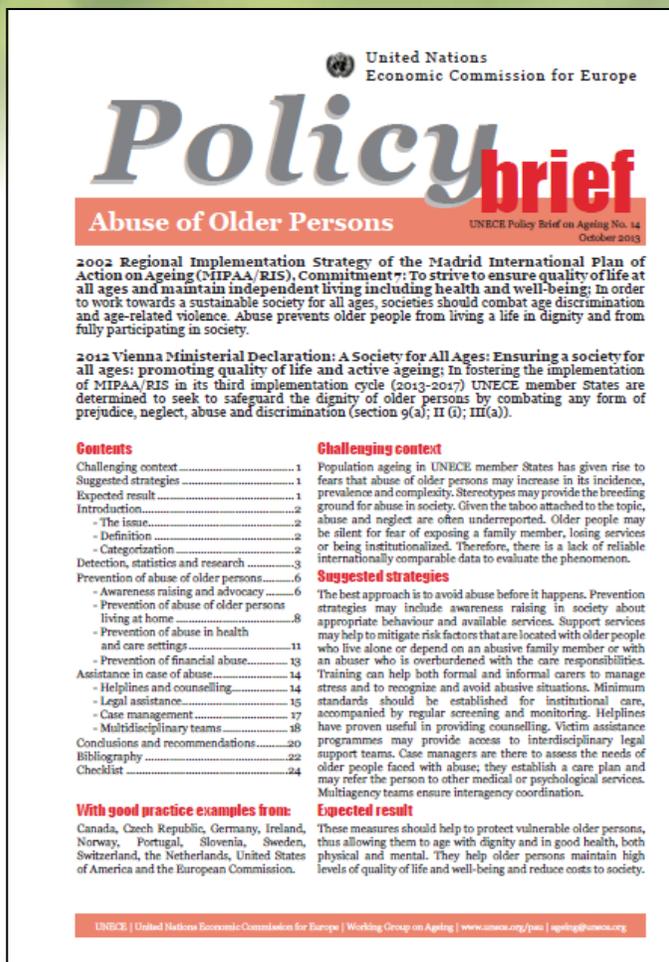
## **2002 Regional Implementation Strategy of MIPAA (RIS):**

Commitment 7 “To strive to ensure quality of life at all ages and maintain independent living including health and well-being”

**2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration:** Safeguard the dignity of older persons in combatting any form of prejudice, neglect, abuse and discrimination (9(a), II (i), III (a))



# Structure



## Introduction

- The issue
- Definition
- Categorization

## Detection, statistics and research

## Prevention of abuse of older persons

- Awareness raising and advocacy
- Prevention of abuse for older persons living at home
- Prevention of abuse in health and care settings
- Prevention of financial abuse

## Assistance in case of abuse

- Helplines and counselling
- Legal assistance
- Case management
- Multidisciplinary teams

## Conclusions and recommendations





# Challenges – strategies - results

## Challenging context:

ageing population increases – more abuse?  
Underreporting - taboo



## Strategies:

Prevention - Intervention



## Results:

Protection of vulnerable older persons, ageing in dignity and good health, quality of life and well-being





# Definition

*“Elder abuse is a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person” (WHO 2008)*

**Physical abuse**

**Financial/material abuse**

**Psychological abuse**

**Sexual abuse**

**Neglect**

**Self-neglect**





# Statistics

## France

Estimation based on contacts with national elder abuse helpline: 5% of 65+ victims of abuse, and 15% for 75+

## Austria

Survey with 247 experts from counselling and advisory centres/facilities, 26 % «frequently» or «very frequently» faced with problem of violence in the private sphere, 12% in nursing homes/institutions.

## Ireland

The Elder Abuse Services infrastructure produces national statistics: in 2011, around 22% of 65+ faced abuse or violence





# Good practice



## Canada: NICE Project Defining and Measuring Elder Abuse and Neglect

- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada funded 2 years of research to develop instruments for measuring the five main types of mistreatment, risk factors and perpetrator classifications
- 2nd part of the project: implementation of the National Survey on the Mistreatment of Older Canadians - data on prevalence, risk factors and causes of mistreatment in older Canadians





# Prevention

- **Awareness raising:** intergenerational programmes, campaigns against ageism
- **Mitigating risk factors in older persons:** volunteer visits to isolated persons, neighbourhood networks, access to home-based care
- **Mitigating risk factors in care givers:** train in recognizing & preventing abuse, stress management, code of conduct, support to families in screening employees
- **Health care settings:** in-house committees with patient representatives, client satisfaction surveys, licensing and monitoring of quality standards in care institutions
- **Financial abuse:** build financial literacy, enlist banks, banking services in senior centres





# Good practice



**Czech Republic:** Awareness campaign on violence against older people

**Slovenia:** Elderly for Elderly

**European Commission:** Project EuROPEAN (reference framework for the prevention of elder abuse across Europe, with good practice data base)

**Switzerland:** Network of Aggression Management in Health and Social Services

**Sweden:** Government's initiative to achieve safe environments for older persons

**USA:** Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans





# Assistance in case of abuse

- **Helplines and counselling** – neutral, confidential advice, referrals
- **Legal assistance** – victim assistance programmes, interdisciplinary legal support teams, one stop contact points, elder courts
- **Case management** – needs assessment, establish care plan, referrals, addressing the needs of perpetrators (treatment, education or confinement)
- **Multidisciplinary teams** – interagency coordination (health/social service providers, law enforcement officers, physicians, money managers, etc.)





# Good practice



**Portugal:** National Social Emergency Line – older people one focus group, staffed with social workers and psychologists, linked with local intervention teams

**Germany:** Action programme 'Living in security in old age' (SiliA); prevention and intervention in property offences, homicide, violence in relationships, maltreatment/neglect of older people in home care

**Ireland:** Senior Case Workers - assessment, protection measures, ensuring safety of person, restoring their rights, creating support systems, minimize their risks while respecting wishes





# Conclusions

- **Public health perspective**, with an emphasis on prevention while also offering remedial interventions
- Include **perspectives of older adults and victims of abuse** in policy development
- Use a **client-centred approach** - be sensitive to language, culture, ethnicity, religion
- Better **cross-national data collection**
- More systematic **evaluation of interventions** and their effectiveness



### Checklist: Abuse of Older Persons

Main areas	Areas of implementation	Key elements
Research	Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys, data about service users</li> </ul>
	Policy-research, evaluation of interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research infrastructure for translating evidence base into policies</li> <li>Evaluation of effectiveness of programmes</li> <li>Research that includes older persons and abusers</li> </ul>
Prevention	Awareness rising and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinating agency for abuse prevention</li> <li>Intergenerational programmes</li> <li>Public information campaigns</li> <li>Information to different target groups</li> </ul>
	For older persons at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counselling to seniors and families</li> <li>Alcohol and substance abuse programmes</li> <li>Active ageing policies</li> <li>Training for informal carers</li> <li>Respite care services</li> <li>Help to families in selecting qualified home carers</li> <li>Home-based care, mobile health services</li> <li>Social day-care programmes</li> <li>Assisted living arrangements</li> <li>Easily accessible information about available services</li> <li>Facilitating social networks, seniors visiting and phone call systems</li> <li>Support groups, self-help groups</li> </ul>
	For health care settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National body to monitor quality of health care institutions</li> <li>Charters/protocols for minimum standards in nursing homes</li> <li>Ombudsperson, complaints mechanisms</li> <li>Integrating elder abuse issue into the curricula of health and care staff</li> <li>In-house committees with patient representatives</li> </ul>
	Financial abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial literacy training, guidance on financial management</li> <li>Enlist banks</li> <li>Banking services in senior centres</li> </ul>
Assistance in case of abuse	Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helplines</li> </ul>
	Legal assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal framework</li> <li>Interdisciplinary legal support teams specialized in older person's abuse</li> <li>Professional specialization on legal aspects of abuse</li> <li>Victim assistance programmes</li> <li>Age-friendly court conditions, trained court staff</li> </ul>
	Case management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case managers</li> <li>Guardians</li> <li>Volunteers</li> </ul>
	Multidisciplinary teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interagency coordination</li> <li>Interagency protocols, memoranda of understanding or contracts</li> </ul>

# Checklist





# Thank you!



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