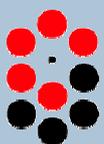


Shelters in Denmark For Battered Women

Inger Koch-Nielsen & Lucia Caceres

***Welfare systems and policies
Working Paper 02:2005***



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The Danish National Institute of Social Research

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Shelters-net

Shelters in Denmark For Battered Women

by

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The Danish National Institute of Social Research, 2004

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Introduction

The aim of this report has been to establish a knowledge base around the topic of sheltering services to women experiencing domestic violence (crises centres) in Denmark. The report has been produced as part of an European project under the EU Daphne programme, and is structured according to the guidelines for the partners in the project.

The report has to a large degree been carried out as a desk study, collating and reporting on literature and a few reports on statistics in this field. Apart from that interviews have been carried out with two representatives from the National Organisation for Crises Centres (LOKK), two experts within the field and a postal questionnaire study among the centres, carried out in the first months of 2004. We want to thank the centres for their willingness to answer our questions. We also want to thank senior researcher Else Christensen for her comments to the report. The material has been collated and the report written by bach.scient.soc.Lucia Caceres in close cooperation with senior researcher Inger Koch-Nielsen, The Danish National Institute of Social Research (SFI).

1. Domestic Violence in Denmark - Short National Overview

1.1. Origins and evolution of the public debate on domestic violence

It was not until the breakthrough of the Women's Movement in the 70's - probably for the first time at a public meeting arranged by Joan Søstrene (The Joan Sisters)¹ - that domestic violence appeared on the public agenda. Up until then 'wife battering' had in large been seen as part of marital life and therefore as a private matter inside the family and intimate sphere.

This historical period is what the American sociologist Nanette J. Davis calls the 1st phase in the development of the debate on domestic violence in the Western societies. She identifies 3 phases: the traditional structure, the deconstruction and at last the reconstruction (Järvinen, 1993). Based on this division, the following section offers a short overview of the main characteristics of the development in Danish society that has influenced the cultural view on and approach to domestic violence. In this description we have chosen mainly to focus on the themes of development in the Women's Movement, women's position on the labour market, the breakthrough of the Welfare State, the changing family patterns and of course as a result of all these the changes in gender relations.

1st phase: The Traditional Structure – up until the 1960's

Historically, domestic violence has to a large extent been socially accepted as a way of the husband's emphasising his position as head of the family. The issue was not even taken up as a subject in what the political scientist Drude Dahlerup in her studies calls the first two waves in the history of the Women's Movement in Denmark (Dahlerup, 1998). Dahlerup identifies the first wave taking off in 1871, when *Dansk Kvindesamfund* (Eng.: Danish Women's Society) was founded, being the first organisation fighting for women's rights and for a general improvement of women's living conditions. The main topic at that time was women's right to acknowledgment as citizens, e.g. having rights such as access to education, work and spiritual stimulation, as well as legal rights to dispose of income from work even when married.

The second wave took place from 1905 to the 1920's around the fight for women's right to vote (Dahlerup 1998). Building up the broadest alliances of women organisation in history, the movement was able to organise a demonstration to the Parliament gathering 10,000-12,000 women. Their claim was fulfilled in 1915, when women got the right to vote and to run for elections. During this period, the legal and formal position of women was improving. In the family sphere, the married mother obtained the right to custody of her children, and domestic work was equalised with paid work in so far as the marriage legislation introduced equal division of property at divorce or death.

In spite of a significant proportion of the female population being on the traditional labour market (Borshost & Siim, 1984) mainly in farming and house work, often assisting their husbands, women were not seen as providers, but on the contrary as responsible for the house keeping. Labour division between the sexes referred women to economic dependency on her husband. Traditionally, women's labour position followed her marital status, hence being on the labour market before marriage, and then becoming a housewife after being married.

From the 1930's with the upcoming of the Danish Welfare State, women moved into the modern sector, mainly in the public area. Also women from the middleclass began entering the labour force, hereby facing what working class women had already faced for a long time, i.e. double work when still being in charge also of the domestic chores. The gender roles were though beginning to be challenged.

2nd phase: Deconstruction – the 1960's and 70's

From the 60's, women's labour-force participation increased immensely. The Woman's Commission, founded in 1965, had the main assignment of getting women out on the labour market, and together with the rising of the Welfare State the individual well being of the citizens was put on the agenda. Women's double workload was vehemently debated and improvements started to show through the establishment of public childcare centres, which was also part of the initiative to try to improve the conditions of single mothers. Although this was gradually becoming a public concern, the premises for single providers were still quite difficult (Koch-Nielsen, 1998). For several decades, married women generally worked part-time.

Gender roles were not changed at the same speed as the larger societal changes. Women were still considered to be responsible for the reproductive work at home, and the idea of the male provider was still very strong although his gender identity in some ways was being threatened by women's growing economic independence, which was not only based on income from work but also based on the possibility of getting income support in case of a divorce. This created conflicts in the homes as the husbands still expected women fully to shoulder the domestic duties, leaving women with double work, in order to accept and support their working outside the home. Furthermore, the difficult living conditions of single mothers probably also deterred women from leaving their violent husband, although the legal access to divorce was made much easier, when in 1970 the already existing right to a unilateral right to separation was clarified and period of separation was reduced from two to one year (Hansen, 1999). The 60's were characterized by large societal changes and even though women had gained almost completely equal legal rights with men, topics like sharing work both at home and on the labour market, women's poor conditions after divorce, the right to free abortion (introduced in 1973) and the contraceptive pill (legalized in 1969) appeared on the public agenda and were energetically discussed.

Slowly, women were beginning to be seen as necessary providers, as the life style of the family would depend on two sources of income, so the worker identity was no longer reserved to men alone. Furthermore, events like the introduction of the contraceptive pill and the access to free abortion in '73 were significant events for women's lives and growing independence (Koch-Nielsen, 1998). All these basic changes challenged the gender roles in

a way that it was now becoming possible to question women's "natural" reproductive responsibilities in the domestic sphere.

The Council of Equality was formed in 1975, a couple of years after the Equal Pay Act and the Act of Equal Treatment were introduced. These were (and still are), however, both directed at the labour market and the educational system, not at the private sphere (Hansen, 1991).

Domestic violence was slowly beginning to be seen as a public issue, a development supported by research into this field (Koch-Nielsen, 1983). These trends laid the groundwork for the next big wave in the Women's Movement, which really succeeded in putting domestic violence on the public agenda as a big social and gender problem.

The new Women's Movement

The Red Stocking is the name of the Women's Movement that from the beginning of the 70's appeared on the scene, and today stands as the core of the third wave in the history of the Women's Movement in Denmark. Originally, the group was founded by a fragmentation of women who came from different left-wing groups, because they felt that the same patriarchal structures oppressing women in society at large were kept unchallenged within political gender mixed groups and organisations.

The theoretical background of the Red Stockings was a socialist feminist theory combining the critic against the patriarchy with a critic against the capitalist society. One of the main slogans was to '*make the private political*' (Dahlerup, 1998). The first issues were equal pay and free abortion, while the topic of domestic violence was introduced in the mid 70's through the public meeting mentioned above, accompanied by the opening of a women's house in Copenhagen.² The theme was introduced into the public debate as a living condition for many women, also across class differences

In 1976, the Red Stockings along with members of the Lesbian Movement and a group called *Thilderne* formed a counselling group named *Joan-søstre* (Eng.: the Sisters of Joan) who still exists today. This group was a significant part of the famous squatting of the first crisis centre in Denmark, and is still today an active group in this house, offering counselling to women who have experienced different kind of violence (see section 'Grevinde

Danner'). Back in the 70's, *Joan-søstre* had a great deal of success in getting public focus on gender violence in society, and the debate even reached Parliament. To a large extent they managed to gain an official acceptance of the violence as a social problem, and they were generally met with positive reactions (as long as though the problem was being dealt with by volunteers). The 8th of March in 1980 was held under the slogan "No to violence against women", highly inspired by American and English feminist movements of the time.

Against the background of the work to fight violence against women, the *Joan-søstre* were able to form broad political alliances, primarily with other women's groups outside the left wing, and the establishment of the first crisis centres, which began at that time, is today seen as one of the main achievements of the movement. A number of the crisis centres have emerged from the women's movement of that time and are therefore also originally based on and influenced by the basic principles of the movement – principles that will be described further in the next section.

The innovating element of this period was that domestic violence was seen as one of the extreme symptoms of the patriarchal structures, perceiving violence as not just caused by the deviant behaviour of a few men, but as an inherent part of the social fundamental power structure between men and women. These political views formed the foundations on which the centres were based, which mean that they very much represented a basic political criticism of the patriarchal society.

At the same time as the establishment of crisis centres the publishing of a book in 1986 called "*Retsløs? Flygtning i sit eget land*" (Eng.: "Rightless? A fugitive in the home country") raised the theme of violence against women in a legislative framework (Hansen, 1999). This book brought forward a severe criticism of the legal status of women who had been subjected to domestic violence, among others by describing the legal conditions that women were brought into and the reluctance of the police to give and sustain restrictions, and on top of that by not letting violation of the restriction having any consequence for the perpetrator when violating these restrictions (Borries, 1991).

In 1987, *The National Association of Women's Crisis Centres*, LOKK, was founded as a national umbrella organisation in an attempt to strengthen the position of the centres and to establish a central knowledge bank in the field of domestic violence. Later that same year,

the association published a leaflet on the rules and possibilities to obtain police restrictions. Partly on the grounds of their pressure, all police districts throughout the country were in 1988 prescribed to give information on how they treated 'domestic disputes'. The responses showed a large degree of arbitrariness in terms of how different districts handled the cases, but the results of the inquiry did (Borries 1991) not have any impact neither on the regulations nor on the public debate.

Once the interest of the public in the sensational and the novelty had vanished, the establishing of the crisis centres seemed on the negative side to work as a damper on the public discussions on domestic violence, and the overall opinion seemed to be, that this problem was now properly dealt with.

3rd phase: Reconstruction

In the 3rd phase of the development in the debate on domestic violence, the problem is more and more seen as a concern of the Welfare State.

With the growing institutionalisation in the field, the discussion around the tendency of the crisis centres to move away from the original ideologies closer to the general system of social welfare services began to break through. Before entering this discussion, however, we will first highlight some of the societal tendencies of influence in this period.

During the mid 80's, the Welfare State underwent big modernisation changes. Keywords like effectiveness, better service and better use of technology and personal development became the leading principles of the public sector, as well as in social policy in general. This ideology continues through the 90's and has to a great deal influenced public institutions, including the crisis centres, where the development on a large scale has changed from mainly voluntary social support between equals, to a more professional treatment of users (Hansen, 1999).

The general understanding is that women in this period began to pervade the traditional male dominated areas, on the labour market as well as in the public sphere. Men also started moving more into the domestic sphere, although not at the same speed. For instance, house chores are more frequently shared between the sexes than earlier, although never the less

still leaving women with a greater proportion of house chores. Also it is only in recent years that debate and research on the masculine gender role has started.

In 1992, the Government initiated the first official national inquiry on the scale of domestic violence against women, and the following research showed that 19 percent of the female population had been subjected to violence once or more in their lifetime with a 50 percent of these incidents being caused by a present or former partner (Christensen & Koch-Nielsen, 1992). This initiated once again a more social and cultural understanding of gender violence, also due to the gradually more systematic knowledge collection and research in this field.

During the 90's, the nuclear family had a comeback as a basic institution in society, no doubt inspired by the communitarian ideology from USA and UK. Social services have become much more family-oriented and solutions of problems within the frame of the family are given priority in contrast to the 80's, when 24 h- institutions to a larger extent were used in dealing with problematic children. Together with a greater focus on the children, the nuclear family is (again) seen as the positive counterpart to the unstable post-modern social life outside the home (Hansen, 1999). In this context, domestic violence has become more linked to problematic and deviant families among those immigrant families, hereby individualizing the problem or moving it into a foreign culture. The proclaim of Danish society as being equalised also weakens the social and cultural critic behind domestic violence, as the violence is rarely linked to larger societal structures, such as children's upbringing and gender socialisation, socio economic differences between men and women, cultural representations of sexual gender relations, etc.

1.2. Concepts

In this specific field of domestic violence, there have been discussions around the development of concepts of the different actors involved. It would, however, be fairer to say that this field has taken over a more general discussion about conceptualising socially exposed and marginalized groups.

An area where the debate has been much more present is within the disability area, where for instance the concept has changed from 'a handicapped person' to 'a person with a physical/mental disability'. Hereby the development has changed from identifying an indi-

vidual via the marginalizing factor(s) into describing one of the premises of the individual's life or a significant factor in the relationship between the individual and his or her surroundings. This change also aims at moving away from victimization into a concept that enables action from the individual, and a similar development can be seen within the field of domestic violence. The changes can both be seen in the academic area as well as in more common and public use, where the concepts are pretty much alike.

In the academic area, one has gone from using the concept '*hustrumishandling*' (Eng.: wife maltreatment) to '*voldsramte kvinder*' (Eng.: women who have been subjected to violence). The concept of the men who have committed the violence has also changed, from '*voldsmand*' (Eng.: assaulter) to '*voldsudøvende mand*' (Eng.: man who resorts to violence). In the public debate concepts like '*hustruvold*' (Eng.: wife battering) are still used, although the concept '*voldsramte kvinder*' (Eng.: women who have been subjected to violence) is mostly used. But no ideological fights over the right use of concepts are found.

1.3. Evolution of national support services for women experiencing domestic violence

The first crisis centres emerged in the late 70's from a feminist criticism of the lacking of shelters and protection of battered women against their violent men. The centres were practically all initiated by the new Women's Movement of that time, some of them started as part of bigger culture houses, which were established by the women grass roots movement in the spirit of creating consciousness and visibility regarding women's lives and problems. The shelter function later became the main activity of the houses and is today seen as one of the movement's most successful initiatives (Socialstyrelsen, 1987). In the spirit of the movement's socialist feministic critic against the patriarchal society, the crisis centres were built up as alternative institutions based on the movement's ideology of 'help to self-help' and 'women helping women'; principles grounded on equality between the helper and the recipient of help. The houses were run with a horizontal democratic structure by voluntary work, and organized as collectives with sister solidarity as the cohesive factor.

In the mid 80's there were approximately 30 centres throughout the country. It is characteristic for most of the houses that the public authorities have gradually become more involved over time mainly via economic support. In the different regions, the cooperation with the authorities have varied both in extent and willingness, but generally the centres have fought successfully to maintain their status as alternatives to ordinary public institutions. They

have insisted on the women's anonymity, in spite of demands by the authorities of registration if expenses were to be covered by public funding.

From 1996, it became possible for crisis centres to establish working contracts with the counties under §94 of the Social Service Act, which covers institutions aimed at groups with special social problems though still maintaining the women's anonymity. Since 2004 the crisis centres have had their own section 93 in the law (see under section 'The Social Service Act' under 'Legislative Framework').

Grevinde Danner

The oldest and most famous crisis centre in Denmark is the house called *Grevinde Danner* (Eng.: Countess Danner), named after the wife of King Frederic VII (who due to her originally low status, being the illegitimate daughter of a maid, could not become queen). The house was founded in 1873 with the aim to house women who had "fallen in disgrace". In 1979, the house was squatted by the Women's Movement after having been sold from the county to a development firm, which intended to demolish it. After a long dispute and a big national fund raising, which gave the house a lot of publicity and broad support throughout the country, even from a large number of organisations like labour unions, the necessary funds to buy the house were raised and it could now remain in the hands of the women (Mogensen & Nielsen, 2000). The relationship with the municipality was problematic from the very beginning, as the municipal authorities opposed the very idea of having a crisis centre in the first place. Until this day, the Danner-house is not permanently supported by the municipality, but many grants come from state as well as from municipal sources.

Throughout the country, groups that wanted to establish crisis centres in different regions have been met with varying attitudes by the local authorities. In some places, the initiators have worked through public administration from the beginning, and in some places squatting has been used as a method to start sheltering for battered women. Today, about 36 crisis centres are spread throughout the country³.

LOKK

In 1987, LOKK was, as mentioned, founded as the national umbrella organisation for the crisis centres. All crisis centres whose particular target group are women who have suffered from domestic violence are members of LOKK. The main purpose of the organisation is to

safeguard the interest of the centres by working for visibility of domestic violence, along with preventive initiatives in this field. They collect data from the centres regularly and therefore also work as a centre of mediation. As a central organisation they represent the centres in public and work for strengthening the network between the centres. The secretariat consists at the moment of four employees, including a lawyer, who offers legal counselling to the women in need of such.

Other Shelters

In addition to the crisis centres there are also other shelters for women having experienced domestic violence. Different Christian organisations provide shelters, although these are generally both for men and women, and also for individuals with other problems than violence, such as homelessness, and different kinds of abuse. Some shelters are specifically aimed at families with different social problems as a whole, e.g. also violence. Furthermore, a few women's houses also lodge women with other problems than violence.

1.4. Recent issues

Generally speaking the development of the crisis centres have gone from very politically based institutions built on grass root principles of being alternatives to the outside society, to gradually becoming more and more a part of the public system: institutions offering professional help and sometimes also treatment. This is among other things to be seen in the context of the growing acceptance of domestic violence as a public responsibility, and the process is discussed both within the shelters and in public.

Arguments supporting this development stress the necessity of continuity in the work of the centres, which only hired staff can provide. Also to optimise women's stay, it is vital that they receive the professional help they are in need of. This line of argumentation is strongly advocated by LOKK.

Opposing opinions, however, feel that the function of the crisis centres, as an alternative to the established institutions, is disappearing with the growing professionalism and hereby pushing the volunteers in the background. It is also stressed that the function of the centres as political counterweight to the patriarchal society has vanished (Michaelsen, 2000). Another issue that is also used as an argument in the discussion above is the change in the user group. The general idea of social clients having become heavier, in the sense of having big-

ger and more complex problems, have also found its way into the crisis centres. Some centres report on dealing with women with more problems than previously, and therefore they are also in need of more professional help. This may both imply that the socio economic background of the users has worsened or that women who previously would not have had the resources to contact a crisis centre are beginning to seek help an assumption that, meanwhile, is difficult to validate due to the lack of statistics in the field.

Ever since the late 80's, the centres have experienced a rise in the number of foreign women addressing the centres. This has challenged the centres in terms of the service offered. The women come with a variety of cultural backgrounds, sometimes experiencing language barriers, or having little or no idea of how the Danish social system works and what rights they have. This increase has provoked a suggestion of having special crisis centres for foreign women, but the idea was met, however, with lots of criticism from different sides, arguing that this would only lead to an even higher degree of isolation from Danish society for the women (Mogensen & Nielsen, 2000).

From the last part of the 80's the children living in the crisis centres came into focus (Christensen 1988), and a network between persons working with children in the centres was established, supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs. And in 1993, a "pot" of money was given to improve the conditions for the children – KRIB-puljen (a parliamentary "pot" given to support children living in crisis centres), which resulted in employment of a specialized children's staff in all crisis centres.

2. Legislative Framework

2.1. National plan against domestic violence

In 2002, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Equality launched a national action plan against domestic violence called *Stop volden mod kvinder – bryd tavsheden* (Eng.: *Stop the violence against women – break the silence*). The plan came out as part of a larger governmental initiative which also contained the plan of the Ministry of Justice: *Stop the Violence*, a plan along with the programme of the Ministry of Social Affairs aimed generally at improving the services for the weakest groups in society, called *The Common Responsibility*.

The national plan against domestic violence mainly contains four areas:

- Support for the victims: A big national information campaign aimed at women exposed to domestic violence should be launched, including a hot line and a web-site on support groups and services. Research into the specific needs of women from ethnic minorities and into the capacity of the crisis centres would also be launched. The police should hand out assault-alarms to women who are specially exposed to violence, and a reinforcement on the children's area will be introduced, including the project *Vold i Familien* (Eng.: *Family Violence*), with a web-site with information on services, publications and knowledge on the subject, along with presentations of other familiar projects.
- Activities aimed at the perpetrator: A study on violent men – their situation and background – is part of the plan. On the juridical aspect a working group should carry out inquiries concerning the possibilities of activating a series of measures within the legal system: to remove the perpetrator from the common home, the so-called 'Austria-model' (that has now been established), to use treatment as alternative to conditional penalty, to use treatment under serving a sentence, and finally to examine which sanctions can be given when a restriction is violated.
- Activities aimed at professionals: Representatives from different expert groups should visit different regions in the country and arrange seminars for politicians and relevant vocational groups in order to stimulate local and professional debate on domestic violence. To professional workers a 'toolbox' containing different information on legislation, counselling, references and other useful information in their work with domestic violence was to be constructed, and local interdisciplinary teams should be established to reinforce the communication and networking between local authorities and the crisis centres. Furthermore there was to be an inquiry to see if and how different educational institutions teach on the subject of domestic violence.
- Knowledge and information: Denmark is participating in the international project under IVAWS - International Violence Against Women Survey with a national survey on the extent of domestic violence carried out by the Ministry of Justice. Another national survey on domestic violence against women with disabilities is also on its way.

In November 2003, the Ministry of Equality sent out a status report on the action plan. Below is a presentation of this report along with remarks on further progress.

- Research is in progress and the information campaign has taken place including advertising and distribution of leaflets throughout the country in relevant places, such as doctors' waiting rooms and at hairdressers'. The assault alarms have already been handed out to the police, though it has later been stressed by the medias, how the police in several districts refused to hand out the alarms to the women. The website of project *Family Violence* is accessible and contains a broad variety of information on domestic violence.
- A pilot research project on the profiles of violent men has been completed, and a working group under the Ministry of Justice has recently published a report, where they propose an amendment of the Penalty Code so that it will be possible to expel a violent person from the home. This amendment is now being processed in Parliament.
- The 'toolbox' for professionals is available, and the national tour to relevant professionals throughout the country has been successfully carried through.

2.2. Effectiveness of existing laws

Historically, the battering of women in Denmark has been illegal since 1683 when the husband no longer had the right to inflict corporal punishment upon his wife, although this was not really criminalized at the time as a punishable act (Hansen, 1991).

Apart from the Social Service Act Danish legislation does not include an explicit section on domestic violence. The topic is, however, mentioned under different laws (the Marriage Act, the Aliens Act, the Service Act, and under the Penal Code) but only under comments, as cases of domestic violence are treated under the general sections of violence (§244-246 in the Penal Code).

This part does neither cover the direct effect of the laws nor any statistics on the ruling in relevant cases, as we have not been able to find such information. Considering that there is no research done in the field of legal usage in cases of domestic violence, this field seems uncovered in a Danish context.

The Penal Code

Crimes in Family Relations

§ 213 A person who has neglected or disgraced his/her spouse, or child or someone under his/her custody or care under the age of 18, or with reluctance has missed to fulfil some of his/her duties as provider or his/her obligation to pay alimony and thereby exposed them to suffering, will be punished with prison up to 2 years.

This law can be used in cases of violence against disabled women, where the violent spouse is also the woman's helper.

The § 244-246 in the Penal Code cover the ordinary violence offences normally applied in the cases of domestic violence.

§ 244 A person who commits violence or in other ways assaults another's body, is punished with a fine or with prison up to 3 years.

§ 245 A person who has carried out an assault of a specially raw, brutal or dangerous character, or has been guilty of maltreatment is to be punished with up to 6 years of prison. If the assault has caused severe damage on the body or health, this must be seen as a special rigorous circumstance.

§245(2) A person who outside of (1) inflicts injuries on another person's body or health, is to be punished with prison up to 6 years.

§245a A person who by an assault with or without consent cuts off or in other ways removes female genital parts completely or partly, is to be punished with prison up to 6 years.

§246 Has a corporal assault, included by §245 or §245a, been of such gross nature or has consequently caused serious damage or death, so that there lies rigorous circumstances, the punishment can rise to prison up to 10 years.

In 1989, significant explanatory notes to the above-mentioned sections were implemented, which influenced the legal treatment of cases of domestic violence. Under §245 'maltreatment' was thus defined as "... a series of acts of violence performed during a period of time as a result of the perpetrator's superior position in relation to the victim, who is often in some kind of dependent relationship with the offender." (Greve et al., 2001, p. 293). Maltreatment is hereby given an independent legal significance as a more rigorous circum-

stance. We have, however, not been able to find any indications of whether this section has or can be applied in the case of domestic violence. Furthermore, the explanatory notes to §245(2) expand the meaning of violence to also concern effects on the psyche mentioning, “... injuries on [a person’s] health, so that causes of psychological traumas are to be included.” (Greve et al., 2001, p. 294). These notes placed the legal process of cases of domestic violence under the § 245 (instead of under § 244), which has a higher minimum and maximum penalty range.

Under § 265 in the Penal Code, the police can impose a restriction normally up to 5 years on a person that persecutes or harasses another person.

§ 265 A person who violates someone’s privacy, in spite of a police warning not to intrude, or pursue by written notes or in other ways to annoy him/her, is to be punished with a fine or prison up to 6 months. A warning given by the police is valid for 5 years.

During the 80’s, there was much debate on the reluctance of the police to impose these restrictions in cases of domestic violence and furthermore the reinforcements of these when given. In 1990, the Ministry of Justice sent out a government circular concerning police restrictions, saying: the police should not be reserved in imposing restrictions in cases of rape, severe violence or threats when the victim fears for the return of the perpetrator. The police should also inform on the possibility to impose restrictions even if charges are not made, and also that the lack of a legal separation between the spouses is no obstacle for getting a restriction

The Administration of the Justice Act

The General Regulation of Investigation

§ 742 in the Administration of the Justice Act places the police under the obligation to start an investigation on behalf of a report or by own initiative if they have a reasonable presumption of an illegal act taking place.

(2) The police will begin an investigation after having received an inform or by own initiative, when there is a reasonable presumption that a punishable act has been committed, which should be prosecuted by the public.

The police can charge a person on a victim's request and hereby sustain the charges, even if the victim later wishes to drop the case. This can relieve the victim from external pressure to drop the case from e.g. family.

In 2000, the Public Prosecutor sent out an announcement concerning the specific investigation of cases of domestic violence to the different police districts, emphasizing that the police has an obligation to start an investigation if there is a reasonable suspicion of violent acts taking place, even if the victim does not report such an act.

The Social Service Act

Until March 2004 the crisis centres were under §94 in the Social Service Act together with ordinary shelters and hostels. But now they have their own §93a.

§ 93a The Counties provide the necessary number of places for temporary residence for women, who have been exposed to violence, threats of violence or a similar crisis in relation to family-or partnership-relations. The women may be accompanied by children, and will during their stay receive care and support. Admission to the shelters is obtained by own personal application or by reference by the public authorities. The person in charge makes the decision of admission

In the bill it was emphasized that the purpose of the new section is to highlight the work of the crisis centres, and with a parliamentary "pot" given in 2003 it is the aim to implement quality standards for the crisis centres.

The § 35 under the Social Service Act obliges public employees to report cases to the public authorities when they suspect that a person under the age of 18 is in need of special support. Hereby employees at crisis centres and shelters are to report on domestic violence if a child is involved and suffering under the violence. Theoretically this law might risk putting the staff of the crisis centres in difficulties because of the contradictory interests between the protection of the woman's anonymity and their duty to report on children living in violent families. In most cases, however, the municipality will know of the woman staying there because they will have to pay towards her support.

The Aliens Act

§19 A temporary residence permit may be revoked:

1) When the reasons for the application or the residence permit were incorrect or are no longer present ...

(7) At the decision of revoking the permit of residence ... it must be taken under special consideration if the grounds for permission of residence are no longer existent because of separation caused by the foreigners' exposure to assault, abuse or other molestation (and others) in this country.

The Aliens Act gives the Danish Immigration Service under § 19 the possibility to extend the foreigners' residence permit if the grounds for the permit was originally family reunification between partners, and the marriage has later on been broken on the grounds of violence. Normally a foreigner has to be married for a period of 7 years to obtain a permanent residence permit, but with the individual judgement of each case, there is legally opened up for extending a woman's residence permit if she has been subject to domestic violence. In order to extend her residence permit, the woman must apart from proving the violence also convince the Immigration Service that she is in great danger if she is to return to her "home-land", e.g. her leaving the marriage might provoke sanctions against her for disgracing her family. Furthermore, she must prove close ties to Danish society through her Danish language qualifications, her engagement in associations, her network and friends, etc. In this context it is very important that she stays in her official integration programme.

The Immigration Services have been broadly criticised by practically all institutions and organisations dealing with domestic violence for not using the above mentioned possibility. The committee requires a certain degree of documentation and evidence of the violence that is almost impossible to obtain in practise (for instance Hansen, 1991). This is one of the biggest obstacles in terms of the work of the crisis centres (see section 'Other national relevant issues).

According to an answer given in parliament from the Minister for integration government finds "*.. that the possibilities to stay in Denmark are good , if one in her marriage has been subject to documented assaults that have caused a separation, after having stayed in Denmark for a certain period, typically already after 2 years*" (Samrådet om samrådsspørgsmål P om danske mænds vold mod udenlandske kvinder og børn). As an argument for this the

minister refers to statistics according to which 275 non- citizens since 1998 have referred to domestic violence as a cause of a separation. But it was only in 86 cases that the woman obtained extraordinary permits to stay. The minister explains this by stating, that in the other cases either has violence not been proved, or the victim has been in the country for such a short time that to give a permit to stay has not seen to be fair.

2.3. Specific needs not covered by legislation

Based on an interview with Peter Michael Toft, legal advisor at LOKK, we are able to list needs not yet covered by legislation according to LOKK:

- The implementation of the so-called Austria-model ought to be followed up by resources, so that the perpetrator can be presented with alternatives once expelled from the home as e.g. special treatment against violent behaviour.
- In cases where children are involved, the law gives the father the right to know where the children are staying which in cases where the safety of the woman is threatened, inflicts with her need of and right to anonymous sheltering, as the father of the children automatically will know where she is staying.
- The Social Service Act prescribes the counties to offer “support and care” to specially exposed groups. Counselling and treatment on the other hand are merely mentioned in the explanatory notes as recommendations as the responsibility for this kind of measures lies with the municipalities. It is, therefore, optional for the county to provide these services. This is a main reason for the varying services the crisis centres can offer.
- Furthermore, the legislation is not specific but rather unclear about which municipalities are responsible for taking care of the woman when she for instance turns to a crisis centre outside of her home municipality. Due to this the municipalities will try to avoid the responsibility and costs, with the consequence that the woman’s case will travel back and forth between municipal departments dragging out the casework.
- Women who find themselves in life-threatening situations and who are therefore forced to emigrate can find themselves without statutory protection. In these cases there is a need for international agreements in the reign of UN or EU so that these serious cases can be taken care of quickly and in a proper way.

2.4. Date of first specific law and important milestones

From the beginning of the 80’s and during that decade, the crisis centres began to receive financial support from the state, the counties, and the municipalities. Gradually, some of the

centres, which from the beginning solely depended on funding and voluntary work, also have engaged in economic working agreements with the municipalities. It is not until recently that the proposal to an amendment to the Social Service Act specifically mentioned the crisis centres. Here ‘women’ are also mentioned for the first time as the specific target group of the crisis centres. This law has not yet been passed.

2.5. Accessibility of access to information on legislation

Websites on legislation

The following web sites contain information on legislation and rights concerning domestic violence:

- www.voldmodkvinder.dk: This site is part of the Governmental national campaign against domestic violence. It contains information on a national hot line, advice to women who have experienced domestic violence, information on violent men and different material on support both in Danish, English, Turkish, Somali, and in Serbian.
- www.vold-i-familien.dk: The site on family violence is also part of the national plan. Here the focus is broader concerning both violence against women and children, and it contains information on support, crisis centres, statistics, research, literature, other projects and so on, all in Danish.
- www.vold-mod-udenlandske-kvinder.dk: ”(Eng. :) *Violence against foreign women*” gives legal information on foreign women’s rights concerning the Aliens Act and the Marriage Act together with an overview of the new rules. Here you can also find counselling, a hot line, information on crisis centres, and articles on foreign women who have experienced violence and information about their cases. The site has information in Danish as well as in English and Russian and is produced by the Immigrant Counselling (Dan.: *Indvanderrådgivningen*).
- www.menneskeret.dk: The theme here on violence against women contains international and national legislation on women’s rights along with articles and TV-spots on different relevant subjects. This homepage is produced by the Institute for Human Rights and is all in Danish
- www.jm.dk: This is the homepage of the Ministry of Justice (Dan.: *Justitsministeriet*), where there is access to all Danish legislation.
- The homepages of the counties often contain information on legislation, especially concerning shelters and crisis centres now that they are their legal responsibility.

- www.formidlingscentret.dk: ”Videns- og Formidlingscentret for Socialt Udsatte” (Eng.: The Knowledge and Mediation Centre of Socially Exposed) has some information on legal matters.

Leaflets

- As part of the national campaign against domestic violence a leaflet, called “*Stop the Violence – break the silence*”, on information about counselling was published in 5 different languages.
- In 2001, The Immigration Service sent out a brochure on “*The Aliens Act and violent marriages*” that informs on the woman’s right to get an individual judgement concerning the extension of residency on the grounds of the breakaway from a violent marriage

3. Research on Domestic Violence: State of the art

3.1. Main topics of research

Women exposed to domestic violence

The research on domestic violence started with the rise of the crisis centres. In the process of creating visibility about the subject, the first research focused primarily on the living conditions of battered women and the psychological consequences of the violence. Later on the more sociological approaches began to gain ground, along with statistic research on the extension of the phenomenon. Domestic violence does, however, merely appear as part of larger statistic inquiries on violence in general. Apart from those qualitative methods have been dominating.

- Djurhuus, M. & Skovsgaard, M.: *Kvinders oplevelse af frygt og tryghed i byens rum*, Geografisk Institut, Københavns Universitet, 2000
- *I kærlighedens vold, en kvalitativ interview-undersøgelse om vold i parforhold*, Aalborg Universitet, 1996
- Hansen, E.: *På afstand af vold? – en undersøgelse af kvinders livssituation efter bruddet med en voldelig mand*, SIKON 1991
- Petterstrand-Nilsson, M.: *Vold i parforhold, den indre verden hos mishandlede*, Gyldendal 1999
- Arskog, T., Bjørkøe, M. & Sørensen, A.: *Kvinder på vej! En undersøgelse af netværks- og ressourcefattige kvinder på krisecentre, familieinstitutioner og dagforanstaltninger*, SIKON (Socialministeriets Udviklingsmidler), 1990
- Karpatschhof, L.: *Kvinders svaghed – En undersøgelse af hustrumishandling*, Antropos, Kooperation for menneskelig forskningsvirksomhed, 1983

- Nielsen, T. & Holtegaard, L.: *Retsløs? Flygtning i sit eget land*, Tommeliden, 1986
- Järvinen, M.: *De nye hjemløse, -kvinder, fattigdom, vold*, Socpol, 1993
- Ligestillingsministeriet: *Mænds vold mod kvinder. Omfang, karakter og indsats mod vold*. 2004

Violent relationships

- *Vold i parforhold*, Nordisk Ministerråd, 1984
- Christensen, E.: *Vold ties ikke ihjel – En bog om vold mod kvinder i parforhold*, Nyt Nordisk Forlag. København. 1984
- Madsen S.Å. : *Socialisering. Køn, fortællinger og vold. Når samvær bliver til sexuel overgreb – et bud på en kønsbaseret udforskning af kontaktvoldtægt*. I Nordisk Ministerråd: *Køn og våld i Norden/Gender and Violence in the Nordic Countries*. Nordisk Ministerråd. København. 2002 www.norden.org

Statistics on violence

- Balvig, F.: *Vold mod kvinder in Med lov... – Retsvidenskabelige betragtninger*, Juridisk Fakultet, Københavns Universitet, 1998
- Christensen, E. & Koch-Nielsen, I.: *Vold ude og hjemme – en undersøgelse af fysik vold mod mænd og kvinder*, Socialforskningsinstituttet, 1992

Violence and health

The relation between violence and health – physical and psychological - has been studied by the help of registers and surveys, but usually the theme of those studies is violence in general, not limited to domestic violence. In the paper mentioned below, however, domestic violence is part of the picture.

- Helweg Larsen K. & M. Kruse: *Gender differences in violence and health problems*. I Nordisk Ministerråd: *Køn og våld i Norden/Gender and Violence in the Nordic Countries*. - Nordisk Ministerråd. København. www.norden.org

Violence against women from ethnic minorities

From the last half of the 90's, there has been a growing focus on violence against women coming from other ethnic backgrounds than Danish. This research has mainly concentrated on the legal conditions of the women. Furthermore, it is only just recently that marriages between Danish men and foreign women have been highlighted, whereas earlier it was presumed to be a problem only within “ethnic” relationships.

- Indenrigsministeriet: *Delbetænkning 1 vedr. udenlandske kvinders integration og retsstilling i forhold til udlændingeloven*, 1995

- Udlændingestyrelsen: *Rapport vedr. opfølgning på Kvindeudvalgets delbetænkning I vedr. udenlandske voldsramte kvinder*, (Etniske minoritetskvinders integration og retsstilling i Danmark) 1997

The children and the vicious social circle

Family violence and children's situation are big issues and recently the issue of the vicious circle or "social heritage" have come on the political and the research agenda – also where violent families are concerned.

- Christensen, E.: *Børnekår: en undersøgelse af omsorgssvigt i relation til børn og unge i familier med hustrumishandling*, Akademisk Forlag, 1990
- Christensen, E. : *Trængte familier*. Socialforskningsinstituttet. Rapport 91:8. København.
- Christensen, E. & Persson, L. (ed.): *Når mor får bank: en mosaik om børn i voldsramte familier*, Socialt Udviklingscenter 1998
- Christensen, E. : *Social arv i voldsramte familier*. Arbejdspapir 15 om social arv. København. Socialforskningsinstituttet. 1999
- Christensen, E. : *Social arv i familier med vold mod mor*. Socialforsknings. Temanummer. December 99. socialforskningsinstituttet. København.
- Christensen, E.: En opvækst hvor mor bliver mishandlet – fra barnets synsvinkel. I Nordisk Ministerråd: *Køn og våld i Norden/Gender and Violence in the Nordic Countries*. Nordisk Ministerråd. København. 2002 www.norden.org

Violent men

- Behrens, H. & Dybtved, K.: *Kvantitativ kortlægningsundersøgelse af voldsudøvende mænd: pilotundersøgelse*, Formidlingscentret for socialt arbejde, 2001
- Olsen, J.: *Evaluering af manderådgivningen i Aalborg: et forsøgsprojekt under Socialministeriet*, Aalborg Universitet 1996

The role of the police

- Hansen, E. & Østvand, A.: *Med forlov – En undersøgelse af politiets praksis i hustruvoldssager*, 1999 (not published).

Research on shelter support

The following lists the available (published) research on the crisis centres. It mostly includes issues like work at the centres, discussing the methods, and structure. No proper evaluations are meanwhile found to exist.

- Mogensen, Britta & Nielsen, Sissel L. (2000): *Solidaritet eller klientliggørelse? – en undersøgelse af Dannehusets ideologi og struktur*, Forlaget Sociologi, København

- Nørregård-Nielsen, E.: *Krisecentrene – et aktivt eller passivt fravalg? – en mosaik*, (not published).
- Blakley, L. J.: *Women's Refuges – a comparative study between Denmark, the United States and the United Kingdom*, BA (Hons) in European Social Work, 1995
- Nordic Council of Ministers: *Shelters for battered women and the needs of immigrant women*, 1998
- Raal, K.: *Metoder og metodeovervejelser i arbejde med børn på krisecentre*, Formidlingscentret for Social Arbejde, 2001
- Michaelsen, K.: *Frivillige på kvindekrisecentrene – Portræt af en kultur*, Center for frivillig socialt arbejde, 2000

The Users

- The following references cover the research on the users of the crisis centres, being the women and the children.
- Bryde, I.: *Kvindehjemmet på Jagtvej: en interviewundersøgelse blandt brugerne*, Danmarks Pædagogiske Institut, 2001
- Behrens, H.: *Kortlægning af Kvinder og børn fra etniske minoriteter på krisecentrene*, Formidlingscentret for socialt arbejde, 1999
- Behrens, H.: *Kvinder i krise – Om kvinder fra etniske minoriteter på danske krisecentre*, Formidlingscentret for socialt arbejde, 2000
- Behrens, H.: *Børn er ikke til kontortid - KRIB-puljen – delrapport 1*, Formidlingscentret for socialt arbejde, 1998
- Behrens, H. & Raal, K.: *”Man kan mærke når hun er i huset” – KRIB-puljen – delrapport 2*, Formidlingscentret for socialt arbejde, 1999
- Behrens, H.: *5230 børn på krisecentre – en deskriptiv undersøgelse*, Formidlingscentret for socialt arbejde 2002

3.2. Main sources of research

In Denmark, there is no tradition of NGOs making research, at least not without governmental funding. Public research institutes and centres, which are more or less attached to different Ministries, mostly perform social research. The several institutes of Gender Research attached to the different universities do not seem to have domestic violence on the agenda at present. The focus here lies more on themes like the lacking equality on the labour market, the unequal wages, and the problems of work-life balance. A big issue at the moment is the ‘mainstreaming’ of equality.

3.3. Links between produced research and practice

Due to changing patterns into a higher degree of professionalism in the crisis centres, the link between research and working practice can be said to have strengthened. Along with more trained staff, the staff members attend educational courses, where research and statistics are used, so women are more often met with professional staff working on the background of vocational training.

Research has also had an affect on the political agenda and hereby the attention and not least the resources given to the crisis centres as well as other initiatives in the field. The issue of children is a good example of how research has disclosed an entire area, which had so far been invisible or non-existing in both professional and public approach to domestic violence, and is now highly prioritised.

4. Shelter Support

The following two sections are partly based on a number of reports written by the *Formidlingscenter*, hereby the most important being the annual statistics of LOKK for whom they collect data from all the crisis centres through annual surveys (Formidlingscentret, 2002) and the recently published Capacity report (Behrens, 2004), done for the Ministry of Equality as part of the Governmental plan.

In addition to this information, we ourselves have carried out a survey specifically for this report, sending out a questionnaire to the 36 crises centres around the country⁴, and we have received 29 of the 36 questionnaires that were sent out, obtaining a response rate of 80 percent. The questionnaires were sent out to and filled out by the daily heads of the centres, and should therefore also be seen as an expression of their opinion and view on how the centres work and which problems exist.

In the process of working out the questionnaires we have made 3 qualitative interviews with different experts within this field; the first one with the author of the majority of the reports on the crisis centres sent out in the last 5 years, Hanne Behrens from the *Formidlingscenter*, and the two other interviews were made with members of the secretariat of LOKK, one being with the daily head of the secretariat of LOKK, Anne Mau, and the other with the legal

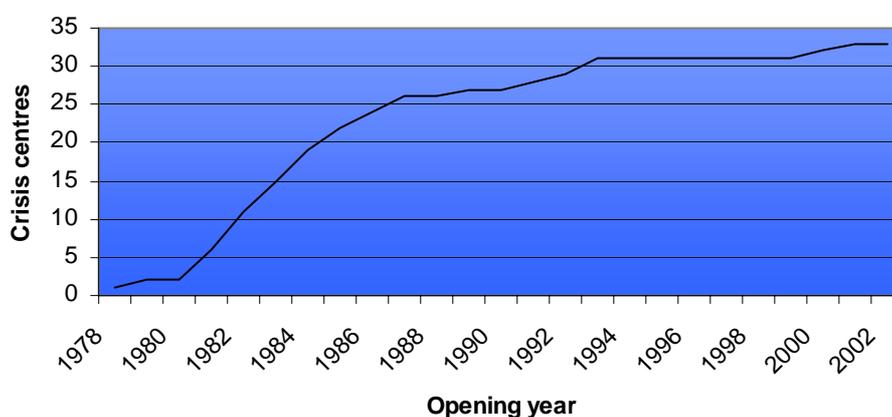
advisor of LOKK, Peter Michael Toft. All three informants have been very helpful in sharing some of their expertise, for which we are very grateful.

The numbers in this section are not always based on the same number of centres, but it will be stated clearly how many centres the numbers are based on.

4.1. Opening Date

The crisis centres were established in their present form between the years of 1979 and 2001, hereof most of them in the beginning of the 80's. Approx. 65 percent of them originally emerged from the Women's Movement, whereas other local organisations, local politicians, the following board and charitable organisations have initiated the others.

Diagram 1: The development of the number of crisis centres



Note: 4 centres are missing in this diagram since their opening date has not been reported.

Source: SFI's postal questionnaire study

4.2. Main sources of financing and managing entities

The crisis centres are financed in different ways, depending on the origins of the centres, on the county, and on the municipality (see section 'Evolution of National Support Services'). The centres also vary in what they charge in user's fee, whereas some places have steady prices while others charge fees depending on the woman's income, also depending very much on how much the different municipalities pay in rent and on meals for every individual woman and child.

The rules of the counties and municipalities concerning whether or how much they are willing to pay for a woman's stay depends on whether she comes from the same municipality or

another municipality than the one where the centre is located. Many municipalities will not pay for women moving out of their districts. These disputes create many concerns for the centres, and resources are spent on fighting with the public system. So the user's fee for a woman varies from DKK 0-200 (Euro 0-25) a day, and the same range goes for the children although there usually on average is a lower price for them (Formidlingscentret, 2003).

The crisis centres are as mentioned under the counties, and because as almost all the centres until now belong under §94 in the Service Act, the state is obliged to refund 50 percent of the expenses, which the counties have concerning the institutions.

Most of the centres are private self-governing bodies with a financial agreement of public management with the counties. As these agreements, however, vary a lot from centre to centre it makes it difficult to give an exact overview of the financing. By and large, one might say that 13 of the centres are financially speaking fully covered by the counties, another 13 are partly covered by the county, and in 4 of these centres the municipalities cover a proportion of the individual expenses for the women (rent and meals) (Formidlingscentret, 2002).

The remaining centres are either not self-governing but fully public institutions, or they have no agreements with the public, and are purely financed by private funding and grants, or they do not appear in the statistics of LOKK 2002, which include 35 crisis centres (Formidlingscentret, 2003). Compared to other institutions with children involved, the centres have significantly less staff coverage (Behrens, 2004).

Generally, it is safe to say that the crisis centres have very different economic conditions.

Practically, all the centres have a daily head of the centre on their payroll. Many of the centres do also have boards that are composed according to different models. Some boards consist of women who have been headhunted on behalf of their former engagement in other boards, some consist of present or former volunteers, and others again are chosen because of their relevant work and contacts in the field of fighting violence against women.

4.3. Capacity

In the 36 crisis centres throughout the country, there is room for the lodging of 272 women and in addition room for about 285 children (this last number is more uncertain, as some centres do not have a fixed number of places for children, but simply state that they have room for so many women and their accompanying children). Calculating on the basis of the number of spaces for women in relation to every 1,000 female individual over the age of 18 in the different counties, the numbers are as follows:

Table 1: Crisis centre spaces per 1,000 women in the counties.

County	Crisis centre spaces per 1,000 women \geq 18 years old
Municipality of Copenhagen	0.33
Bornholm	0.23
Storstrom	0.17
Frederiksborg	0.16
Vejle	0.16
Sonderjylland	0.15
Nordjylland	0.12
Viborg	0.12
Roskilde	0.11
Copenhagen	0.09
Aarhus	0.09
Ringkobing	0.08
Vestsjaelland	0.08
Ribe	0.06
Fyn	0.05
Municipality of Frederiksberg	0.00

Behrens, 2004.

Note: Included are two women's homes in the area of the Municipality of Copenhagen, which together have 53 spaces, covering 38 centres altogether.

In an effort to get an idea of the capacities of the centres they were asked to for a period of 7 months to register all applications for lodging, using the personal number of the applicant. Meanwhile only 27 per cent equal to 585 of the applications were properly registered. Among those $\frac{3}{4}$ were enrolled at their first attempt. The following table gives an overview of how many times the different reasons for rejection mentioned in the table were given.

Table 2: Reasons given for rejections by the centres.

Reasons for rejection	
Lack of space in the crisis centre	283
Lack of space for the woman's children	11
Lack of resources for the woman's/children's problems	23
The woman does not fit into the crisis centre	15
Other reasons	45
In all	377*

Behrens, 2004.

* Note: The total number is larger than the sum of the categories because in some cases there are given more than one reason for rejection.

Discussing capacity, the geographical issue is also relevant, as the distance to a centre may be an obstacle for a woman, as moving far away can cause difficulties in sustaining the daily routines as fulfilling job obligations or keeping the children at their normal school or daycares.

The largest number of rejections is seen in the areas around the capital.

The centres all have private rooms for the women and their children besides the common areas such as kitchen, living room, bath and toilet and playroom. From the questionnaire we can see that the heads of the centres sense a general satisfaction among the women concerning the distribution between the private and the common areas, although one third say that they wish for more privacy. Some specifically mention that it is a problem that women with several children only have one private room at their disposal, and the same goes for the families with somewhat older children.

One of the central issues that was presented to us in the questionnaires is the strong need for a 24-hour full staff coverage at the centres. The following table shows the number of crisis centres that have different 24-hour coverage.

Table 3: The crisis centres' 24-hour coverage.

The crisis centres' 24-hour coverage	
Full staff coverage	4
Staff cover dayshifts and volunteers nights watch	17
Staff and volunteers cover dayshifts – night watch on call	8
Full staff coverage supplemented by volunteers	1
Staff day and evening, no night watch	4
Staff and volunteers day and evening – no night watch	2
In all	36

Behrens, 2004.

4.4. Other national relevant issues

We asked the heads of the centres whether they could pinpoint some of the events that have had significant influence on the work of the centres, both in a positive and in a negative sense.

The all time score on the *positive* side is the Governmental action plan with its media attention, which has created a larger understanding of domestic violence, both among professionals and in the public in general. In terms of focus and resources, work with children is highlighted, as is the rising professionalism of the working teams of the centres. Other issues are also mentioned as significant events such as the handing out of assault alarms, the focusing on forced marriages, and the establishing of work agreements with the county.

On the *negative* side, the two primary themes are first the outside coming rules that impede the work of the centres and second the permanent uncertainty that is a consequence of economic instability. Firstly, the Aliens Act and the rules for obtaining residence permit along with the difficulties in documenting the violence, and also the problems in joint custody cases, are mentioned again. Secondly, as the grants that many of the centres depend on are negotiated from year to year, they work under a constant uncertainty concerning their future and the kind of services they will be able to deliver. Some centres have experienced a reduction in the grants given by the Ministry of Social Affairs, whereas another one has lost its working agreement with the county. Some centres also mention the lack of financial backing that many of the Governmental initiatives have been characterized by.

Denmark is, however, facing a major structural reform that will also influence on the situation of the crisis centres. The counties that up till now have been responsible for the crises centres will be closed down and probably replaced by 5 regions. Those regions, however, will not have any competencies within the social area, as municipalities will take over all social services. Moreover, the municipalities are supposed to form bigger entities by uniting thus being more efficient in terms of dealing with bigger tasks. Nevertheless, those working in the fields of the shelters in general and at the crisis centres fear that the municipalities will not be able to shoulder this task properly having no expertise in this special field. And many municipalities will probably have to join forces in order to support one centre. The centres fear that this situation might make the responsibility less clear.

5. Service Delivery

5.1. Shelter regulation

In the beginning of 2004, LOKK sent out a paper on guidelines to quality standardisations of the crisis centres addressed to the social subcommittee in Parliament. The report describes organisational aspects as well as the user's experience and professional qualities to try to ensure a minimum of quality in the service delivery of the centres. The paper was part of the preparatory work done in relation to the introduction of the new section in the Social Service Act. Generally, the report aims at a higher degree of professionalism with vocationally trained staff 24 hours a day, and the use of volunteers merely as a supplement. Every centre should also work out a management plan for the institution, along with a set of values for the work to be done. Besides, they should reflect on their interaction with other actors outside the house, and have a clear idea of their measures and goals.

The more detailed guidelines include: more individual lodging for women and their children, a maximum lodging capacity of 4-6 spaces for women per centre, implementation of user evaluation, intervention plans both for the duration of the stay and after, clear safety procedures, along with standardisation of user fee. Besides, there should be a capacity standard in terms of sheltering for 1 family in every 10,000 inhabitants evenly nationally distributed, which means a twofold increase of the already existing spaces.

If the guiding report is being implemented it might show both to have positive as well as negative effects; positive effect at the centres where the standardisation would mean an improvement of the services, but a negative effect at places where the report might be used by the authorities to withdraw some of the financial support if the standard is higher than the minimum demands.

5.2. Duration of stay

72 percent of the centres recommend and work with a fixed maximum time limit of the stay, most of them recommending a 3-month period, and 40 percent of those report on exceeding the limit regularly. The reasons given for this is housing shortage (mostly in the larger cities (Behrens, 2004)), the slow process in administrative and legal procedures, and that the women are not yet ready to live on their own. Behrens (2004) and our study indicates that the long stays are often caused by women's complex cases, where violence is only part of their vulnerable situation.

The statistics of LOKK from 2002, which includes 35 centres, show the following pattern in the duration of women's stay.

Table 4: Duration of stay

1 day	2 days to 1 week	1 week to 1 month	1 to 3 months	> 3 months	In all
290	489	566	406	192	1935
15%	25%	29%	21%	10%	100%

Formidlingscentret, 2002.

It also shows that women from ethnic minorities on average stay longer, i.e. 43 days on average, compared to Danish women who on average stay 30 days at the centres (Formidlingscentret, 2002).

5.3. Admission for children

About half of the centres have rules concerning admission for children, and these rules include restrictions on boys' age. The age limit varies from 15 to 18; the maximum age limits at most centres though being 18.

5.4. Working teams

All the centres have vocationally trained staff, and most of the centres have 2 or 3 full-time working professionals, whereas the bigger houses have between 5 and 8 full-time working professionals. A minor proportion of the centres also have 1 or 2 part-time working staff members. The staff members have different training and education, such as pre-school teachers, who constitute the biggest professional group, social workers, nurses, psychologists, or other educational background.

Below is an overview of how many centres have different professional groups within their staff.

Table 5: Number of centres with different categories of professional staff:

	Pre-school teachers	Social worker	Welfare workers	Nurse/health personal	Psychologist
Number of centres with:	27	20	22	2	2

Formidlingscentret, 2002.

These numbers are based on 34 crisis centres.

All centres have professional children's staff. Normally the pre-school teacher will contact the mother as soon as possible after her arrival at the centre, to talk about the child's practical situation as well as about the child's experience with the violence. The work of the pre-school teacher is influenced by unpredictability, because of the uncertainty of the length of

the child's stay, and in the report *5,230 børn* (Eng.: 5,230 Children) it is described how the pre-school teachers work with the children through relatively short and delimited processes. Most of the time the children spend with the teacher is together with other children living at the centre at the same time – engaged in activities like going on field trips, playing either in the centre's play room or outside somewhere. Practically all the centres have children's group meetings, where the children get together and share the experience they have had, often through different kinds of games. Some of the centres offer talks with both the mother and the child, and sometimes with the child alone.

According to our questionnaire $\frac{3}{4}$ of the professional vocational staff participate sufficiently in relevant supplementary training courses – the main course for not participating are economic barriers.

Volunteers still have a role to play in the shelters - only 6 of those participating in our survey don't have volunteers. At 26 crisis centres, a total of 1,185 volunteers, who were attached to the centres in 2002, were working shifts. This makes 46 on average per centre covering a range of 6-103 volunteers at the two ends of the scale (Formidlingscentret, 2002). Aside from working shifts, the volunteers carry out a variety of different tasks, such as being a member of the board, organizing open house events, cafés, parties/celebrations, and work with children. At some centres, the volunteers are in charge of follow up visits to the women after they have moved from the centres.

From our questionnaire it seems as if the centres have some difficulties in recruiting the necessary number of volunteers. The most difficult area to cover is the children's area and to some extent also the shifts.

Mandatory course for the volunteers exist in 23 centres and they are mostly arranged in collaboration with other crises centres, with the *Center for Frivillig Socialt Arbejde* (Eng.: Centre for Volunteer Social Work) or with other local actors.

We asked the head of the centres about what kind of qualifications they look for when recruiting paid staff but also volunteers. In recruiting volunteers personality is important, while neither education nor experience is of special importance. For the paid staff experience is more important, although not as important as vocational background. For neither of

the two groups their female-oriented political engagement is of importance when hired or recruited.

5.5. Intervention plans and follow-up work

According to our study more than 80 percent of the centres make intervention plans (or action plans as they are called) together with the woman in terms of both the duration of the stay and the time after, and they are almost all reviewed regularly. Although close to 90 percent of the respondents from our survey state that there is some kind of follow-up work done at the crisis centre, these activities vary very much so, both in form and substance. The most common activity is counselling either at the centre or at the woman's home. Some centres offer help to establish network contacts to other women who have previously stayed at the centre, and also practical help in for instance getting settled in a new home is often offered. Former users are sometimes invited on field trips, holidays or other activities at the centre. Although most centres do offer some kind of follow-up, there is a general wish to improve this important area, as it is a fact that almost half of the women stay at a centre more than once (Behrens, 2004). Generally, it can be said that this area is short of resources. The table below shows an overview of the reasons given for not carrying out follow-up work.

Table 6: Reasons given by the centres for not agreeing on follow-up work.

Reasons for no agreement of follow-up work	Number of incidence during 6 months
Shortage of resources at the crisis centre	100
The woman does not wish follow-up	254
The woman moves far away	163
Other public institutions supply help	198
Other volunteers supply help	27
In all	621

Behrens, 2004.

All the centres seem to communicate well and on a regular basis with other crisis centres. Their contacts take place through meetings between the daily heads of the centres, there are official forums for sharing experience, courses and seminars and then, of course, they stay in contact whenever they must forward a woman to another centre on the grounds of lacking space.

5.6. Additional barriers and problems

As stated previously, the target group of the centres will exclude women who have an alcohol and/or a drug abuse, women who suffer from mental illness, and to some extent women with physical disability. The precondition from the crisis centres is that the women must not require specialized help due to physical disabilities. An inquiry from 2002 made over the accessibility of the crisis centres for physically disabled women, show that only one crisis centre is accessible for wheelchairs. Concerning the possibility of accommodating a helper, only 3 centres can provide a private room for the helper, but in the majority of the centres the helper can stay in the same room as the woman. An overview of the centres accessibility can be found on www.voldoghandicap.dk.

Concerning issues that the centres face in their daily work, the heads of the centres in our study again mention the three main problems as being the legislation concerning foreign women's residence permit and custody cases, and the shortage of financial resources (see section 'Other national relevant issues'). The latter results in insufficient staff coverage, which mean that rather many centres depend on volunteers in order to be open 24 hours a day. This concerns many centres.

Also the general lack of knowledge in society about domestic violence makes the work more complicated, alongside with a lack of professional treatment, both for the victims of the violence but also for the perpetrator and the family as a whole.

5.7. No evaluations

In spite of a widespread tendency to use evaluations in the social services in Denmark this is according to our questionnaires not the case in this field. We have only asked for external evaluations wanting to exclude the ordinary annual reports probably given in to the financing authorities.

An explanation for this might be that evaluations are difficult, when the entities are as small as the centres – a proper evaluation of the outcome of the stay would need a population of a certain size and a possibility to make a follow-up. Evaluations could, of course, also be based upon user surveys but here again it would demand a certain size of the population of users and a possibility to get in touch with them after they have left the centre.

5.8. Innovative work

We asked the centres whether they could give us examples of innovative working methods (but didn't give a definition or explanation of what we meant by innovative). The three primary categories in which we have divided the answers from the heads of the centres regarding the innovative work of the crisis centres are: one that points back to some of the fundamental values from the Women's Movement on which many of the centres were founded: help-to-self help, women's culture, confidence on women's own resources and not treating the women as clients or patients. The second category, which can also be linked to the original values, is the view on the crisis centres as alternatives to the common institutions and systems. The volunteers are also mentioned, as is the coexistence of different cultures, religions and languages under the same roof.

As the heads of the centres have the accession right, the house has an autonomous saying in terms of who can stay at the centres, and women may therefore address the centres on their own without having to be referred from elsewhere. The centres also help expediting the case works.

Finally, the knowledge of violence is stressed. The centres' expertise can help preventing domestic violence, and at the same time the centres have built up a valuable knowledge of how to treat women and children who have experienced domestic violence.

6. Webpages

On violence against women

- www.vold-i-familien.dk: The site on family violence is also part of the national plan. Here the focus is broader concerning both violence against women and children, and it contains information on support, crisis centres, statistics, research, literature, other projects, etc., all in Danish.
- www.voldoghandicap.dk: This site gives a broad and very detailed overview of the field of violence against women with disabilities. It contains information on legislation, legal possibilities of protection, overview of all kind of different relief organisations and institutions, accessibility to the different crisis centres depending on disability, as well as information on how to help women with disabilities that are subjected to violence. In addition, there are overviews of research and statistics and of relevant activities and

links. The site is made by *Udviklings- og Formidlingscentret på Handikapområdet*, formally called *Formidlingscentret Øst*.

- www.flygtninge.dk/publikationer/rapporter/kvindeasyl/vold/index.php: The Danish Refugee's Aid has here a couple of texts on violence against women and asylum rules.
- www.kvinde.info.dk: This site aims at foreign women, and has among others things themes on 'Violence and crisis centres' and 'Relationships, registered partnerships and marriage' with articles and news as well as personal stories, along with a letter page.
- www.kvinderikrise.dk: A non-professional group has created this site to inform and counsel about domestic violence. They describe the violence, it's forms and symptoms, along with recommendations for different places where to seek help, such as a network of women who have previously been subjected to violence, crisis centres, and other relevant sites.
- www.joansoestrene.dk: The Joan's Sisters offer counselling to women who have been subjected to violence of different kind. Here also lies a folder in English on the work of the group.
- www.kvindesamfund.dk: (Eng.: Danish Women's Society) has a theme on violence on their site that contains different texts, articles, resolutions and other things.
- www.voldmodkvinder.dk: This site is part of the Governmental national campaign against domestic violence. It contains information on a national hot line, advice to women who have experienced domestic violence, information on violent men and different material on support in both Danish, English, Turkish, Somali, and Serbian.

Aimed at families suffering from the after-effects of violence

- www.familievold.dk: Here lies material from 'The Association of Children from Violent Families', with campaign material like video-spots and references to a hot line.
- www.icare.dk: Care offers counselling and therapy for families who suffer from the after-effects of violence.
- www.lisegaarden.dk: A doctor, Lise Seidelin, offers a peaceful stay after having left a violent relationship. This site has information on violence and treatment.

Aimed at men who resort to violence

- www.dialogmodvold.dk: Dialogue against violence offers treatment to violent men and their families. This initiative is part of the Government's project *Vold i Familien* (Eng.: Violence in the Family).
- www.manderaad.dk: This is the site of a programme for counselling of violent men. Here is information on the programme as well as knowledge of the area.

- www.whiteribbon.dk: The purpose of this male organisation is to fight violence against women. Here is information on the group, their aims and activities.

Others

- www.bavk.dk: (*Foreningen til Beskyttelse af Voldsramte Kvinder* – Eng.: The Association of Protection of Women Subjected to Violence) The association members support the crisis centres in terms of security and body guarding. They offer escort, risk assessment and counselling.

On shelter support

- www.lokk.dk: Here are overviews of shelter support and other useful information on domestic violence, along with a list of own web pages of the centres.
- www.dannerhuset.dk
- And the homepages of the counties sometimes have information on shelter support in their area.

7. Conclusion

As was the case in other countries the first crises centres were part of the women's movement back into the 1970's and were originally based mainly upon female volunteers, who saw the volunteering as part of their engagement in the movement. The centres were created upon and ran according to the principles of sister solidarity. With the growing public involvement in the running and financing of the centres this has slowly changed, so that now the centres are considered in the same way as other welfare services. And as a consequence we can see the same development here as elsewhere: more trained staff coming in as the users of the centres are considered to be more and more difficult to deal with, requests for quality standards, requests for statistics (which of course is very nice seen from the researchers point of view). It should also be seen as part of a general trend that the rights of fathers to contact with their children is given a high priority which certainly creates problems for the shelters.

The centres have formed a national association that will represent the centres and produce annual reports and who run a homepage that makes it easy to find information about the centres in general but also to find your way to the individual centres.

The recent focus upon domestic violence can't be seen as a revival of a feminist approach. It is part of the general trend in crime policy where the focus is upon the victims in general. Victims of violence attract the attention of the politician and among those victims of domestic violence. This time the problem is not attributed to a patriarchal structure of the Danish

society, as general equality is perceived to have prevailed. The perpetrators are considered to be deviant males who need treatment – or – and that might be one of the main reasons for bringing domestic violence back on the political agenda – they are considered as representatives for a patriarchal structure – but inside the ethnic minorities – especially the Islamic minorities.

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¹ Personal communication from senior researcher Else Christensen.

² Personal communication from senior researcher Else Christensen.

³ This figure only covers the number of crisis centres that specifically works as shelters for women who have experienced violence (for more detailed definition, see 'Capacity' under 'Service Delivery').

⁴ The selection criteria for limiting the group of centres to be included in the survey were made on the basis of the centres' explicit formulated target group and purpose. We have, therefore, included the centres that define their aim to offer shelter along with support for women who have been subjected to domestic violence and their children, having the violence as the main reason for seeking shelter. This has ruled out a number of places that along with this specific target group also offers shelter to other groups, which are not received at the crisis centres, i.e. women with no home caused by other reasons than violence, women with mental disabilities and others.