



## **Protective Environmental Factors Securing Human Rights**

Discussion of European research on positive and protective factors particularly in working life, including current restructuring of European labour markets under gender perspectives and surveys on the cultural changes of image and social reality of men

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# 1. Introduction

“The twentieth century will be remembered as a century marked by violence. It burdens us with its legacy of mass destruction, of violence inflicted on a scale never seen and never possible before in human history. But this legacy – the result of new technology in the service of ideologies of hate – is not the only one we carry, nor that we must face up to.

Less visible, but even more widespread, is the legacy of day-to-day, individual suffering. It is the pain of children who are abused by people who should protect them, women injured or humiliated by violent partners, elderly persons maltreated by their caregivers, youths who are bullied by other youths, and people of all ages who inflict violence on themselves. This suffering – and there are many more examples that I could give – is a legacy that reproduces itself, as new generations learn from the violence of generations past, as victims learn from victimizers, and as the social conditions that nurture violence are allowed to continue. No country, no city, no community is immune. But neither are we powerless against it.”

(Nelson Mandela in the foreword of the “World Report on Violence and Health”, quoted in Krug et al. 2002: ix)

The fundamental premise in this report is that the social and economic organisation of peoples’ everyday lives is a key to the actual attainment of human rights. Inequality and discrimination constitute the framework in which violence and violations occur and are often underpinned by aspects of work segregation, opportunities in the labour market and the work-life-balance among men and women. Gender equality thus seems central to preventing human rights violations. The present report focuses on the gendered nature of the workplace and the organization of paid and unpaid labour. This approach to gender equality matters for several reasons. Through the labour market individuals can access the financial resources necessary to afford housing, education, healthcare and other necessities of daily life. For many, the workplace also reduces social isolation and facilitates the development of networks that can provide social, emotional, and logistical support in times of crises. Both aspects are likely to be important mechanisms in protecting individuals against violent victimization and securing human rights. Moreover, changes over the past years in the gendered organization of paid and unpaid labour have motivated a large and growing body of research on men and masculinities. From a perspective on human rights and violence prevention this research is of particular interest. Involvement in the labour market (or lack of it) and in unpaid family labour positions men in complex ways to each other and to women. The actual implications of these constellations for protection against violence are not yet well understood and deserve more

scrutiny. For example, the role of the workplace in either facilitating or interrupting interpersonal violence has come into focus only recently<sup>1</sup>.

With this in mind, the present report—while situated within a broader protective factor framework—focuses primarily on work culture and the distribution of labour in the private and professional spheres and argues for interdisciplinary research to identify positive and protective factors in working life related to work and family.

Research on interpersonal violence has focused mostly on its extent and consequences, on ways of supporting victims, and on sanctions against perpetrators. There are a plethora of studies about risk factors for victims of violence as well as some studies about the risk of becoming a perpetrator, but we still know little about which structural and cultural conditions help to foster lives free of violence. Thus, the important political question has been largely ignored by researchers: when and how is violence stopped?<sup>2</sup>

We know that the large majority of the perpetrators of violent crime and of physical and sexual violence are men but not all men are violent and those who use violence are likely to do so for specific reasons and under specific circumstances (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994). Although our understanding of which men become violent in which contexts and against whom is only beginning, evidence from different disciplines suggests that for the most part violence is predictably structured rather than random (Ross, 1993; Miethe & Deibert, 2006), that many men who are violent against women invoke a range of misogynist rationales ranging from claims of male entitlement (Hearn, 1999) to hatred of women (Scully, 1990), and that among violent men there seem to be different ‘types’ (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Jacobson & Gottman, 1998; Lisak & Miller, 2002), which may have implications for intervention. Nonetheless, much speculation about the motives and circumstances of perpetrators remains and a more informed understanding of the different contexts of masculinity and violence is only in the beginning stages.

In contrast to the empirical knowledge of this issue, there is an array of suppositions that are, in part, theoretically grounded. These focus on the factors contributing to a situation in which individuals, groups and societies do not become violent. This report presents empirical evidence on factors protecting against violence and discusses them in the light of this largely conceptual body of work. While situated within a wider conceptual framework of protective

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<sup>1</sup> See Maine Department of Labor/Family Crisis Services (2004).

<sup>2</sup> See Hagemann-White 2002: 44

factors the report emphasises theoretical work on masculinities and focuses the empirical review on protective factors related to the work place, and to changes in work and labour markets over the past years<sup>3</sup>

Both women and men have the potential to act in a violent or non-violent way. In concrete everyday situations, most people have some discretion over how to act but the course of action they choose depends on many factors including the general cultural rules that lay out what is expected or frowned upon depending on one's gender, class or skin colour, the specific behavioural repertoire an individual acquires over the life-course, and experiences with behaviours in the past, which depend heavily on the reaction of others, for example with regard to resolving or managing interpersonal conflicts. Thus, whether one uses or refrains from violence is heavily dependent on context, especially on the prevailing relations of power and the level of acceptance of violence in any given context. Therefore, it is not surprising that in patriarchal societies men are more often the perpetrators of physical violence than women. There are different motives and intentions behind this violence: the preservation or assertion of power, a fear-defence mechanism and problem coping in the hetero- and homosocial context. Hegemonic masculinity, with its emphasis on strength and power over others, and of violence to display one and secure the other, provides one conceptual pathway to explain the more pronounced tendency for men to act violently. However, on the level of individual behaviour the issue is far from clearcut. It is important to recognise the different patterns of violence in order to understand violent actions: homo- and heterosocial violence by men and by women.

For one, it is important to recognise different patterns of violence; motives and circumstances are bound to differ in men's violence against other men and against women, and in women's violence against men and against other women. Second, while the degree of exposure to different forms of violence is likely to influence individual behaviour – through role modelling, peer pressure, reinforcement, and training – it is also likely to vary across social categories (e.g., fistfights, brawls, sexual harassment, combat experience, rape, domestic violence, muggings, robbery). Both boys and girls can become victims of sexual abuse, but girls are violated at higher rates. In warfare men may be more often exposed to combat violence than women, but women may suffer more sexual violence than men. Not only are these different experiences of violence but these forms of violence are embedded in different,

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<sup>3</sup> See also "Work Changes Gender", 5th Framework programme (Puchert et al. 2005).

heavily gendered cultural interpretations and practices: combat veterans are rewarded and venerated as heroes, whereas raped women are punished and despised.

Chapter 2 of this report offers a critical discussion of the concept of protective factors, and chapter 3 introduces theories about men and violence. Using research from several European countries, chapter 4 discusses findings about changing men and masculinities and their significance as protective factors. Chapter 5 gives a structured overview about empirical studies on protective factors. Finally, chapter 6 summarizes the findings, and further ideas for a more appropriable concept will be discussed.<sup>4</sup>

## **2. The concept of protective factors**

Protective factors are thought to protect a person from becoming violent towards others, or from becoming a victim of interpersonal violence, or both. In contrast to prevention, which usually focuses on avoiding danger and on containing negative effects of experienced violence, research on protective factors in the context of human rights violations also focuses on explicitly non-violent environments. What are the prerequisites or conditions for a peaceful and pacifist life? Which circumstances foster the use of non-violent solutions to a crisis or conflict? What are the conditions in which people have never been exposed to interpersonal violence by others?

Explorations of risk and protective factors have become more prominent in the past decade, especially in the context of research on crime prevention, health and child abuse. Concerning crime prevention, risk factors are defined as factors linked to the whole environment of children and adolescents and that indicate a greater probability of the occurrence of criminal behaviour. (DFK n. d., 10). Protective factors act against the occurrence of delinquency and crime and they are also linked to the environment of the individuals. These factors support the prevention and attenuation of negative development during the period of growing up (ibid., 11).

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<sup>4</sup> The interdisciplinary research map of protective factors in work and families, which was planned in this deliverable, is not included, because the whole map is already published (Puchert, R./Busche, M. et al., 2006): Protective environmental factors securing Human Rights. Structured map of literature. <http://www.cahrv.uni-osnabrueck.de>).

Mono-causal explanations are not sufficient to explain delinquency and criminal behaviour; criminological research thus examines multiple interactions of risk and protective factors (Lösel/Bliesinger, 2003; Wetzels, 1997). This approach is also common in research on child abuse, where every case is regarded as being based on distinctly individual combinations of jointly interacting risk and protective factors (cf. Wetzels, 1997: 79 et seq.). Different practical tools have been developed for identifying risks such as social profiling, that is the definition of potential risk factors for later delinquency and the identification of members of groups thought to be at risk of delinquency. In Great Britain, “risk assessment tools” for preventing domestic violence and child abuse belong to statutory service management (Humphreys et al., 2005). In both fields, risk factors mark an important category of variables, consisting of individual or environmental factors that are found to increase the likelihood of negative outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast, protective factors are conceptualised as individual or environmental safeguards that enhance the ability to resist or cope with negative life events, risks or hazards. With this, protective factors are taken as the opposite of risk factors and are regarded as relevant mostly in the context of an identified risk (cf. US Department of Health and Human Services: 2000). This assumption is too shortsighted for an analysis of conditions that enable people to live without violence.

Several aspects of the prevailing conceptualisation of risk and protective factors are problematic. For one, many analyses concentrate on cases where violence has already happened or is likely to happen. Although perhaps useful where immediate intervention is needed, a more general conceptualisation needs to broaden its scope beyond risk and coping with risk, and examine peaceful cultures and environments, non-violent processes and the conditions under which these can be developed and sustained. In addition, the conceptualisation of protective *factors* is often too static. Interpersonal violence is the product of dynamic processes, not static factors. It is also questionable whether a protective factor can simply be assumed to be the opposite of a risk factor. Developments in health research suggest that protective factors should not simply be thought of as the absence of risk factors (e.g., absence of violent role models), but rather as the presence of positive variables

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<sup>5</sup> Risk factor assessment is also used in crime prevention. Some authors harshly criticise this development, mainly because on the one hand new norms and values are established while on the other hand the production of new deviant and risks groups take place, which have to be controlled and excluded from the hegemonic standards (for example by dragnet investigations). The “success” in terms of prevention is questionable. For further aspects concerning security see Lemke (2004).

independent of risk such as configurations of protective competencies (Laucht/Esser/Schmidt, 1997: 263 et seq.).

The increasing reliance on ecological frameworks (Belsky, Heise) indicates that the analysis of any one single factor is rather limiting. To explain non-violent experiences and circumstances, an analysis of processes, symbolic structures (e.g., codes of masculinity in top management, uniforms/dress codes, etc.), organisation cultures, etc. is needed. Single factors do not depict the whole picture, but they can help to guide in the search for other factors, where to make connections between different levels of analysis and to clarify their interconnectedness.

Useful levels of analysis are described in the ecological model by the WHO (Krug et al., 2002), which can be used as a first conceptual framework. It encourages a multi-level, multi-dimensional and integrating approach that reviews protective factors on the level of the individual, the relationships, the community and the society, taking into account the different layers of influence and the interactions between them.

Research on protective processes and structures needs to focus on every level and on the interconnections between levels. This report focuses primarily on levels of community (i.e., workplace) and relationships, while trying to include wider societal structures (culture, values, habitual patterns).

### **3. Theories on violence and men**

In the sociological, psychological and pedagogical literature, violence is, for the most part, no longer described as a deviant, sick form of behaviour; rather, the capacity to commit violent acts is regarded as a possibility inherent to human beings. “A person never has to, but can at any point act in a violent way. An individual never has to, but can at any point kill—individually or collectively, jointly or as a socially specified sub-group; in every situation, fighting or celebrating; in various states of affection, in anger, without anger, with passion, without passion, screaming or silent (deathly still)—for any reason. Anyone can do it.” (Popitz, 1992: 50).

But not everyone does. In criminology, sociology, psychology, and anthropology evidence is mounting that only some individuals use violence, that they do so in somewhat predictable ways (although it remains difficult to predict individual actions), that the use of violence is

related – in complex ways – to social inequality, and that gender (along with other dimensions of inequality) structures the use of violence in specific ways.

Although gendered patterns in interpersonal violence are well established and much research is available on the situation of victims, fundamental questions concerning how men adopt violent behaviour and which men in which situations become violent have not been significantly researched. There are few studies that explicitly investigate the reasons for non-violent behaviour in men. However, research from different disciplines suggests evidence of cultural, social, and interpersonal factors that seem to protect against violence and encourage non-violence. Examples of these appear in research on communities in which men are not violent to women (Counts/Brown/Campbell, 1999; Lepowsky, 1993), research on intimate relationships (Gottman, 1994; Schwartz, 1994) and research on conflict negotiations (Fisher/Ury/Patton, 1991).

The women's movement and feminist scholars in the 1970s developed the concept of patriarchy to describe gender relations. In this view, male violence against women is understood as an integral component, if not the basis of the system of compulsive heterosexuality. Violence becomes “the symbol for the whole array of disadvantages, humiliation and debasement of women in a society that treats the genders unequally.” (Hagemann-White, 1997: 501) In otherwise differing feminist analyses, male violence is not only the deviant behaviour of individual men, but is rather embedded in the logic of patriarchal male dominance and, thus, male perpetrators of violence can be seen as normal men. Differences in male (and female) living situations and forms of behaviour were often not considered in this view. Male experiences of powerlessness and victimisation, or the non-violent behaviour of men received less attention as did the female use of power and violence.

In the 1980`s theorists started to explore the field of male violence focusing on its function to sustain male dominance and differentiating between masculinities. In the following we are focusing on those concepts and ideas found in masculinity theories that seem helpful for structuring the search for protective factors: habitus, socialisation and differentiation of masculinities. The theoretical frameworks in which these concepts were developed coexist somewhat uneasily and may in part contradict each other; however, they encourage the innovative exploration of different fields of (non-)violent behaviour.

## *Habitus*

With the notion of “habitus”, Bourdieu (1997) attempts to integrate ideas about individual agency and self-determination in the context of social and cultural constraints such as those that may be linked to the social class a person was born into (e.g., life style, language style, appearance, taste etc.). More specifically, habitus presumes that culturally and socially inflected practices, over time, develop into habitual patterns of agency distilled from a person’s life history. One could perhaps say that habitus becomes an arena for agency and self-determination but one that is shaped, and limited, by such social and cultural influences as an individual has experienced over time. The agents themselves may or may not be aware of the extent to which what they think of as their free will is shaped, bounded, and limited. Bourdieu uses this concept in his book “Male Dominance“ (2005) to analyse particularly the male habitus. Focussing mainly on gender differences and (hidden) social structures of male dominance, he also explores homosocial violence between men on a few pages. He proceeds from the assumption that the social ideal of masculinity is not individually achievable, which leads to considerable vulnerability for men. “Paradoxically, it is precisely this vulnerability that leads to the sometimes dogged investment in violent male sports. In our societies, sports—and especially fighting sports—are best suited to demonstrating the visible features of masculinity and to proving so-called masculine characteristics and putting them to the test.“ (Bourdieu, 2005: 93f) Initiation rites in peer groups, schools and the military seek to establish bonds between men and are intended to test the masculinity of the prospective candidate. “As with honour [...] masculinity in its true essence of actual or potential violence must be confirmed by the other men and proven by one's acceptance as a member within a group of 'real men.'“ (ibid.: 94). Reciprocal violence, especially between young men, represents an example of what Bourdieu refers to as a power game. Seen as a masculinity ritual, the fight (and going the distance in the fight) serves to assure one's masculinity, to express it to the others and to form a communal building block in certain male subcultures. Even if men lose in these violent interactions, they still become heroes rather than victims. Injuries and scars resulting from these conflicts are borne in this context as a demonstrative sign of one's masculinity, as masculine decorations. Violence functions as a means of mutual acceptance. Meuser (2002: 67), who adopted the habitus approach, emphasises that competition serves to generate the male habitus. In this respect reciprocal injuries can be referred to in a positive way, because they strengthen identity and create fellowship. In a sphere where this shared culture of competition is lacking, the violation of physical integrity can not be taken as a sign

of acceptance.<sup>6</sup> This is also true for cases of heterosocial violence. Men are not given credit for becoming a victim of female violence. Women, who are mostly excluded from places of male violent culture (military, youth gangs etc.), are seldom in the position to gain a higher status by using violence. At the same time, their vulnerability is culturally tied to femininity. According to Meuser, the social construction of masculinity is based on this double logic of distinction and dominance. Besides the competition and distance with other men, masculinities are constituted through practical and symbolic struggles against (and over) women. Strategies to break these mechanisms, the effects of male bonding in the sense of protection – for example a certain concept of male care - as well as the development of non-violent habitus have not been central to research up to now, but nevertheless these topics are touched on in other studies focussing, for example, on workplace violence or socialisation.

### *Socialisation*

Other approaches emphasise more the motivations of violent men. From these perspectives violence committed by individuals is often understood not only as a means of extending and maintaining power, but also as a means for compensating the perceived or actual lack of power or manliness. For example, Kaufmann (1993, 1996) points out that violence is a way of combating doubts about one's own masculinity. Underlying this analysis of violence is the idea of a fundamental "fragility of masculinity." In modern society, it is impossible to fulfil all of the social demands on masculinity, which one has absorbed during the process of socialisation. "None of us can always be the man of our dreams—all it takes is one crisis to burst the bubble." (Kaufmann 1993: 34). Kaufmann's application of masculine fragility is limited to heterosexual violence, because "the final confirmation of one's masculinity is our power over women." (Kaufman, 1996:163).

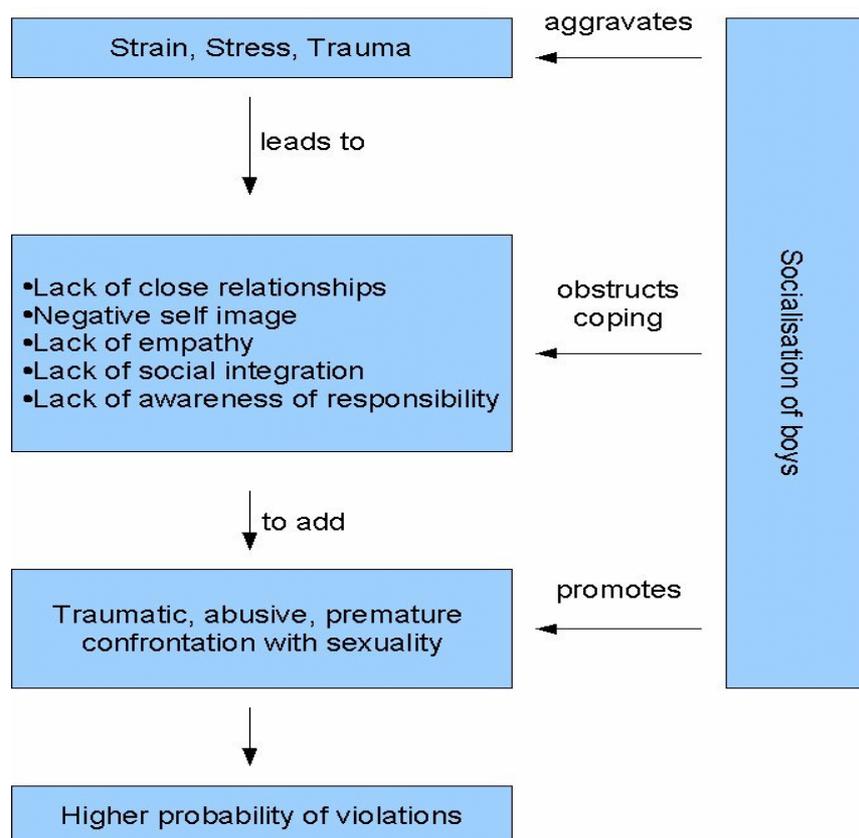
Pedagogical research about violence is typically focussed on male youths as perpetrators. Violence is often viewed as the expression of a deficit in the structure of the personality. "Masculine violence is an expression of a man being socially denied (more than a woman is) the possibility of accepting his helplessness, of having to direct the hate resulting from this condition at himself and to project it onto others." (Böhnisch/Winter, 1993: 197). Böhnisch understands masculinity more as a way of coping with demands than as acquirable possibilities. Violence is understood as a problem-coping strategy. Bourdieu (2005: 90 et

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<sup>6</sup> E.g., this is the case for rape in men's prisons (cf. Smaus 1999).

seq.) interprets male violence and risky behaviour as being rooted in angst, a fear of being excluded from the world of “real men”. Anita Heiliger and Hanna Permien (1995) see violence as well as a defence strategy against fear and also as a consequence of “division in the male’s perception of his body.” The production of bodily and emotional absence is intended to enable youths ’to act like men’ and is also a “reason for the acceptance of violence as a possibility for compensating for the absence of a body by means of world annexation” (ibid.:164). The argument that men lack emotion is attributed by many authors as a basic reason for violence. First, the notion is continually repeated that men in general experience or express less emotion, except rage and anger. That is to say, men dwell in a world of feeling that includes the potential for exercising violence. Secondly, men are accorded with a lack of empathy. It is thus assumed that violence tends to be committed if the man is incapable of empathy (Kaufman 1999:3). It is normally assumed that the cause of this lack of empathy lies in the absence of men in reproduction work—professional and private caring work. Additionally, psychological studies indicate that the amount of empathy can also be linked to power positions: “in some (...) experimental studies, when relative status is manipulated, the person with lower status reads the other’s emotions more accurately. The common explanation is that people of higher status can afford not to notice what others are feeling, whereas those of lower status need to figure out the others’ emotions, because these feelings will affect the others’ behaviour – and thus impact them.”(Larson/Pleck, 1997: 55 et seq.).

Male socialisation, as the place where these patterns are learned, seems to include some “principles” that can lead to violent behaviour and that are influenced by internal and external factors: experience of violence, muteness, distance to one's body, imperative of autonomy etc. (Boehme, 2000; quoted in Pech, 2002: 61). But not all boys who are brought up this way become adult perpetrators. Boehme adds additional factors like the experience of a traumatic, premature and/or abusive sexuality, which can also lead to violent behaviour. This may also occur in combination with the experience of critical situations and loss of social relationships.



Model of violating behaviour by Ulfert Boehme (2000; in Pech, 2002: 61)

Taking a closer look at the socialisation of boys and men, the question is, why don't all men brought up in this way become perpetrators (Sørensen, 1998)? What are the additional/missing elements that make the crucial difference? Where can elements of change be found? Non-violent men might have experienced the same traditional male socialisation and crisis as violent men, but instead of acting violently and limiting their social relations, they chose a different way (Pech 2000: 62). One helpful step in the search for answers here is to widen the view in terms of developing a complex view on men and masculinities, which incorporates the different male strategies of not acting violently.

### *Differentiation of masculinities*

Differentiation between men was described in the newly emerging area of men's studies. In 1985, Carrigan, Connell, and Lee presented the basic features of a theory that differentiated between various masculinities. They proceeded from the assumption that the gender order was not only determined by the subordination of women, but also by the hierarchical structures between different masculinities. In addition to dominant, hegemonic masculinity, they posited

distinctions between subordinate, complicit and marginalised masculinity.<sup>7</sup> Connell shows that the concept of hegemonic masculinity can explain hetero- and homosocial violence: "A structure of inequality on this scale, involving a massive dispossession of social resources, is hard to imagine without violence. It is overwhelmingly the dominant gender who holds and uses the means of violence." (Connell, 1995: 83). He describes two patterns of violence which follow from this situation: "First, many members of the privileged group use violence to sustain their dominance. [...] Most men do not attack or harass women; but those who do are unlikely to think themselves deviant." (ibid.) And as the second pattern, "[M]ost episodes of major violence (counting military combat, homicide and armed assault) are transactions among men. [...] Violence can become a way of claiming or asserting masculinity in group struggles. [...] The youth gang violence of inner-city streets is a striking example of the assertion of marginalised masculinities against other men, continuous with the assertion of masculinity in sexual violence against women." (ibid.). With a perspective on different masculinities, Connell combines concrete personal settings with the question of where women and men are placed in a society and which are the images used for orientation. Following his idea implies that if boys and men get most of their orientation from violent images of masculinity in western societies, then social institutions, images and personal ideals must be studied, analysing to what extent changes from violent ideals to non-violent images of masculinity are possible - or have even already happened.

These theoretical considerations on habitus, socialisation and differentiation of masculinities – in the context of structural gender inequalities – have implications for potential protective factors against violence. It appears that *change* is an important aspect of developing non-violent behaviour, relationships, and societies. Therefore, processes and settings in which changes take place need closer attention. These include mainly gender (e.g., changes from traditional to other forms of masculinities), the labour market (tendencies of more awareness towards bullying, changes in working conditions like flexibilisation etc., distribution of work etc.), and families and relationships (e.g., more equality in the distribution of work, child care, empathy etc.), both in terms of actual practices and conceptual developments. The process of socialisation, its different settings and changing of attitudes within this process were also taken into account as a matter of "exit politics": where and how do men "oppose patriarchy

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<sup>7</sup> The theory of hegemonic masculinity is based on the hegemony concept developed by Gramsci in the 1930s. Gramsci understands hegemony as the predominance of a group that achieves its dominance not solely by pursuing its interests through the use of direct violence, but rather it constructs its dominance through the formation of alliances and consensus building with those who are ruled. To maintain hegemony, an ideology and culture is constructed and also accepted and borne by those who are ruled (see Gramsci, 1983).

and try to exit from the world of hegemonic and complicit masculinity” (Connell, 1995: 220), which also means to break patterns of violence.

## **4. European research about changing men and masculinities**

European research, theory and practices are only beginning to focus on men in a specifically gendered way, although major changes can be seen in men’s working and private life:

- 1) structural changes through the erosion of traditional patterns in paid labour that are challenging men’s traditional roles and the gendered distribution of work;
- 2) cultural changes in the images and social realities of manhood;
- 3) increasing diversity of masculinities;
- 4) changes in care giving that require broader relational competencies such as in active fathering.

The search for protective factors that secure human rights and prevent violations needs to take into account such larger trends in society because patterns of violence and possibilities for protection also change.

The interdisciplinary project *Work Changes Gender* (Puchert et al., 2005) is the first empirical European research project that addresses changing masculinities in a comparative, cross-cultural context. The project examined the implications of changing working conditions on male employees in Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Israel, Norway and Spain.

In Europe, standard work—in the sense of full-time and non-temporary employment with social insurance—is decreasing and is possibly in a long-term process of erosion. Unemployment rates of men and women have converged in the last decades, and the number of men in temporary positions is nearing that of women. The number of men working part-time in the EU has doubled since 1988. Thus, the traditional breadwinner model is on the way to being dismantled, which has deep-rooted consequences for gender relations and the self-image of men. The purpose of this investigation was to identify men’s strategies that both aimed at dealing with these changes and were oriented toward quality of life and equality. Apart from analyzing economic data and engaging in discussions with experts, researchers in

the participating countries conducted a total of 140 semi-structured interviews with men. The majority of the interviewees were men who voluntarily deviated from a normal work schedule and were working part-time.

In working life, it is not only women but also men not working a standard full-time schedule who are confronted with obstacles when seeking higher positions and careers. Men who voluntarily deviate from the full-time norm are frequently exposed to social sanctions and devaluation, although differences across organisations and countries are also visible. These losses in potential standing, power and income are most often consciously accepted. The situation is different in some advanced organisations and countries, in particular where supported by a political framework. In Norway, for instance, one month of parental leave is legally “reserved” for men and is taken advantage of in 90% of the time. A lower assessment of the value of work and a higher one of family is experienced here as a source of satisfaction.

The wish of fathers to be breadwinners and to raise their children can be supported by governments, is realized more and more by men, and is becoming a new model for fathers. One result of the interviews with men in caring situations is that the often new and manifold requirements and changes initially cause feelings of insecurity. Over the course of time, however, this is dealt with through reflection and a change in social contacts and networks.

In Germany and Austria, men are subjected to a deep-seated traditional family model combined with a traditional gender-based division of labour, in which men ought to be breadwinners and women stay-at-home mothers and wives. In these two countries, men have to fight against ideological stereotypes. In Bulgaria, however, men are very pragmatic about taking up caring duties in a society where women demonstrate a very pronounced orientation to professional work. This is not perceived as a threat to men’s masculinity.

In short, contentment outside the “normal work life” is possible for men if these alternative forms of work and life are chosen by the individual. However, when flexibility is not combined with measures ensuring social security, the way towards reconciliation of work and family life seems to be obstructed.

The issues of work and home, and the intersections between them, have provided the foci for the largest corpus of research on men and masculinities in Europe. For example, “fatherhood” has become a key theme for virtually every perspective on the study of men – and for policy-makers at both national and European levels (Pringle 1998a). The involvement in non-traditional occupations and reproductive work offers new experiences for men – and poses

threats to traditional images of masculinity. The research findings that will be summarized below are organized both by subject matter and national origin of the study or studies.<sup>8</sup>

## 4.1 Fatherhood

Šmídová (2005) describes in their cromenet country report that the research on masculinities in the Czech Republic focuses on men's role in family life. As in other eastern European countries Czech men are not the only breadwinners in the families. An equal distribution of caring tasks is the ideal, but in reality in married couple men do less of such care work than women (CVVM, 2003; Cermakova et al., 2000: 102-106), which Šmídová has discussed in reference to different types of paternal and care-oriented masculinities (Smidova, 2002, 2003, 2004; Stastna 1998; Kubickova 2004; Marikova 1999, 2004; Radimska-Dudova 2002).

As the country report of Iovannni and Pringle (2005) in cromenet shows, in Denmark there are a number of studies on the involvement of men in fathering. All of these studies suggest that fatherhood is changing, but the findings also indicate that only some of the men who take on an active role are able to reconcile this fully with their conceptions of masculinity. Olsen (2000) found that fathers on leave tend to interpret their experience of intimacy with the child and responsibility for childcare and parenting in terms of a specifically masculine fatherhood; but she also found a minority who regret their loss of a workplace role<sup>9</sup>. In a larger study, Christoffersen (1998)<sup>10</sup> found that father who took parental leave were more likely to be working in the public sector with wage supplements to the leave and lower risk of dismissal.

Højgaard (1997)<sup>11</sup> analyses the ambiguities in the conceptions of fatherhood on three levels:

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<sup>8</sup> The abstracts of literature in this chapter are mostly taken out of the database of the CROME website (CRITICAL RESEARCH ON MEN IN EUROPE) [www.cromenet.org](http://www.cromenet.org). The database was developed in the EU project "The Social Problem And Societal Problematisation Of Men And Masculinities" and expanded in CAHRV.

<sup>9</sup> "Sociologist Bente Marianne Olsen's dissertation (Olsen 2000) [...] conducts in-depth interviews with 13 fathers [...] being the sole daytime caretaker of a child under the age of three during the then 13 weeks of childcare leave. The study finds that for the most part these fathers do reflect the notion of the "new father" who desires intimacy with their child and assumes equal responsibility for the child's care. A smaller group continues, however, to relate primarily to the workplace they miss and these fathers have difficulty coping with the leave. Fathers on leave tend to describe a new masculine fatherhood that is different from motherhood, particularly in terms of more active play that encourages independence. In this study and in other work (Olsen 1999), Olsen contends that childcare leave (at the time, the 13 to 26 weeks after the total 18 weeks of maternity leave) is a political tool of the labour market that effectively obstructs gender equality." (Iovannni/Pringle 2005) 4f)

<sup>10</sup> The Danish National Institute of Social Research conducted a study on factors related to child growth and development based on interviews with a representative national sample of 5000 families.

<sup>11</sup> Sociologist Lis Højgaard (1997) analysed data from three Danish career workplace settings (a government

- paternal versus parental leave at the institutional level
- different work place cultures at the interactional level
- active father versus the independent hard-working male at the individual level.

In *Fædre og fødsler* [Fathers and childbirth], Madsen, Munck and Tolstrup (1999) focus on the subjective significance of the process of becoming a father.<sup>12</sup> A point of departure is the gradual change in the division of labour in the home and in childcare. The authors ultimately recommend changes in the practice of health care administration in order to fully welcome and integrate fathers into the birth process in their own right and not only as support for mothers. This is because fathers view themselves as more involved in delivery than the health care administration does. In *Fædres tilknytning til spædbørn* [Fathers' bonding to infants], Madsen, Lind & Munck (2002) also stress the importance of fathers' representations of their own mothers as caregivers for understanding the bonding process between fathers and their infants.<sup>13</sup>

As the country report of Hearn and Lattu (2000) in *cromenet* shows, in Finland there are only few studies addressing the involvement of men in fathering. Parallel to the discourse on changing masculinities, which is mentioned in chapters 3 and 5 of this report, these studies suggest that fatherhood is changing. Jouko Huttunen's (1999) describes two main directions: Firstly, there are subcultures where fatherhood is becoming weakened (since 1960s) where fathers are not present, in part related to rising divorce rates. These weakening forms of fatherhood include "urban single parents" and "fathers that never grow up" who cannot take on responsibilities. Secondly, since the 1970s there has been a strengthening of fatherhood when "involved fathers" started to participate in household chores, breaking with traditional hegemonic fatherhood. Huttunen sees involved fatherhood as some kind of "better version" of the traditional father, though it does not question existing role models.<sup>14</sup>

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ministry, bank and medical corporation).

<sup>12</sup> The authors investigate fathers' expectations, thoughts, wishes, fears and actual experiences as well as midwives' perceptions of fathers attending the delivery process.

<sup>13</sup> This links with international research which suggests that one of men's primary inspirations as fathers is their experience of their mothers. It casts into doubt the idea of men *needing* good "fathering" to be good fathers themselves. See Heward, C. (1996) 'Masculinities and families.' Pp. 35-49. In M. Mac an Ghail *Understanding Masculinities*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

<sup>14</sup> In this development, the concept of the "new father" appeared about ten years ago: its basic theme is shared parenting. "New fatherhood" has many social implications, such as changing arrangements for reconciling work and family, as traditional forms of fatherhood change in some cases.

Christoffer Tigerstedt (1994, 1996) has also analysed changes in fatherhood in Finland by using the life story competition data, in which fatherhood is often a major theme. Rapid changes in fatherhood are partly due to changes in work; for example, unemployment can abruptly transform the position of the male breadwinner.

As the country report of Müller (2000) in cromenet shows, in German research there is a growing interest in fathering. The studies suggest that fatherhood is changing, but slowly and with contradictions. German men in general seem to have become more child-oriented than their fathers were, and they plead for more possibilities to combine home and work in order to be active fathers (Zulehner/Volz 1998; BMFSJ (1996). Yet, as Vaskovics and Rost (1999) show, only a tiny group really is willing to share parental leave.<sup>15</sup> „Money“ is cited as the most important reason why fathers did not take parental leave, but 12% of the sample earned the same as the female parent. In 10% of the cases the female parent earned even more before the birth of the first child. This was already found by Notz (1991) in her in-depth study with 28 parents: in the few cases where the mother's income was higher, it was nevertheless her who took parental leave. This shows that „money“ is used to legitimate the gender-specific division of responsibilities within the family only when traditional patriarchal models have to be justified. When the opposite is the case, the argument does not apply.

Money also plays an important role in the decision to become a father. In her pioneering study on men and family planning Helfferich showed that income is a very important factor in predicting if men become fathers and how often this will be the case (Helfferich et al. 2004:21). Lower qualified and lower waged men tend to have fewer children, whereas with women it is the other way round: less qualified women tend to have more children. Higher qualification is a positive predictor for the parenting of men, but a negative one for the parenting of women.<sup>16</sup> The study underpins once more the long working hours of fathers.<sup>17</sup> Forty-four percent of fathers in the West declare to have increased their working time or their professional success in the first three years after their first child's birth.

For Norway Holter and Olsvik (2000) reference in cromenet a study by Brandt and Kvande (2000), which illustrates fathers' leave schemes and how fathers cope with the guidelines established by work and parental leave policies, tracing different choices and constructions of

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<sup>15</sup> 1999 under 2 % are taking parental leave.

<sup>16</sup> This refers only to West-Germany.

<sup>17</sup> 88% of the fathers work full-time, one third even more than 45 hours per week.

fathering. The study indicates that even if the state introduces new policies<sup>18</sup> and applies mild coercion to encourage fathers to use these new policies, there is still variation in how fathers use leave schemes. The great majority of fathers who use the quota do not see it as coercion, but as a right. The authors found four types of fathering practice:

- the 'limit setting' type, where the first consideration is how the father is to get as much time with his child as possible, he thus sets limits on the demands of working life;
- the 'unrestrained' practise, where work comes first and leave is adapted to it;
- a practice based on the state allowing the fathers to take leave: it is a right they have been given and many would not have availed themselves of the leave if it has not been reserved for them;
- a fourth practice which gives little priority to any of the leave rights: the restraining factor is more the rough male environment and accompanying demand for flexibility.

Brandt and Kvande relate different practices to dominant development trends in working life.<sup>19</sup> Based on Branth and Kvande's analysis of those who are bound by traditions and who do not use the leave, it is most likely that only long term normative guidelines stemming from the fact that paternal leave has become the majority practice will have any effect.

In the cromenet country report about UK Pringle and Raynor (2000) focused on fatherhood after separation or divorce and on single fatherhood as well as on the differences regarding research on mothers after separation.

A major piece of recent research on men separated or divorced from their partners and not living with their children has highlighted the men's plight and attempted to explain why a considerable number want more contact and involvement in their children's lives in return for financially supporting the children (Bradshaw et al. 1999).<sup>20</sup> Many studies on fatherhood after separation/divorce do not ask about the whole problematic issues which have occurred between men and their ex-partners and therefore assume that these will have no bearing on men's potential as fathers. This is also the case for a few studies, which have focused on

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<sup>18</sup> E.g., new rights as a paternity quota of four weeks out of a total of 48.

<sup>19</sup> The authors argue that the limit setting and unrestrained practices stem from work organisations with new knowledge based jobs which constitute the core of post-modern working life. These easily become unrestrained jobs where it may become difficult to give priority to child care. As these working conditions are claimed to be the jobs of the future, it may be interesting to ask which type of leave rights Norwegian fathers will be best served by in this situation.

<sup>20</sup> This research interviewed men and neither their ex-partners, nor their children nor the relatives supporting the men.

single fatherhood such as Barker (1994) and Adams (1996). It is not explained in detail what may have happened in the relationships prior to separation/divorce because the research in each case was carried out with men only. That has led to men as fathers becoming a topic, which is regarded as mainly distinct from the topic of men as relationship partners. Fleming and Luczynski (1999) observe the same phenomenon in the analysis of group work in a family centre with men, mostly single fathers. By contrast, research focussing on women who are separated/divorced and/or on professionals involved in such cases found violence in the relationships regarding the time before and after separation (Hester/Radford, 1996; Hester et al., 1997; Hester et al., 1998; Hester/Pearson, 1998; Eriksson/Hester forthcoming; Hester/Radford, 2001). This research has demonstrated vital linkages between some men's violences to their heterosexual partners and those same men's physical, sexual and emotional abuse of their children – both when men were living with partners and children and after separation/divorce (Harne and Hester 1999).

Despite the possible threat of male violence<sup>21</sup>, Pringle (1998b, 1998d, 2000) has suggested that it would be useful if fathers would work with their children to challenge oppressive attitudes/behaviours including sexism. In other words some fathers have particular opportunities, as fathers, to implement a profeminist agenda with their children. Hearn (1999a) and Pringle (1995, 1998b) have both emphasised the centrality of actively profeminist work with boys via informal and formal settings in the project of challenging patriarchal relations of power in society.

## 4.2 Men in non-traditional occupations

Iovanni and Pringle (2005) show in their cromenet country report, how Danish studies reveal the theme of men and care work. Nielsen (2003) critically examined how a variety of discourses converge at new notions of masculinity and caring men and the idea that maleness is a unique qualification for childcare work (Nielsen 2003).<sup>22</sup> In the edited collection *Hvor går*

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<sup>21</sup> Pringle warns that the assumption of fathers in families always being a “good thing” is simplistic and unwarranted because of (a) the amount of child abuse (especially child sexual abuse) perpetrated by some men in heterosexual families generally (Pringle, 1995, 1998b); (b) the more specific connections now identified between some men's violences to both their female partners and their children (Harne and Hester, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> These discourses focus on gender equality (e.g. men in traditionally female-dominated jobs), the labour market (create a gender-blind, flexible labour market), organizations (gender blending makes for a more cooperative environment) and the needs of children (expose children to men's “special pedagogical and care abilities”). At the same time, men who perform a “normal, strong” masculinity are also needed in childcare institutions to serve as role models for minority ethnic group boys and boys with absentee fathers. It is only a recent discussion of the

*grænsen?: køn og arbejdsliv i forandring* [Where's the limit?: gender and work life in transition] (Bjerring et al. 2000) different Danish researchers present investigations on men and care work. Marianne Linnet (2000) conducted an interview-based study with care workers of both genders. Organizational consultants noted the benefits of male care workers as role models for young male clients. They also function as a form of violence prevention in a residential institution for the young, mentally ill. Male staff indicated they were hired, among other reasons, because they were young men.<sup>23</sup> All respondents indicated that it was important to have staff of both genders.

Lotte Bloksgaard and Stina Brock Faber (2004) analysed qualitative interviews with eight male nurses and eight female police officers in *Køn på arbejde: en kvalitativ undersøgelse af mandlige sygeplejerskers og kvindelige politibetjentes arbejdsliv* [Gender at work: a qualitative study of the work lives of male nurses and female police officers]. The authors describe the similarities and differences in terms of each group's "experience" and "handling" of their minority status in hierarchically gendered occupations.<sup>24</sup> Regarding male nurses in this study, different facets of ambivalence are revealed. E.g., the male nurses perceived themselves as masculine, while they felt society perceived them as unmanly. At work they were also expected to live up to a female model of delivering care. Researchers interpreted much of the men's behaviour as attempts to live up to hegemonic masculinity, i.e., stressing the most masculine aspects of the work, ritualizing masculinity in the form of male fellowships and stressing masculine free time activities. They also faced status ambiguities, sometimes ascribed more expertise than was warranted, other times confronting doubt about their nursing abilities.

Krabel and Stuve (2005) conducted a recent German study about men in the traditionally female dominated professions of caring and education and deliver illuminating data on the relative share of men in care and education professions. They also give a review about the different theoretical and empirical approaches, which deal with the phenomenon of men in "female" professions. Besides asking for the motives of men to work in such occupations, barriers that hinder men to choose such a career are also addressed. The authors discuss

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risk of exposure to child abusers in day-care institutions that has called into question the issue of males and care work, as Nielsen notes.

<sup>23</sup> Regarding violence, it is noteworthy that the concept of male care workers performing a violence prevention function in residential institutions takes no account of more international literature regarding sexual abuse in such settings.

<sup>24</sup> Men comprise 4% of the total number of nurses in Denmark and women comprise 8% of the total police force.

strategies of how to win men over as professional caretakers and educators. By describing patterns of gender-related segregation within these occupations, the authors refer to perfidies, which are linked to the global demand for more men in social professions.<sup>25</sup>

For the UK – as shown in the cromenet country case by Pringle and Raynor (2000) –, the topic of men in non-traditional occupations is discussed controversially. Social welfare organizations in the UK are of particular note since one can regard them as sites where public and private patriarchies intersect with particular intensity (Parkin, 1989). Some commentators<sup>26</sup> stress the important role men, as men, can play in welfare work for the benefit of women, men themselves and for children – especially boys (Ruxton, 1991, 1994; Moss, 1994, 1996; Owen et al., 1998). These analyses have been critiqued by other commentators<sup>27</sup> on the grounds that they largely failed to take into account men’s violences in welfare settings (see Pringle 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998a).<sup>28</sup>

### 4.3 Home, work and reconciliation

In their Finish country report in cromenet, Jeff Hearn and Emmi Lattu (2000) mention the great impact state policies have on the possibilities to combine work and family life in Finland. Sixty percent of Finnish men use their right to fatherhood leave (6 to 12 days after birth), but only 4% take parental leave (two weeks to half a year) and 2% take childcare leave (until the child is 3 years old). It is more often young, educated men who take fatherhood leave. The research and development project ”Combining Work and Family Life”, carried out in 1996-1999 by STAKES and the Work Research Centre of the University of Tampere/Finland,<sup>29</sup> found that many men often see the reconciliation of work and family as a positive thing and that they would be ready to reorganise their work in order to spend more time with their family.

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<sup>25</sup> One example for such perfidies is the threat of fostering gender stereotypes: E.g., in childcare institutions with female staff, women have to fulfil all arising tasks. As soon as male colleagues are approaching, the danger of distributing certain task according to gender attributes increases.

<sup>26</sup> These authors argue mainly from within “Men’s Studies” and socialist feminist/profeminist perspectives.

<sup>27</sup> These commentators are mainly influenced by radical feminist perspectives.

<sup>28</sup> Pringle had previously emphasised that levels of violence perpetrated by some men in such settings were very considerable (1990, 1992, 1993). In more recent years, Pringle has sought to develop a model whereby the potentially positive contributions to welfare work by men can be maximised whilst at the same time placing the safety and well-being of service users and other service providers centre-stage (1995, 1998b, 1998d, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> The subcomponents of the project deal with men’s family leave (Lammi-Taskula, 1998b), and the combining of work and fatherhood (Lammi-Taskula, 2000). Women more often make compromises in their personal lives with their arrangements for work and family.

Regarding domestic work in Germany, Ursula Müller (2000) points out that among German men there has long been a contradiction between the ideas they profess and the way they actually live. Many studies show that domestic work was and still is a woman's business, regardless of whether women also work outside the home or whether there are children.<sup>30</sup> In a study by Busch/Hess-Diebaecker/Stein-Hilbers with 15 couples with small children who were trying their hand at "shared parenthood", that is, a concurrent or at least even distribution of parental duties and a lowering of professional ambition, the authors found out that the women were generally disadvantaged by higher workloads and less time and space for rest and recuperation (Busch et al. 1988).<sup>31</sup> Some of the fathers who reduced their working time had to face difficulties in different ways at their workplaces, but also in the family context and with friends, because in the 1980's this model was still very unusual. Asked about their opinion about shared fatherhood, the fathers presented three different standpoints: only a few were totally convinced and satisfied with the model of shared parenthood<sup>32</sup>, another small group of fathers rejected more or less openly the decision for shared parenthood<sup>33</sup>. The largest group of fathers, however, were ambivalent about the shared parenthood they practised. Without their female partners being determined to share parenthood, they wouldn't have done it; this points to both the attractiveness of the traditional model, but also to the potential of open-mindedness.

In another German study researchers found out that men who are married to their partners turned out to do less in the home than those who are not married to the woman they live with (BMJFFG 1986).<sup>34</sup> In a micro-political perspective, reluctance towards marriage seems

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30 Still in the eighties, they did virtually no domestic work (BMJFFG, 1988). In case their partner was in full-time paid employment outside the home and had no children, they did somewhat more than nothing, but by no means half of what had to be done (Metz-Goeckel/Mueller, 1986). Once they became fathers, their involvement in housework declined; if their partner worked half-time, then she could expect virtually no help with the housework from her male partner (for Germany: Metz-Goeckel/Mueller, 1986; for international findings: Hoepflinger/Debrunner/Charles, 1991). Even in the case of those few couples (Hoepflinger et al., 1991) that share housework and childcare more or less evenly, there are still differences emerging.

<sup>31</sup> One criterion for the sharing of parenthood was the reduction of working time by the father. It turned out that in some cases the women in those couples had constructed a connection between having a child at all and their sharing of parenthood: if their partner would not consent to reduce his working time as well as she would, she would not have babies.

<sup>32</sup> Basically because it enabled them to built up a close connection to their child or children and to gain insights into everyday life they would not have had access to otherwise.

<sup>33</sup> They could not remember how it had come, as they were not able to describe any decision processes.

<sup>34</sup> This was proved by a survey in the "old" FRG that compared a representative sample of married couples with a representative sample of non-married couples. If age, income level, educational level, women's economic activity, and other important variables are controlled, the status of being married turns out to be the most important variable to explain the significantly higher amount of housework that non-married male

to be an important resource for women to pursue a strategy of sharing domestic work more evenly.

Neither the study of Jurczyk and Rerrich (1993) nor others (for instance Vaskovics/Rost, 1999) reveal any continuously compelling connection between objective structures and constraints, such as those imposed by the husband's working hours and the family's economic circumstances, or by the number of children and the skill levels of all concerned, that might explain the actual distribution of caring work.<sup>35</sup> Regarding class differences, studies show examples of working-class families with more traditional attitudes in which more of the actual burden of care has been shifted on to the man than in many families in higher social classes. Even a shift worker whose employer hired him only because he had a non-employed wife makes it possible for her to work temporarily by looking after the children before or after his shift, which means that he actually does more childcare than men do in some academic households, which pay much lip service to the right to equality (Jurczyk/Rerrich, 1993; see also Meuser, 1998; Behnke, 1998).<sup>36</sup>

In the previously mentioned UK country report, Pringle points out that the general picture regarding how far men are becoming involved in sharing "house" work with women is more or less the same as that for parenting in the UK, that is, there are indications of more involvement by men in some situations but overall women still bear the brunt of responsibility for domestic labour in heterosexual relationships. In the important study by Speakman & Marchington (1999) of male shift workers, a lack of any major re-configuration of domestic work responsibilities is confirmed, despite the greater labour market participation of female partners and an overt recognition by the men that the structural situations of men and women regarding the labour market are changing. They document how men use covert means of resisting greater home activity such as appeals to their incompetence in this sphere.<sup>37</sup> Pringle

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partners do. Furthermore, an additional sample of in-depth interviewees from both groups revealed that the distribution of housework is a frequent issue of discussion, quarrel, and negotiation between non-married partners, whereas married couples discuss this topic very rarely. In the nineties, marriage as a differentiating factor has no longer been pursued.

<sup>35</sup> For example, there are academics who profess extremely egalitarian views but are able to adduce an abundance of reasons to explain why they are not in a position, at least for the foreseeable future, to practise what they preach and share the caring work more equally with their partners.

<sup>36</sup> West and East Germans of both sexes differ considerably in their evaluation of societal frames for everyday gender life. Concerning home and work, public childcare plays an important role, but this is being argued on. Whole day public childcare, for instance, is regarded as harmful by more than 40% of West Germans, but only 14% of East Germans (BMFJ, 1992), and men are more traditional than women in this respect.

<sup>37</sup> Speakman & Marchington focus on "the dynamic of negotiated patriarchy" which may "redistribute some

also mentions several recent studies that have demonstrated how, to varying extent, patriarchal relations extend into the lives of heterosexual couples in case of retirement. Dallas found in her study of early retired chemical workers (1993) some positive renegotiation of domestic arrangements among a significant minority of her sample but more of them did not renegotiate. In addition, of those who did, a proportion simply “extended traditional gender divisions into retirement by maintaining the boundary between a ‘man’s world’ and ‘woman’s world’ in their leisure activities” (p50). Waddington et al. (1998) portray an even bleaker picture in a similar study of early retired miners with employed female partners. If peace was to reign at home, the over-arching task for the woman was to re-confirm the man’s gendered identity in the absence of the breadwinner role.<sup>38</sup> Pringle found indications from other research that as women and men move into older age, in some respects the oppressive gender dynamics apparent in the above studies may change in some couples. In her large qualitative research project with men and women over 75 years of age Wilson (1995) pointed out that in old age the concern with power aspects of gender relations decreases for both men and women, but particularly for men.<sup>39</sup> This can be linked with several studies which have now explored the hitherto under-researched issue of men as carers of their partners who are disabled and/or in older age (Arber & Gilbert 1989; Arber & Ginn 1990, 1992; Fisher, M. 1994; Parker 1998). This research not only demonstrates that older men and women provide equal amounts of co-resident care (albeit mediated by other factors such as class) but also that many men carers derive considerable satisfaction from this work.<sup>40</sup> Pringle brings out the arrangement of women with patriarchal structures in relationships, and Speakman & Marchington (1999) noted that sometimes the women in their study would actively cooperate with the men’s “negotiated patriarchy” and, similarly, the women in Waddington et al.’s study (1998) often sought to cooperate with the men’s agenda of maintaining a gendered identity in the home, sometimes against all the material evidence. In Dryden’s recent marital study

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aspects of housework while confirming men’s (and women’s) gendered identity” (p102), thereby leading to a “reconceptualisation of the rationale” (p101) for traditional gendered identities in the home. In other words, things may seem to change but the basic gendered inequalities remain intact.

<sup>38</sup> Sometimes they achieved this by maintaining a mutual fiction with their male partner. Waddington et al also stress that throughout this process, the agenda was set by the man and the re-negotiation was not an equal one. Chillingly, Waddington et al. note that where the man’s patriarchal identity could not be maintained, stress would ensue in the home and the “trouble with men then becomes the trouble for women” (p254).

<sup>39</sup> “The emphasis on survival and just keeping going did not leave much room for gender-based assertions of domestic power and there were virtually no power-based roles outside the household available to men in advanced old age” (p111).

<sup>40</sup> Still elder abuse has a strongly gendered quality even though it often relates to violence inflicted on elders by their children or formal carers rather than simply by partners (Holt, 1993; Ogg and Munn-Giddings, 1993; Wilson, 1994; Pringle, 1995; Whittaker, 1996; Hearn, 1999b).

(1999), which encompassed “housework” and parental issues, the women showed resentment about their male partners in the joint interviews, which they dealt with by providing a final positive gloss on the relationship that was often at clear variance with what had previously been said or implied. Unequal gendered power relations can be an answer to the contradictory behaviour of these women, Dryden even refers to the underlying threat of violence from some of the men.<sup>41</sup>

In summary, the country specific research shows that traditional masculinities, which are embedded in a patriarchal system, are resistant towards change. Even though economic developments display opportunities for change, these changes do not happen automatically and immediately. However, in European research the interest in changing masculinities is increasing. As a result, tendencies toward diversification of masculinities can be depicted and certain groups seem to undertake changes; for example, more fathers are willing to adopt concepts of active fatherhood. Still, men who try to abandon their traditional masculinities, for example by taking over caring tasks, are exposed to manifold contradictions and restraints.

## **5. Potential protective factors in the changes of masculinities and labour markets**

### **5.1 Equality and socio-economic changes**

Gender relations in Europe are based on the division of private and public spheres. Masculinities and men's lives are most often focused one-sidedly on professional employment. Whether careerist or provider for the family, the predominant masculinities in conservative and liberal welfare states are centrally grounded in professional employment. This orientation is not simply limited to securing an income. For men in particular, it is work—more than anything else—that structures time, governs the arrangement of social contacts, attributes status and social prestige, constitutes self worth and defines men's engagement with external reality. The work world in capitalist societies is dominated by competition. From the early socialisation in men's lives to acting effectively in the work

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<sup>41</sup> She also refers to economic power disparities.

world, men learn and practise competitive behaviour. This is consistent with the male power games described by Bourdieu.

In their study of emotionality in boys and men, Reed Larson and Joseph Pleck (1997) describe the roots and current effects of a competitive work culture. The current male working culture is rooted in the 19th century, when the male workplace was characterized by combative energy, its free expression of hostility and self-assertion, and the casual cruelty of its rivalries. “Anger and other negative emotions were a by-product of this culture of competitive individualism.” (Larson/Pleck, 1997: 47) The male self-concept used to be based on labour (“the capacity to fill the breadwinner role was the key to masculinity”; Holter, 2003: 79), but a growing number of working biographies of European men now show discontinuity, insecurity, parallel jobs and unemployment.<sup>42</sup> A good illustration of this is the city of Berlin, which, in this respect, may lead the way in the Federal Republic of Germany: here one can notice a 15.1% decrease in the number of men in standard work between 1991 and 1998. In Berlin, of men aged 15 to 65 who are fit for work<sup>43</sup> only 40.3% are now employed in standard jobs. The corresponding percentage for women in Berlin is 31.4%, with a decrease of 7.4% in the same period (Oschmiansky/Schmid, 2000: 20 et seq.).

Today, most countries are in some way affected by processes that are referred to as “globalisation“, “transition“, “deregulation“ or “erosion.“ As far as men are concerned, researchers have referred to such impacts under a variety of concepts, such as “the end of the male normal biography” in central Europe or “breadwinners without income” for certain Eastern European countries (Puchert et. al., 2005). Likewise, depending on the respective historical and political conditions, cultural changes have taken place that are closely interwoven with economic, scientific and other developments. At present, in a process of rapid economic deregulation, genders and gender arrangements have started to become more pluralized and diverse, arranged less around traditional images of masculinity, femininity, the heterosexual nuclear family and its gendered division of labour. Within these changes lie new

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<sup>42</sup> The main structural features of the changing gender relations and (un)employment in the UK has been well-summarised by, among others, Hearn (1999a), Land (1999) and Oakley & Rigby (1998). The number of men in overall employment is falling accompanied by a shift from manufacturing to services such as financial, retail, catering, leisure. At the same time more women are entering the labour market with a particularly marked growth in part-time jobs in the financial and welfare sectors. More men are experiencing unemployment, with unemployment prospects particularly bleak for young, working class and black men; long working hours for many men who are in employment.

<sup>43</sup> This calculation base is preferred, because – in contrast to other studies – it does not only assume the male work force, but also includes unemployed men or students. This more comprehensive approach shows that the concept of the full-time working breadwinner does not represent the whole social reality.

opportunities for violence, due to more competition in the labour market, the effects of unemployment and the lack of suitable gender images for orientation in a changing world. However, despite threats and insecurities these changes also contain possibilities for protection, for example, by replacing the role of the male breadwinner with less competitive and less aggressive forms of masculinities in working life and relationships. This can happen through changes in work cultures, family models<sup>44</sup> and through more equal distributions of work and care. In Western Europe, women's participation in wage labour has been increasing from a relatively low level: women's rising contribution to the household income and the general societal and cultural impact of feminism and equal status policies have changed many men's views. The co-habitation/marriage sphere, like the sphere of wage labour, is in transition, and some changes have arguably occurred more rapidly here than in wage labour. New institutional patterns are emerging, containing more diverse forms of masculinity. This is associated with increasing equality in private life, which affects couples of either sexual orientation, parental duties, and rights following divorce. There is a growing emphasis on gender equality among men, especially in the area of caring and relational competence. These trends suggest that men are developing a new culture of dealing with work and private life.

### *Equality*

It is mainly pragmatic behaviour where changes among men have taken place. So far most evident is the increased amount of time fathers spend caring for their children. However, the absence of men in caring roles has changed less in working life than in the home and family sphere, which today is the primary reason for the continued gender segregation of work life in some parts of Europe (Puchert et al., 2005: 66ff). There are conflicts between novel images of men and traditional stereotypes, whether they refer to the position of men at work or their role at home. Such conflicts are often linked to the question of social values and how power is distributed. General theories about the roots of violence, and theories about violence within gender relations often argue that power imbalances mark the beginning and course of both structural and interpersonal abuse. This suggests that more equal distributions of power would protect against violence and in particular that gender equality will protect against gender-based violence. Indeed, gender-based violence seems a particularly vile expression of gender inequality. Research in societies with little gender-based violence suggests that less violence

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<sup>44</sup> The term "households of choice" can function as an alternative to "family" or the heterosexual norm of partnership. It takes the multitude and diversity of partnership and household models or lifestyles into account, which have become more visible in the last three decades (Adam 2004).

is correlated with more gender equality, lending support to the argument that gender equality protects against gender violence. However, the very process of making gender relations more equal can put women at risk, if abusive men resist such changes and increase their intimidation or violence to keep the old, unequal status quo.

Notwithstanding persuasive theoretical and political arguments the empirical basis for gender equality's role in the protection against interpersonal violence is poorly understood and a critical analysis of such ideas and their implementation is important. The links between gender equality and gendered violence are often complex and riddled with contradictions. In most social and cultural realities women and men are not equal and hierarchies exist also among men and among women. Old forms of social stratification persist; new expressions of sexism, misogyny and aggressive competition emerge continuously. Gender, class, and racial/ethnic hierarchies dominate the workplace and the public sphere and play out at home and in interpersonal relationships. In sorting through the rare literature that covers equality at all, a number of distinctions need to be made.

Equal by what measure? Gender equality is conceptualized and measured in different ways. Assessing women's status relative to men in terms of income, education or access to formal political power is common in sociological research and studies on economic development. Anthropological fieldwork often focuses on women and men's involvement in a variety of cultural practices ranging from household decision making to community networking, economic production, and spiritual authority.

Equal to whom? Gender equality foregrounds differences between women and men, while ignoring or treating as less important differences among women, and among men. This is problematic when the analysis focuses on data from regions or countries that are also stratified by other dimensions of inequality such as class/caste or race/ethnicity. To expand our understanding of gender inequality and violent crime, the study of Vieraitis and Williams (2002) provides an assessment of the relationship between gender inequality and lethal violence against women. The authors use a cross-sectional design with racially disaggregated census data for 158 large U.S. cities in 1990 to assess the degree to which women's absolute status and their status relative to men affect their risk of homicide victimization. Overall, the findings suggest that although certain measures of women's absolute and relative socio-economic status are related to female homicide victimization rates, when race-specific measures are used, the effects hold only for White women (Vieraitis & Williams, 2002).

Equality also need be examined in cultural context. The anthropological evidence that suggests a link between gender equality and little or no gender-based violence is based on research in relatively small societies with little social stratification of any kind (Counts, Brown & Campbell, 1999). Such insights are important and inspiring but it is not entirely clear how best to transfer them to societies or communities of larger size and different patterns of social organization.

In addition, what protects against one form of violence may not protect against another, therefore it should be clarified against which form of violence a protective factor or context is effective. Research has documented multiple forms of interpersonal violence. Studies that focus on gender equality and violence against women relate equality indices to different forms of violence including sexual violence (Yodanis, 2004), homicide (Vieraitis & Williams, 2002; Gauthier & Bankston, 1997), rape (Bailey, 1999), assaults (Straus, 1994; Yllö, 1993).

Levinson (1989) concluded from a comparison of anthropological evidence that different forms of violence against women were not highly correlated and seemed to ‘respond’ differently to different potential protective factors.

For U.S. homicide data some have argued that increases in women’s economic status have protected men against intimate homicide more so than women. The argument is that women with better financial resources are more likely to escape violent male partners and less likely to resort to the ‘last resort’ of killing their abuser: The article by Dugan, Nagin and Rosenfeld (1999) explains the two-decades-long decline in the intimate partner homicide rate in the United States in terms of three factors that reduce exposure to violent relationships: shifts in marriage, divorce, and other factors associated with declining domesticity; the improved economic status of women; and increases in the availability of domestic violence services. The authors' explanation is based on a theory of exposure reduction that helps to account for the especially pronounced decline in the rate at which married women kill their husbands. The authors test the theory with data from a panel of 29 large U.S. cities for the years 1976 to 1992. The results of the analysis are generally supportive of the exposure-reduction theory. The authors consider the importance of the results for subsequent research on intimate partner homicide and call for further evaluation of the efficacy of legal responses to domestic violence. This points to different reasons or motives for why women and men kill intimate partners (at least in the U.S.), which should be addresses in a conceptual analysis of gender equality as a protective factor against interpersonal violence.

Some of the complexities of affected change toward gender equality are apparent in Skjørten's study "Voldsbilder i hverdagen – om menns forståelser av kvinnemishandling [Images of violence in everyday life – men's ways of understanding violence against women]" (1994), that the main route to combating the abuse of women should go via efforts to achieve gender equality. An equalisation of power differences between women and men will create a mutual vulnerability that can set limitations to the abuse of power. Her research is focussed on men's subjective experience and interpretations of violence. Skjørten's starting point is that in cases involving the abuse of women there are two parties with different perspectives of the experience of violence. The purpose of the study was to find out how men who abuse women experience and interpret violence in the relationship, as well as to see how men's interpretations of violence reflect major cultural trends in society. The body of material in Skjørten's study consists of 37 comprehensive interviews, 34 of which are with men who have committed violence, and three of which are with women who have been abused. In addition, the data include 153 interviews with men who have contacted "Alternative to Violence" (ATV) for treatment, and 28 questionnaires filled in by men who have completed the treatment. Skjørten recruited her interviewees at treatment facilities such as family counselling offices and psychiatric polyclinics, through therapists who were particularly committed to working on the abuse of women, and through announcements in the press. The participants were between ages 20 to 62; a considerable number of the men had higher education.

The men in Skjørten's study state that they experienced violence as justified at the point in time and in the situation when they hit their partner. They saw their own violence as a response to perceived provocation from the woman. Most of the men in Skjørten's study were nevertheless of the opinion that from a more general moral standpoint the use of violence was not right. However, many of them were inclined to the view that violence in certain situations could be excused. Many of the men in Skjørten's study also describe acts of violence as limited single occurrences in a relationship that was otherwise good. These men's experience of violence could be called "compartmentalised" since the acts of violence are isolated from the rest of the relationship. The men perceived themselves as "in reality peaceful and kind". The predominant tendencies among the men recruited to ATV correspond to those presented in other research, which shows that violence in relationships is often associated with a weak social network. Studies of networks of friends for men and women in general show that men are typically lonelier than women. This gives them the opportunity to hide the violence from their surroundings. Some of the men saw their acts of violence as connected to more deep-

seated attitudes and presumed they would have to go through fundamental changes in their ways of understanding the world around them as a whole if they were to stop using violence.

It is not sufficient to remove violence if the objective is liberation from positions of subjugation. Provisions must be made for creating a society where different groups have the best possible knowledge about each other which can be seen as a base for more equality. If violence is to be restricted, expectations of male dominance in relationships must be changed and replaced with expectations of equality and mutual respect. Efforts must be made to strengthen the social networks of men who commit acts of violence. One of the objectives at ATV is for men to come into contact with each other, thus becoming less dependent on the woman they abuse. Condemnation and shame will be most effective if people are linked to a close social network. A high level of urbanisation and mobility along with looser bonds between people will weaken primary control.<sup>45</sup> It is important to generate greater openness in and about families. Silence about the family's welfare facilitates the extensive abuse of power in this arena. Efforts in this direction must be based on two facts: that obscuring a stigma is a common way of hiding a personal identity that is not accepted in society, and that both women and men utilise this method to conceal violence.

Since equality is not only a static factor, its features as a process must be analysed. Identifying protective factors is not the same as implementing them. Several literatures converge on a number of factors related to gender equality that appear to protect against violence. They include women's interpersonal, social, and economic autonomy, the degree to which a society acknowledges women as sovereign adults, women's ability to build coalitions, and a society's ability to sanction perpetrators effectively, which includes not only punishment for violent actions but also the disruption of violent masculinities.

These factors seem to protect against gender-based violence once they are in place and integrated into a community's web of cultural practices. However, getting there can be problematic because resistance to the process of becoming more gender equal can increase gender-based violence. Criminological data discussed within status inconsistency theory suggest immediate short-term risks to changing unequal gender orders, even when the long-term prospects may be good. For policy makers and social change agents this means that the

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<sup>45</sup> Primary control strategies contain i.e. the adolescents' belief in their own abilities to obtain their personal goals in spite of societal restrictions. In contrast, secondary control strategies refer to internal processes of adaptation, i.e. the value-shifting of young people due to societal conditions (Reinders 2002).

implementation of protective factors may be accompanied by a surge of interpersonal violence rather than a reduction, at least for a transitional period. Without proper plans for how to respond to increased violence the implementation of gender equality, ironically, might become a risk factor for more violence rather than a protective factor against violence. To avoid or minimize such risks, implementation plans, whether on a local or international scale, will need to include measures to address resistance to more gender equality.

## **5.2 Changes in the image and social reality of men and masculinities**

This chapter shows differentiating tendencies in the field of masculinities and illuminates the possibilities for amicable instead of violent ways of living, which might be included in different, newly emerging forms of masculinity. The connection between masculinity and violence runs through this section as a theoretical thread, a connection that has not been figured out in detail.

“The new man” usually stands for a caring, responsible fatherhood, the balance of job and family work, real partnership with equal duties, reflection, softness, sensibility, ability to solve conflicts by communication, empathy, no fear of showing weakness, respect for women, etc. This is more of a myth than a real existing figure. Detlef Pech (2002) has introduced the term “changed masculinities”, because they moved away from traditional masculinities.<sup>46</sup> But it can be taken as a symbol for the longing for an amicable life. In the analysis of male violence, we therefore look for research on new masculinities which promise to use less or even no violence.

There are alternative forms of masculinities that have been described in empirical and theoretical studies, but only a few of these investigations focus on violence. A study by Zulehner/Volz (1998) is about changes in German men, how they see themselves and how they are seen by women. Twelve hundred men and 800 women were asked about the reality and images of men. Besides taking stock of how far masculinities already have changed, the study had a practical aim: commissioned by the Ministry of Family Affairs, the Community of Catholic Men in Germany and Men’s Work of the Protestant Church, the results were to

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<sup>46</sup> Agreeing that the term “new men” would describe something that has not been there before, and denying the developments inside the gender system (democratisation, differentiation etc.), Pech’s definition of “changed men” will – under the focus on non-violent behaviour – carry everything that we can find about non-traditional or hegemonic masculinities.

help the church institutions to adapt their existing concepts of men's work to the real life conditions of men, so that more men take part and make use of these groups' offers. A second study was conducted by Pech (2002), who asked six men about their concepts of being a "new men" and their attitudes towards violence. The last part of this section reflects the role of crisis in the context of the results of the European research project "Work Changes Gender" (WCG) (Puchert et al., 2005).

### *Men between tradition and change*

In their German study "Männer im Aufbruch" ("Men's new departures") Zulehner/Volz (1998) started from the basic assumption that the working sphere is central to most men. At the same time they are only partially present in the family sphere. As a third thesis the authors assume that men hardly have access to their inner feelings. Asking men about their attitudes towards these three fields (work, family, inner feelings), Zulehner and Volz found four different types of men: two "true" types, traditional men and new men and two mixed forms, pragmatic men and unsettled men. The traditional man performs the classical breadwinner model: he earns the money, while the woman cares for home and children. The authors found 19% traditional men in their sample. The pragmatic man (25%) is characterised by traditional values of men in the workplace and women at home caring for the children, but at the same time he embraces values that usually characterise new men: positive attitudes towards women working, emancipation, and men involved in child care. The new man (20%) wants an equal division of responsibilities concerning labour, family and housework. He thinks that taking parental leave as a father is enriching; he is willing to shorten his work time, and finds compatibility of work and family important. The largest group of men, Volz and Zulehner found, is the group of unsettled men (37%). These men have embrace neither traditional nor new images of men, so unsettled men do not agree with any of these role models.

The authors also asked seven different questions about men's disposition towards violence. Most of the questions did not ask about violent acts directly. They rather referred to approaches to infidelity, "white pride", male society ("Männerbund") or the question of guilt of a female rape victim. Only one question is concerned with direct physical violence<sup>47</sup>. In another, physical strength is mentioned as a means to demonstrate masculinity, with the assumption that some men may experience close relationships with women as threatening. In analysing participants' responses the authors distinguished between three tendencies or

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<sup>47</sup> "Sometimes one has to slap a child to make it come to its senses."

dispositions: strong disposition towards violence (4% of all men), middle disposition (37%) and weak disposition (59%).<sup>48</sup> Concerning the four groups of men, they report that 11% of those men characterised as traditional are strongly disposed to use violence, while none of the new men seemed strongly disposed to do so (pragmatic men: 4%; unsettled men: 1%; *ibid.* 200). Amongst the moderately disposed were 54% of traditional men and 9% of the new men (pragmatic men: 35%, unsettled men: 51%). Thirty-six percent of traditional men have a weak disposition towards violence compared with 91% of the new men (pragmatic men: 45%, unsettled men: 64%).<sup>49</sup> In a later study focussing on the development of men between 1992 and 2002 in Austria,<sup>50</sup> Zulehner comes to the same conclusion: traditional men have a higher disposition towards violence than modern men (Zulehner, 2004: 8). He hypothesizes that modern men are more self-confident and this seems to be a reason why they are not in need of using violence (*ibid.*).<sup>51</sup>

Zulehner and Volz only report about dispositions to use violence; they did not ask about concrete acts of violence. According to them, the dispositions they found include aspects of interpersonal violence, like sexist and racist attitudes, violence against children and other men (Zulehner/Volz, 1998: 199). Even though it is not entirely clear how the authors interpret attitudinal statements such as attitudes about the superiority of the white race as attitudes towards violence, they do assume that with the increase of new men male violence is likely to decrease.

### *Crisis and economic change*

In Pech's German study (2002) the experience of crisis plays an important role. Crisis can be the loss of control, the use of violence, the experience of violence, the asymmetry between self-image and reality, etc. Pech conducted six biographical and guided interviews with men who described themselves as "new" or "different" men, were active fathers, and lived in a

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<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately the authors do not depict how they developed their analysis frame and why they came to this division.

<sup>49</sup> Pech calls some attention to the fact that the category "no disposition to use violence" does not exist at all in this study. He questions whether this is due to the fact that no men could have been put in this category or whether this category has not been brought up because of the close link between male socialisation and violence (2002: 59).

<sup>50</sup> In this study the increase of modern men went from 14% (1992) to 23% (2002) (Zulehner, 2003: 23).

<sup>51</sup> A discussion about self-confidence as a protective factor follows at the end of this chapter.

relationship, which they expected to be with equal rights (ibid. 170 et. seq.).<sup>52</sup> Pech uses three steps to figure out aspects of violence:

1. Which attributes characterise the interviewee as a “new man”? What is different from traditional masculinity?
2. Which role does the fact of compulsory military service/civilian service play? Which basic attitude towards the means of violence is shown?
3. How does the interviewee speak about his own experiences as perpetrator or victim? (ibid. 15)

Similar to this report’s approach, Pech’s leading hypothesis concerns the connection between a self-description as a “new man” and the refusal to use violence. He asserts that there is a close connection between male socialisation and the use of violence, which leads to his premise that a profound change in masculinity can only be reached by men reflecting on their own violent behaviour and putting distance between them and such actions (ibid. 62). If one assumes there is a connection between masculinity and violence, it is worth asking if men are actually aware of this link (which does not mean responsibility should be abrogated in cases where awareness is absent). An important factor for such awareness might be men’s reflection on their own (violent) socialisation as well as their experiences with more egalitarian relationships.

Pech found that violence was not connected to masculinity in any of the six biographical interviews (ibid. 154). The decision to join the German Bundeswehr did not have a significant meaning, neither for the use or refusal of violence nor in the reflection on one’s own masculinities. Concerning the physical violence these men used, they distinguished between aggressive violence (which is at odds with both the public discourse, which defines “new masculinity” as the absence of violence, as well as with their self-images as “new men”) and a defensive and protective use of violence (which seems to reflect an effort to eschew violence as a means of solving conflict, while holding on violence as an option in other circumstances). So even if reflection can help to reject violence as a means of solving conflicts, the connection between masculinity and violence remains strong. In Pech’s study, the refusal of violence can be interpreted as a personal attitude, even leading to personal change, but it is not connected to a reflection on institutional structures and does not lead to

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<sup>52</sup> Further elements in the lives of the interviewees: father of a boy, participation in a men’s group, political examinations of gender equality, part time work, parental leave (ibid. 171).

social action (ibid.: 166). Pech concludes that change is caused by external processes, mostly concerned with work place changes: Those men who experienced a crisis due to changes in their working life changed their relationships towards more equality. Therefore, Pech argues that masculinities will not change by merely reflecting on gender but by changing economic conditions (ibid. 18).

### *Crisis: Chance or threat?*

One major hypothesis in the literature on masculinity and violence is the view that personal crisis is the starting point for the increased probability of men committing violence. Böhnisch (2003) for example develops this idea in a psychoanalytic framework, referring especially to Gruen (1992): “Society not only suggests to men that they should employ power and violence in coping with neediness. It goes further by normatively assuring the legitimacy of a power/violence pattern and thus ‘rewards’ it to a certain extent.” (Böhnisch, 2003: 158) The “crisis” explanation rests on a concept of fragile masculinity. Böhnisch (ibid. 154) speaks of externalization as a main feature of masculinity, and *violence* as an extreme means of transferring problems outwards fits into this pattern. Male violence can be seen as a pattern of acting out helplessness by projecting one's own helplessness and vulnerability, which feels like an inner threat to others who are weaker (ibid. 157). These crisis rather lead to violent behaviour, but there is no answer by Böhnisch how to prevent it.

By contrast, other authors like Pech suggest that personal crisis may actually offer an opportunity for transition to non-violent masculinity. Within the social psychological concept of identity work (Keupp et al., 1999), people seek to find a balance between social demands from various sides and their own needs and wishes. To be successful in balancing these levels and to avoid major crises that may constitute a context for violence, people need resources and abilities (e.g. material resources; social integration and acknowledgement; the ability to negotiate and to overview options; ambiguity tolerance). In general, cultural and social resources in particular will make the difference in how people are able to cope with crises.

From a biographical perspective in the Work Changes Gender project (Puchert et al., 2005), two main categories of subjective representations of changes were found among an international sample of men in atypical working situations, in caring situations or with patchwork-working biographies (Scambor et al., 2005). Asked to reflect on the developments leading up to their actual situation concerning work, private and social life, the interviewed men recalled either (1) unspectacular phases in their lives, with a gradual development

towards what they were doing and corresponding facets of their self concept, or (2) sudden and difficult changes after life events or in situations that turned out to be more demanding than expected. As long as resources are sufficient to cope with actual demands, the individual will feel comfortable with the (subjectively perceived) challenges. Too few resources, however, will result in the perception of an overwhelming situation, and crisis may occur. Therefore, crisis can also be seen as a thread and its outcome depends on different factors, which are not yet researched with regard to their impact on protection against violence.

The Work Changes Gender project also took a closer look at men who performed caring tasks, mainly concerning children within the possibilities of the respective national parental leave regulations and organizational conditions. Interestingly, reducing paid labour and doing more caring work for children (like taking parental leave) was perceived as a very demanding situation by most men interviewed in the WCG project, which suggests the continued influence in men's self-concepts of images such as an "outgoing, instrumental type", a "hard, expendable performer" and especially a "non-carer" (Holter, 2003). For some men in caring situations, after feeling out of place in the new caring context, the resulting gender status insecurity led to a phase of crisis. Similar to what has been called culture shock<sup>53</sup>, different results are possible after "acculturation". Among the positive results reported by the men interviewed was a self-concept change that incorporated care-giving as an aspect of one's life and identity.

People need personal and social resources to develop self-concepts that differ from pre-defined male ideal types and are opposed to dominant masculinities (Scambor et al., 2005: 160 et seq.). To hold and express untraditional attitudes and to behave differently with regard to specific norms requires the ability to deal with social rejection and to maintain a positive self-esteem. The success of such changes depends crucially on being able to reflect and to refer to supportive public discourses. The resources that support doing so are not distributed equally in society. Therefore, the structural conditions play an important role in helping people to cope with crisis, and for men's biographies that means recognizing the importance of work, and the implications for men's development of changes in work and working conditions.

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<sup>53</sup> E.g., see Hofstede, 2001.

### *Conclusions and further questions*

The research reviewed here suggests that to some extent masculinities and the violent behaviour of men change when there is reflection about traditional male socialisation and critical childhood events and/or periods. However, Pech concluded that reflection alone is not enough when he discovered a case in which a man started to legitimise his violent behaviour even though it did not fit into his self-perception. Strategies of legitimisation often function the same way as images of masculinities in which violence is an important part, for example, by emphasising the necessity of being the protector and legitimising violence in self-defence. So, to fully understand violence in order to foster protection, the view on violence must be broadened to include its legitimising strategies *and* the social gender images they refer to (e.g., “the protector”). Even though there are some indications that men’s violence will change when traditional masculinities change—for instance through increased care-giving, part-time work (Zulehner/Volz), self-reflection and changes in economic conditions (Pech) and further personal, social and economic resources to cope with crises (WCG), it cannot be taken for granted that violence will indeed decrease to a relevant extent. Further research in this new field must be conducted. When do adolescent boys reach the point where they are under pressure to fulfil their “socially determined claim on superiority”, especially through the devaluation of girls and women? What do they need to become self confident enough to refuse homophobia? Can there be solidarity among boys and men apart from tendencies towards male bonding and exclusion?

### **5.3 Socialisation**

The socio-economic status of children and adolescents differs from the status of adults. Children and adolescents depend to a large extent on adults in a variety of social settings. Finding protective factors in this field is not only important for decreasing violence in childhood and youth, but probably also in adulthood. Studies, which analysed the connection between violence in gender- or generation-relations, found significant correlations between corporate punishment, violence between the parents and violence in adulthood. For boys, victimisation in childhood is associated with violence in adulthood, whereas girls who became victims of violence in their childhood face an increased risk of becoming victims of violence again in adulthood. Families, school, peers, and the media are among the most important socialisation agents and settings.

In a qualitative longitudinal study Kurt Möller (2001) analysed acceptance and rejection of violence during the early years of adolescence in Germany. He found protective factors concerning families, school and peer groups. The participants comprised approximately 40 boys and girls who were followed for more than 3 years when they were between the ages of 13 and 15. The results are based on the central question of how to explain the trajectory of violence acceptance and rejection in the context of social experiences in family, school, leisure time, and peer groups, and in terms of the development of individual competences such as self-worth, reflexivity, and conflict management skills. One point of focus in the study was a gender-specific evaluation. The results are discussed against the backdrop of a thorough examination of the current empirical status and the prevailing theoretical approaches of (adolescent) violence research. Results indicated that a number of competencies do in fact reduce violence or lead to a relative rejection of violence: the ability to reflect in a differentiated way, an ability to change perspectives that is linked with empathy and the willingness to assume responsibility, the availability of sufficient verbal strategies to solve conflicts, and the ability to construct one's self-worth based on interests and competencies (Möller, 2001: 380). The development of the above-listed skills can be promoted, e.g., by the experience of social appreciation. It is clear that they are to be understood as "results of integration processes" (ibid), and that they occur in the "central social relations of adolescents, that is, mainly in the family, school, and peer groups." (Ibid) Möller clearly establishes the existence of differences in and between gender groups in relation to the acceptance of violence and distancing oneself from violence. He does so in terms of the differing societal "offers" and the ways of coping connected to gender identity: E.g., girls are encouraged to solve conflicts in a non-violent way while boys have to deal with expectations of answering back and physical struggle.

Nine Lives, written by Messerschmidt (2000), one of the most respected authorities on the subject of gender and crime, provides a fascinating account of the connection between adolescent masculinities, the body, peer abuse in schools, and violence. Drawing on penetrating life-history interviews of nine white, working-class, teenage boys in the United States, Messerschmidt unravels some of the mysteries of teenage violence. The book is a comparative analysis of male sex offenders, assaultive offenders, and non-violent boys, and has implications for understanding and preventing such national tragedies as school shootings in the United States.

Messerschmidt found the following protective factors:

- Connection to warm and caring parents who emphasize non-violence.
- The gender division of labour in the non-violent families was considerably more egalitarian.
- Democratizing the family challenges the traditional gender division of labour and therefore provides the opportunity for family members to engage in practices that restructure traditional forms of masculinity and femininity. Such practices are much more likely to achieve non-violence than violence.
- Shared parenting is one example of how to democratise the family. Shared parenting challenges the traditional gender division of labour in the home by demonstrating through practice that men are just as capable as women are of nurturing children and maintaining the household.
- The non-violent boys had intimate relations with an adult male who practised “good fathering” and similar they had mothers who not only emphasized non-violent resolution of conflict but were nurturing, responsive, and engaged with their sons. Such “good mothering” challenges the notion that father absence is somehow a danger to boys. Messerschmidt concludes, that the development of “good parenting” (whether by heterosexuals, homosexuals, or singles) is important because what boys bring to the school flows from relationships that they have with the adults in their lives.

Between 1994 and 1997 Tillmann et al (2000) conducted a representative study of violent behaviours (and the mentalities accompanying them) in fifth grade in schools in the state of Hessen in Germany. The goal was to identify causal conditions for such behaviours. Standardised interviews were conducted with 3,540 male and female students, age 11 to 16 (in 1995; representing 167 classes from 24 schools) and 448 teachers (in 1995). In 1994, 430 school administrators completed and returned questionnaires (out of 727 questionnaires sent; a return rate of 59.1%). Finally, in 1997 the authors conducted problem-oriented interviews for a qualitative school case study.

The authors regard school as a place where formal education is acquired, as a learning environment for the acquisition of social skills, and an arena for experiences of social inclusion and exclusion. The results of this study suggest a number of promising ways of preventing violence: Developing a learning culture through student-oriented instruction, by learning matters that are strongly tied to social environments of pupils, supportive teacher involvement, avoidance of performance pressure, establishment of fair opportunity structures, facilitation of performance, prevention of failure at school, development of a social climate, both in student-student relations as well as teacher-student relations. Further the study

suggests giving support in the acquisition of gender rolls by carrying out selective work with boys, encouraging and increasing the sensitivity of boys and girls, as well as media education with a focus on media violence.

## 5.4 The workplace: dimensions of risks and protection

This section explores the field of workplace violence in terms of gender and of possibilities for protection against violence. The goal of this analysis is to show an integrated picture of the complexity of a field, where structural, organisational and personal factors interact. The discussion includes studies that do not speak directly to risk or protective factors but that suggest protective factors or dynamics. The following discussion draws heavily on research conducted in Germany and Norway.

Bullying, as a core element of workplace violence, has been explored by several representative studies in European countries. Large representative studies have been conducted in Germany (Meschkutat et al., 2002), Switzerland (Kiener et al., 2002) and Sweden (Leymann, 1993), the latter a classic in the field.<sup>54</sup> Definitions of bullying vary across studies. According to Leymann (1993: 22; 33-34), at least one of 45 actions must be repeated for at least once every week during a period of six month to be classified as bullying. The representative German study, “Der Mobbing-Report”<sup>55</sup> (“Report on bullying”, Meschkutat et al., 2002: 19) is less specific, stating that “bullying means that somebody is harassed, oppressed or discriminated and redlined in the workplace for a longer period of time”.<sup>56</sup> Another important resource that addresses various forms of workplace violence is the report

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<sup>54</sup> The inquiry for the German “Mobbing-Report” had two steps. The first step was a telephone inquiry with standardized interviews to get the representative data. The sample was randomized and care was taken to include people who are not at home very much. 4396 interviews were conducted. For the calculation of bullying rates, only employed persons were considered. 535 of the interviewees were identified as victims of “Mobbing”. The second step was a standardized questionnaire including several open-ended questions. This questionnaire elicited written responses and was sent to all persons who had indicated in the telephone inquiry to be victims of “Mobbing”. The questionnaire was also distributed through print media which resulted in an additional 1,317 usable questionnaires (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 13-17).

For the Swiss representative study, 3,220 standardized telephone interviews were carried out. The questionnaire included personal data, questions about interviewees’ conditions and feelings in the workplace, and questions concerning health. Filter questions were used to distinguish between persons who had had bullying experiences and those who had not (Kiener et al., 2002: 7; 55).

Leymann (1993) includes results of a Swedish representative study with almost 2,500 gainfully employed participants (ibid. 84) as well as results from smaller case and sector-specific studies (ibid. 96-106).

<sup>55</sup> For possible differentiations between bullying and the German term “mobbing” – which have converged during the last years – see Di Martino et al. (2003: 3-10).

<sup>56</sup> For more details on definitions of bullying, see Leymann (1993: 21-34); Zapf (1999: 2-3); Kiener et al. (2002); Meschkutat et al. (2002: 18-22); Honsa & Paasch (2004: 28-33). For definitions of sexual harassment, including victims’ perspectives, see Holzbecher et al. (1997: 10; 31-37; 92-97; 160-171; 206-212).

“Preventing violence and harassment in the workplace”, published by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Di Martino et al., 2003). For sexual harassment, including verbal and physical assaults, a main source is Holzbecher et al. (1997)<sup>57</sup>, who deal with empirical studies on sexual harassment in the workplace, first published in 1990. A huge amount of “factors”—mostly risk factors—can be found in the literature on “bullying”. Most of these factors can be put into four thematic categories: Gender, discrimination based on “othering”, competition and cooperation, and power and participation.

There is a large overlap between these categories, particularly between gender and power: gender relations are power relations, and a good deal of power distribution is based on the construction of gender differences. Thus, some of the specific “factors” that can be found in the literature refer to more than one category. However, each of these categories includes aspects that are not fully covered by the others, as we will see in the following sections.

Most national studies do not find significant gender differences in rates of exposure to physical violence or bullying in the workplace (Zapf, 1999: 6-7; Kiener et al., 2002: 50, Di Martino et al., 2003: 37). In contrast, the German “Mobbing-Report” finds that the rate of persons who were victims of bullying at the time of the inquiry was 75 % higher for women than for men (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 26).<sup>58</sup> According to Zapf (1999: 7), such differences are based on labour market segregation<sup>59</sup>.

There are more male than female “main perpetrators” of bullying (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 69; Zapf, 1999: 7-8). Women tend to be bullied by women, while men tend to be bullied by men (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 69; Zapf, 1999: 8).

While the vast majority of studies including men find much higher rates of sexual harassment for women than for men, Di Martino et al. (2003: 27-29; 40) do acknowledge that men often

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<sup>57</sup> Holzbecher et al. (1997) carried out six company case studies – ranging from 265 to 607 interviewees – in the public sector and one cross-sector inquiry with 1981 labour union members, all of them based on a standardised questionnaire in writing. Additionally, 44 personnel officers and 26 victims were interviewed.

<sup>58</sup> This rate was 2.0 % for men and 3.5 % for women. The total bullying rate (portion of persons who have been bullied at least once during their working life) is 12.9 % for women and 9.6 % for men (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 26-27). These findings concerning gender differences are particularly surprising, because the “Mobbing-Report” does *not* include any explicit items about sexualised violations (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 159) – in contrast to other studies, that have mostly found no significant gender differences in bullying rates at all (e.g. Kiener et al., 2002: 71).

<sup>59</sup> Cf.: Leymann, 1993: 87, Meschkutat et al., 2002: 27. “[...] 51 % of women reported a man as their boss in 1995 against only 7 % of men reporting a woman as their boss in 2000. Even in occupations dominated by women [...], men are more likely to be in a hierarchical position [...]. Men are also more likely to have people under their supervision (24 %) than women (13 %).” (Di Martino et al., 2003: 27)

may be victims as well (ibid. 29).<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, findings of an Icelandic study on nurses from 1996 indicate that the gender distribution of sexual harassment is determined to a significant degree by the type of harassment the question focuses on (ibid. 29-30). In addition, according to Holzbecher et al. (1997: 213), more men than women were sexually harassed by persons of the same gender. Women's risk of being sexually harassed at work is notably higher if they are outnumbered by men (ibid. 279). It also seems that similar mechanisms can affect men who work in typical "women's professions" (Lawoko et al., 2004: 43). According to Leymann, bullying and other kinds of discrimination and conflict in such cases arise from situations where a dominant gender-specific working style and culture seems to be challenged by different models brought in by a gender minority (ibid. 101-103).

As gender inequalities definitely play a role for the occurrence, forms, motives and consequences of workplace violence, *gender equality* may be regarded as a protective environmental factor.<sup>61</sup> This means balancing hierarchical positions, economical resources, qualification, social status, care, and various aspects of gender images as well as desegregation of labour markets and work tasks. These factors interact with workplace contexts and specific forms of violence, such as the risk of male minorities in traditional female occupations of being bullied or even sexually harassed. In this example, the workplace (traditional female occupation) underpins patterns of othering by gender stereotypes.

"Othering" means the construction of groups, based on stereotypes, as "others" in order to confirm one's own "normality" (Eggers 2005). Besides gender discrimination, homophobia, racism and discrimination of disabled or poor persons are based on this phenomenon.

Studies on harassment against homosexuals indicate that between 27 % and 98 % of them—a very wide range that probably reflects different research methods—have experienced some kind of harassment (ibid. 30-31). According to the German representative study on bullying in the workplace, 2.1 % of victims assumed their sexual orientation to be one of the perpetrator's motives (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 114).

Even without considering cases of "direct" racial harassment, immigrants, particularly illegal ones, are more frequently affected by workplace violence than non-immigrants because of the prevailing bad and precarious working conditions at casual jobs (Di Martino et al., 2003: 22).

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<sup>60</sup> E.g., a study carried out 2002 in Portugal surprisingly showed that "men in a health centre were more frequently victims of sexual harassment than women" (Di Martino et al., 2003: 29), and a "national study on sexual life" from Finland found a rate of 30 % for men and 27 % for women (ibid. 40).

<sup>61</sup> For sexual harassment, this is strongly suggested by Meschkutat et al. (1997: 18).

Leymann (1993: 98) shows that a much higher proportion of bullying victims can be found among disabled employees than among other workers. More specifically, if a male victim is disabled, his chance of being bullied by a woman is much higher than for other male victims (ibid. 87-88; 99).<sup>62</sup>

In the German “Mobbing-Report”, 17.7 % of victims assumed that “my personal lifestyle” was one of the bully's motives (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 111). Interestingly, 11.9 % of women compared to 5.3 % of men assume their appearance to be one of the perpetrator’s motives (ibid. 114), a finding which refers to overlapping of various kinds of differences and discriminations. According to Zapf (1999: 16), the self-perception of bullying victims differs significantly from their colleagues, in regard to attitude, performance orientation, conscientiousness/rigidity and uncertainty/avoidance. There are also clues for high or low self-worth as risk factors (for becoming perpetrator as well as victim) (ibid. 15-16; Di Martino et al., 2003: 15-16).

Forms of violence discussed under the issue of “othering” are based on certain societal norms. Whoever differs or seems to differ from these norms concerning gender, sexual preferences, or physical features has a higher-than-average chance to experience some kind of discrimination or violation. Thus, hegemonic societal or organizational norms, such as whiteness, health and heterosexuality, must be questioned and released from their rigid borders towards rather fluid concepts. Without such exclusions and hierarchies protection can be provided by some kind of equality including all the aspects specified above referring to gender, including the empowerment of all who are perceived as “different”. Perceptions of injustice and unfairness are strong risk factors for the occurrence of physical or psychological violence, either against the perceived sources of injustice or against third parties (Di Martino et al., 2003: 17), a finding that supports the thesis of equality- understood as a process with constant reflection on prejudices and norms - as a protective factor.

Workplace violence is often used as an “unfair career strategy” (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 92). Strong evidence can be found for the role of competition as a risk factor. Among the motives for, and causes of bullying assumed by victims, rivalry and envy get high scores in the “Mobbing-Report” (ibid. 111-112; 118-119).<sup>63</sup> In contrast to approaches that locate the risk

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<sup>62</sup> Leymann inquired about disabled and non-disabled members of a South-Swedish labour union who were employed by charity organizations, so these findings are not representative for all disabled people in the labour market (Leymann, 1993: 98).

<sup>63</sup> Zapf’s (1999: 16-17) finding that bullying victims more than other employees tended to believe they had a higher performance orientation than their colleagues also can be interpreted as evidence for competition as risk factor.

factor “competitiveness” in the individual (Di Martino et al., 2003: 15), competition-related factors can also be considered to be fundamentally structural, based on socio-economic relations in working teams and organisations as well as in society, and likely to produce and perpetuate physical as well as psychological violence (ibid. 19-21). Insofar as it exists, it is encouraging to find “a growing awareness [in the literature], that violence and harassment at work are not merely episodic individual problems, but structural strategic problems rooted in wider social, economic, organizational and cultural factors” (ibid. 68). On the other hand, most authors still seem to believe in the “stimulating effect of competition over work competencies, acceptance, appreciation, status and power” as opposed to the destructive processes of bullying (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 131).

A culture of care, based on appreciation of others and a respectful approach to dealing with differences, could minimize the prevalence and negative effects of violence. Empirical evidence is mounting, for example in the literature on deviancy training<sup>64</sup>, that violence becomes less attractive when it is not rewarded.

While superiors apparently tend to have a moderating role in respect to physical violence (Di Martino et al., 2003: 18), it is commonplace in the literature on bullying that the more frequent cases involve employees being bullied by their supervisors.<sup>65</sup> Supervisors are involved in one half to three quarters of bullying cases (Zapf, 1999: 9-10).<sup>66</sup> As Meschkutat et al. (2002: 66) point out this is particularly remarkable because the total number of colleagues is much higher than the number of supervisors.

In the literature on workplace violence, issues of power are often addressed in terms of “bad leadership” versus “good leadership”.<sup>67</sup> “Abdication of leadership, or a so-called laissez-faire style of management may also provide a fertile ground for bullying between peers or colleagues [...]” (Di Martino et al., 2003: 19) According to Di Martino et al. (2003) addressing issues of power in terms of good or bad leadership holds the danger of reducing

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<sup>64</sup> See Dodge et al. (2006); Dishion et al. (1996).

<sup>65</sup> Bullying committed by supervisors is sometimes called “bossing”. For cases where bullies are colleagues, the term “staffing” has been proposed (Honsa/Paasch, 2004: 31).

In cases of sexual harassment, the proportion of supervisors among perpetrators seems to be lower than in cases of bullying (Holzbecher et al., 1997: 265-266).

<sup>66</sup> In Norway as well as in Sweden (Zapf, 1999: 9-10) and Germany (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 64-66), supervisors are involved in almost 50%, in England in more than 70 % of bullying cases (Zapf 1999: 9-10). In the Swiss study, the rate for “supervisor” involvement in bullying is 51.3 %; another 16.0 % of the victims indicate there has been more than one perpetrator, without specification of his or her position (Kiener et al., 2002: 23).

<sup>67</sup> Lack of transparency (concerning decision-making processes) and a lack of willingness to engage in dialogue as well as deficient conflict management and negative responses to criticism are typical features mentioned in this respect (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 125; 132). For additional features of bad leadership, see Zapf (1999: 14).

them to matters of personal and communicational “style” and avoiding other—and probably more important—subjects.<sup>68</sup> Similar to competition, dominance is based on the deeper structures of the vast majority of organizations and most contemporary societies. This concerns in particular the allocation of resources and power. In such a structure, “weak” supervisors are in fact likely to produce problems, but nevertheless one has to be careful with causal conclusion to be drawn about organisations (and societies) where power and resources are in fact shared equally.

Other risk factors for victimisation are young age (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 28), precarious jobs (Di Martino et al., 2003: 27-28) and working in the informal sector (ibid. 22). (Di Martino et al., 2003: 17). These are positions of relative powerlessness.<sup>69</sup>

Another dimension is the opportunity of being able to arrange one’s own work life and its conditions in accordance to one’s needs, including economic and social security.<sup>70</sup> What is required might be called *power of decision-making and discretion*.<sup>71</sup> Di Martino et al. (2003: 19) mention that “people who had neither been bullied nor had observed bullying reported that disagreements at their work place tended to be solved by negotiation”. The ability to solve conflicts and problems by negotiation can indeed be regarded as a *sine qua non* for having *decision-making* power.

People with “inspection, control and general ‘authority’ functions” (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2002: 1) like police officers and security personnel (Di Martino et al., 2003: 37) themselves are at high risk of becoming victims of violence. “Wearing a uniform” is also considered a risk factor (Di Martino et al., 2003: 14). According to the German pilot study on violence against men by Jungnitz et al. (2004: 12-13), “the level of violence to which men are subjected to during military service [...] far exceeded the levels

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<sup>68</sup> Still, this is not only a problem of leadership concepts, but rather a problem of research that is lacking in scope and is uncritical. Zapf (1999: 17) argues that in some cases bullying is used as a more or less rational strategy for attaining a certain goal (which, according to Zapf, in many cases consists of removing the victim completely from his or her place of employment), if supervisors or colleagues do not find a “legitimate” way. Thus, a risky situation is one “where decision-makers believe that they can realise personnel-related decisions, particularly dismissals, exclusively by means of bullying” (ibid. 21).

<sup>69</sup> According to Di Martino et al. (2003: 19), powerlessness can be regarded as risk factor for getting physically violent as well.

<sup>70</sup> There are clues that bullying victims have less room to manoeuvre than other employees and noticeably lower capabilities of influencing issues that affect themselves (Zapf 1999: 13). Similarly, according to the “Mobbing-Report”, 46.4% of victims reported the existence of rigid hierarchies in their enterprise at the time bullying occurred; other features reported by more than 35% were “deadline pressure, stress and bustle”, lack of transparency, obscure work organisation and fear of losing one’s job (Meschkutat et al., 2002: 124) – situations where feelings of powerlessness are likely to emerge.

<sup>71</sup> The German term “Gestaltungsmacht”, which might be more handy and precise in this respect, is quite untranslatable. It literally refers to the power to shape (one’s circumstances). In the following, the term “decision-making power” is meant to include power of discretion and room to manoeuvre.

experienced subsequently in adult life”. In addition, Holzbecher et al. (1997: 262) find that the police have particularly high rates of sexual harassment.

Decision-making power will not be protective without equality. If both are missing, other “protective factors” will probably not be sufficient to protect workers, or might even turn out to be risk factors.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, it is important to distinguish the concept of decision-making power from typical modern management and governance strategies, as these indeed tend to be based on mobilising employee’s motivation, participation and self control rather than on classical authoritarian methods (Lemke et al. 2000), but are still far from actually granting all employees real room for manoeuvre, i.e., granting them more than the right to choose between two bad options.

#### *Workplace violence: Intervention measures and research suggestions*

Regarding workplace violence, some suggestions for intervention and preventive measures can be taken from research conducted in Norway. Norway is ranked highest in Europe with regard to gender division on the labour market. The best way of stopping sexual harassment is to work towards establishing a gender-equal labour market where women and men have the same opportunities for both status and pay.

Nielsen (2003) showed that the connection between destructive leadership, cognitive disturbances and post-traumatic stress poses a challenge: to clarify the development of the connection between the variables mentioned. In keeping with most other surveys on bullying at the workplace, this study had been exclusively based on the victim’s view of conflicts involving bullying. A striking finding was that several of the victims of destructive leadership had also been exposed to bullying from other colleagues – and in addition had experienced secondary harassment from personnel and support staff. A challenge for future research on bullying and destructive leadership will therefore be to map the organisation culture at workplaces where bullying represents a serious problem.

In agreement with this, Frøberg and Sørensen (1992) emphasise that sexual harassment is a working environment problem rather than a personal problem. The researchers point out that the working environment is of great significance for whether sexual harassment occurs at the

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<sup>72</sup> A good example can be found in Di Martino et al. (2003: 16-17): As the presence of others is a *sine qua non* for support, it is no surprise that “working alone” is considered a risk factor for physical violence; but team-working and cooperation can also be risk factors if they are enforced, particularly if linked to inter-team competition for limited rewards (ibid. 20). This illustrates a limitation of the concept of “factors”: The “protective factor” cooperation can even turn into a “risk factor” if other protectors are missing—in this case, *decision-making power* and equality.

workplace or not. To explain the prevalence of sexual harassment, Frøberg and Sørensen present two power systems that function together and that reinforce each other: the gender-divided labour market and the sexualisation of women. The imbalance of power places women in an exposed position. It is emphasised that not all men are happy with a working environment that is marked by social conventions that are both sexual and at times hostile to women.

On the personal level, guilt should be placed at the door of the correct offender. It is important for health reasons to verbalise the situation. The report advises victims to contact the employee union or others at the workplace who are responsible for personnel, and recommends that events should be carefully noted. Victims are advised not to retaliate with the same sort of behaviour since studies from the USA show that those who retaliate cause the situation to deteriorate even further. In collaboration with their local federation, the employee unions should draw up clear guidelines against sexual harassment. Measures could include training programmes for all union representatives and other key personnel, and the trade unions ensuring that the employer has an action plan against sexual harassment. Measures against sexual harassment should be incorporated into the collective agreement, and formal procedures should be developed for the use of sanctions against the perpetrators. Men should be encouraged to talk together, to assist in combating sexual harassment and to reject behaviour and remarks from men that imply sexual harassment. Employee unions as a whole must ensure that men assume responsibility for their conduct. It is also important that all the harassment that occurs –against both women and men – is registered and that the union representatives take the initiative to do something about the problem even if the victims have not complained. Both leaders and the local federation should be informed.

The management also has a great responsibility at workplaces where sexual harassment occurs. Sexual harassment is a concealed subject and leaders should acquire the ability to see and recognise this type of conflict in the working environment and should formulate clear guidelines. Leaders should arrange individual consultations that focus on the relevant terminology with the aim of ensuring that all those concerned speak the same language to facilitate better communication at all company levels. The environment should be discussed, and a project group should work on the factors that emerge from the consultations.

Einarsen, Raknes and Matthiesen (1993) focus on what can be done to prevent and handle sexual harassment at the workplace and in society as a whole. The authors' main point is that sexual harassment is a type of interpersonal problem that may arise at the workplace but that should not necessarily be separated from the rest of the efforts to improve the psychosocial

working environment as a whole. Special focus can be given to sexual harassment as a subject, but it must not be isolated from other endeavours to better the working environment. Society and the authorities must influence the prevalence of sexual harassment through a broad range of direct and indirect measures and policy instruments. This can to a large extent be achieved through education policy, financial policy and family policy. Every attempt to increase equality between the genders will contribute to reducing these problems. Other factors can also have a preventive effect on sexual harassment: education, the dissemination of information, campaigns to change attitudes, and legislation and regulations imposed on organisations. An important factor with regard to education is that the authorities should ensure that the mandate of the educational system includes forming attitudes and building competence on such problems. In the opinion of the writers, the Norwegian school system addresses the subject of interpersonal interaction at the workplace to a far too small extent and does little to prepare young people for this situation.

The authors recommend that both the Norwegian Worker Protection and Working Environment Act and the Norwegian Gender Equality Act, along with the law of damages and legislation on crime, should contain a ban on sexual harassment.

At the level of the organisation, clear rules should be incorporated into the organisation's staff handbooks, and information on the company's or the organisation's attitude to sexual harassment must reach all sectors of the organisation. Information on the rules for assuming responsibility must be monitored. All employees must be aware that they are responsible for preventing the occurrence of sexual harassment. Assigning responsibility to line managers is a prerequisite for ensuring that this is taken seriously. The competence within the organisation must be enhanced. Leaders and employees must increase their knowledge about sexual harassment.

Einarsen, Raknes, Matthiesen and Hellesøy (1994) studied bullying at the workplace and together with the participants in the bullying survey they point to the following main areas of priority and requirements for preventing bullying: First they mention the development of an open and secure climate and working environment. This should be supported by appointing well-qualified managers who are confident, have acquired knowledge of people management and are democratic. It must be ensured, that the working environment is characterised by respect, tolerance and solidarity. Making provisions for the free flow of information about bullying in the organisation, as well as for openness and forums for communication where bullying is brought to light, is also important. Again the appointment of competent union representatives, who are active and aware of the problem, is mentioned. Of course the victims

must be provided with support, help and protection, so they can speak out in safety. The authors suggest the implementation of sanctions against bullying: bullies must be dealt with appropriately. Starting very early to make people feel secure, new employees should be made to feel welcome to the organisation. An awareness of limits is also requested – joking and teasing can be dangerous and may change character.

The authors also claim that the efforts made to prevent bullying at school are an example to be followed at the workplace. Professor Dan Olweus at the University of Bergen has compiled a simple programme of measures that has produced extremely good results. Some of the measures are:

- Arranging study days for teachers and parents with bullying as the theme.
- Giving each class the task of drawing up rules against bullying.
- Holding regular talks with the victims and the bullies as soon as an incident occurs.

Other measures include education, competence enhancement, information activities, the compilation of a specific plan for handling complaints and for counselling, the establishment of an informal non-threatening system for arbitration along with a support service for rehabilitating victims and clear rules for sanctioning violations.

## **6. Conclusions and further perspectives**

This report attempted to compile research on protective factors against interpersonal violence and move toward the development of a new research perspective. Compared to the wealth of theoretical and empirical work on violence, the field of non-violence is relatively barren.

Considering that the concept of protective factors in research on interpersonal violence is quite recent, chapter 2 presented an integrated, ecological approach covering single factors, contexts and processes<sup>73</sup>. Such a broad, multilevel approach is necessary in order not to prematurely narrow the perspective on potential facets of protection. In chapter 3 theoretical concepts were developed that guided the selection and discussion of the protective factor literature and applied it to men and masculinities. The discussion of habitus, socialisation and differentiation in hetero-normative contexts, emphasised the moment of change: change from traditional to non-traditional forms of masculinities, changes in the labour market towards flexibilisation, work distribution, reconciliations etc., but also towards more awareness

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<sup>73</sup> According to the WHO-model, these levels are: individual, relationships, community, society.

regarding work place violence, and changes towards more equality, empathy and care in concepts of family life and relationships. After all, the factors and processes addressed should be able to address notions of the changes necessary to move from violence to peace, and this for victims and/or perpetrators. The studies discussed in this report indeed showed that the moment of change plays a crucial part in such developments. Still, change can be a double-edged sword: Depending on internal and external factors and processes, men and masculinities drift between differentiations of identities and larger scope for action on the one hand and on the other a mere restructuring of traditional masculinities without profound change. This in chapter 4 in selected research on men and masculinities in Europe, and also in the studies explored in more detail in chapter 5. Masculinity types encompass traditional masculinities—omnipotent, heroic, breadwinner, violent—as well as alternative forms of masculine existence, and a small number of empirical studies have found the latter to show decreasing endorsements of violence. Nevertheless, alternative masculinities must be looked at carefully: one cannot simply assume that the emergence of modernised masculinities and new fathers implies an increase in caring masculinity (for oneself, for children); these masculinities also possess the danger of restructuring traditional masculinity, enabling it to merely perpetuate itself in the guise of what is popular or trendy. It becomes clear that social images of men and masculinities, which are used for orientation, change very slowly. Violence is not inherent in masculinities, but it still serves as a means of (re)structuring hegemonic forms and therewith a bipolar hierarchical gender order.

The connection between violence and masculinities requires deeper investigations, especially concerning structures that build masculinities and do not exclude violence. These include military structures present in socialisation and institutions, homophobia, the dichotomy of helpless and weak femininity and protective, omnipotent masculinity, as well as other mechanisms of “doing difference” in a system of gender binarity. Ways of effecting more change must be researched, e.g., individuals’ means of reflecting on their experiences of traditional masculinity and violence, socialisation processes and experiences of personal crisis. Apart from that, strategies used to legitimise violence are also of interest, because they foster the existence of violent cultures and shed light on the images of masculinities that men seek to realise or maintain.

### *Searching for new concepts*

The concept of “protective factors“ has expanded the scope of research on violence, by casting light on factors that may be involved in the elimination of violence, and connecting

with the concept of prevention. However, the concept of protective factors usually does not cover radical counterproposals to conceptual frameworks developed to explain violence. Such counterproposals are necessary though to actively create non-violent environments, structures and cultures.

Improvement is required in the conceptual frameworks necessary for understanding interpersonal violence and, particularly, for understanding the processes that can reduce violence. Although what follows is a critique of “protective factors”, we are not arguing that violence research should drop the concept. Rather, it should be retained but given a new role and orientation, combined with a more process-oriented conceptualisation.

The report has shown that individual “factors” do not necessarily lead to non-violence. They may be a necessary condition but are insufficient for solving the problem. Instead, several factors and processes must be brought to act in concert. Protective factors frameworks sometimes seem to suggest that there is some unavoidable process of violence at work that goes on regardless of what we do, but that can be enclosed, isolated, and made less harmful. In this view violence seems much like a poisonous exhaust that will always be there; the best one can do is to build an effective exhaust system. The idea of violence as an unavoidable, “natural” process in combination with ideas of gender that emphasise “natural” attributes of women and men is often expressed in phrases like “boys will be boys”, “there will always be aggression”, or “violence is unavoidable”. This view lacks a critical approach to violence (or gender). To research non-violence instead of violence is not only uncommon, it also presents many difficulties, often prompting us to wonder whether we need to invent new terms that can describe the opposite of violence and an approach on to how to research it. Thinking about environments and structures conducive to non-violent behaviour might lead in the right direction and appropriate language and concepts will surely develop. Through its development of the concept of protective factors to include processes of structural and personal change, the present report moves the field towards a new approach to researching non-violence.

#### *The health promotion paradigm*

Current ideas on health promotion reflect the kind of process-orientated thinking that emphasises pro-active strategies towards a desired goal (i.e., health, non-violence), above and beyond strategies to avoid undesirable outcomes (i.e., illness, disease, violence). Rather than focusing on how to prevent illnesses, health promotion focuses on developing “positive“ structures in which illness and disease no longer have a place, sense or purpose.

For the field of health, this idea has been developed in the concept of “salutogenesis” by medical sociologist Aaron Antonovsky (1979, 1987). Criticising biomedical sciences and pathological approaches that usually look for causes of diseases and risk factors, he asked why people stay healthy. The concept of salutogenesis refuses to reproduce the binarism of being healthy and being ill. Instead it suggests a health ease/disease continuum, taking into account that everybody has sick parts as well as healthy parts, and nobody is completely healthy or completely ill: Health is seen as a process. Central to this concept is the Sense of Coherence, which functions as a global orientation based on trust that a person has developed and that makes him/her cope successfully with life’s adversities.

With some caution this thinking might be put to good use for understanding why people are not violent. For instance, one could ask how a workplace or an organisation should be structured so that mobbing would not find “unfavourable conditions” in which to take root? Informed by research on risk and protective factors workplaces and other social structures ought to be designed such that they are incompatible with violence.

Until now, research has tended to highlight the contexts and conditions that favour violence while implying that alternative contexts would favour non-violence. For example, if pronounced social hierarchies promote bullying, then such hierarchies would not belong in an environment supposed to foster non-violence. One problem here is a lack of positive vision. Not surprisingly, risk factor research has focused on what should be avoided without necessarily clarifying what should be promoted and developed. Protective factor research tries to move beyond this, but the realm of alternatives to violent context remains relatively uncharted. Thinking in terms of “promotive context”, more than being merely a semantic change, may push protective factors research forward, for example by developing a better understanding of how, mindful of Bourdieu’s habitus, social contexts and individual agency can mesh happily to promote non-violence.

Among other things a promotive context will need to take into account the interplay of protective environmental factors, in particular during the process of change from a context that facilitates abuse to one that promotes non-violence. For example, violence against women in heterosexual partnerships has been associated with women’s economic dependence on a male partner or spouse. Hence, women’s economic independence might protect them against such abuse. However, economic independence does not appear with the flick of a magic wand. It requires a process of change that may include looking for a job, going back to school for an advanced degree, or taking a better paying job that may require a longer commute or

more travel. Abusive men are unlikely to embrace such changes. Instead, women who set out to improve their economic situation often face increased hostility, intimidation or violence from their partner. Thus, the implementation, so to speak, of a protective factor may put women at higher risk unless appropriate safety strategies are in place to minimize or contain concurrent risk factors (such as the partner's efforts to thwart independence).

There are a lot of possibilities for defining such positive visions to foster "healthy contexts" for reducing violence. This model must be developed further and linked to concrete empirical material, both in representative studies as well as qualitative studies that are already investigating existing "peaceful pockets of society"<sup>74</sup>, as we have pointed out in the example of work cultures. Thus, prevalence studies on violence must be further developed with respect to design, so that they no longer exclusively allow for statements about victims, but rather allow for analysable statements about individuals who have not experienced violence. Additionally, such studies should strive to include more of the perpetrator's perspective in order to learn more about the conditions in which people do not become violent.

Can we expect a reduction of violence in a global society that still often continues to endorse and worship violence? This question is as relevant today as ever. Therefore, the opportunity should be taken to establish distinct and progressive models of violence prevention. This requires a clear alternative to violent practices in all areas of society. It can be created by encouraging active gender equality movements together with allied factors, such as caring, social security, participation, diversification, equality with regard to sexual orientation and other democratic reforms. Improvements in working life are very important given the links between masculinities, gender discrimination and work (Puchert et al., 2005). Gender equality and learning to change violent patterns will most likely be among the key factors that promise success for the global community in the future (Breines et al., 2000). The extent of interpersonal violence cannot be lowered without an analysis of structural conditions, life-long processes and cultural contexts.

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<sup>74</sup> "Neither gender equality nor a culture of peace can be observed on a large scale at present; at the most, we can speak of approaches that are to be found in pockets of society." (Godenzi, 2000: 35)

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