



Split the Difference Summary Briefing: TEO Draft Ending Violence Against Women & Girls Framework (October 2023)

Split the Difference asks that The Executive Office (TEO) and their partnering Public Authorities act on the [recommendations made by The Men's Federation Northern Ireland](#), in relation to the proposed Framework and Action Plan. Specifically that:

- TEO reviews their three Human Rights Impact Assessments and mitigate against adverse impacts for male victims arising from the single sex specific approach adopted by the strategic framework and foundational action plan.
- TEO works in partnership with the relevant Partnering Authorities and agrees a positive action plan (led by DoJ/H) to address structural and attitudinal barriers that male victims of intimate violence encounter when seeking protection, support and justice from Public Authorities.
- In the absence of a parallel male victims positive action plan, some actions identified in the foundational action plan should be led by DoJ/H under their inclusive DSAS Framework for action. Specifically outcomes 4, 5 and actions 15 to 19 from outcome 6.

[Read our full consultation response](#)

Split the Difference are campaigning for [a sex specific strategy for male victims of intimate violence in Northern Ireland](#) because:

Police Service for Northern Ireland data shows that:

- 1 in 4 child victims of sexual abuse;
- 1 in 5 adult victims of sexual abuse;
- 1 in 3 adult victims of domestic abuse, and
- 1 in 3 victims of domestic homicide are male.

NISRA research commissioned to inform the VAWG Framework found that:

- Adult men experience similar levels of physical, economic and online violence when compared to adult women.
- Men (12%) and women (20%) both encounter psychological violence.
- Young males (47%) experience online abuse at similar levels to young females (50%), and experience more verbal abuse in person, (69%) and physical assault (59%) than young women (60% & 46%).

Male victims also face unique challenges including:

- Fear of not being believed or losing their children;
- Stigma if their perpetrator is female;
- Victim blaming if their perpetrator is male; and
- Prejudice and discrimination from some support service providers.

Aspects of both the NI Executive's current and proposed Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy are 'gender neutral' in name only. This means male victims and the men and women who support them have to navigate:

- A sex segregated service infrastructure;
- Significant / total gaps in service;
- Exclusion from funding streams;
- Suspicion and sex discrimination.

In our [Report on Gaps in Support and Protections for Male Victims in NI](#) we set out [14 positive action recommendations](#) that are primarily for the attention of The Executive and all relevant Public Authorities, including The Department of Justice, Department of Health and all other Public Authorities represented on the EVWAG Programme and Oversight Boards.