

8th International EFJCA Conference

Building safety together

Engaging Men and Boys, Preventing Femicide and Advancing Risk Management in Integrated Responses to Violence Against Women

Portlaoise, Ireland — 30 November & 1 December 2026

The EFJCA and Laois Domestic Abuse Service, together with valued local partners, welcome you to the 8th International EFJCA Conference in Portlaoise, Ireland, on 30 November and 1 December 2026.

As Europe continues to strengthen its response to gender-based violence and domestic violence, new challenges and opportunities are emerging. While multi-disciplinary collaboration remains at the heart of effective intervention, increasing attention is being given to the prevention of femicide, the identification and management of high-risk cases, the engagement of men and boys as allies in prevention, and the need for stronger accountability and behavioural change among perpetrators.

The conference programme combines keynote presentations, expert panel discussions and interactive Q&A sessions, offering participants both in-depth knowledge and practical opportunities for exchange and reflection. Over the course of two days, the conference will bring together internationally recognised speakers and experts from a wide range of disciplines, including academia, medicine, law, public policy, Family Justice Centers, perpetrator programmes and prevention initiatives. Participants will hear from leading researchers, policymakers and practitioners working at the forefront of violence prevention, victim safety and multidisciplinary intervention.

The programme is organised around four themes:

Family Justice Centres and Multi-Agency Working explores coordinated practice and the role of survivor perspectives in shaping effective responses.

Working with Perpetrators, Engaging Men and Boys, and Bystander Action examines perpetrator accountability, prevention and community responsibility.

Femicide, Risk Assessment and Risk Management, and Forced Suicides brings together research and practice on recognising risk, preventing serious harm and improving responses.

Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Emerging Forms of Abuse addresses sexual violence and exploitation, non-fatal strangulation, abuse during and after pregnancy, and technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

Together, these sessions offer space to share knowledge, reflect on practice and strengthen the partnerships needed to build safer communities.

Participation **in person and online** is possible.

Practical information

Date: Monday, 30/11 – 1/12 2026
Time: 09.00-17:00 GMT (Dublin Time)
10:00-18:00 CET (Brussels time)
Venue: Midlands Park Hotel
Jessop street, Portlaoise – Ireland
Participation: in person and online
Language: English
Participation fee: € 160 in person, € 75 online
Free of charge for Irish participants.
Lunch: to be ordered during registration

Register on www.efjca.eu

Join us in Portlaoise for two days of learning, inspiration and cooperation as we work together to build safer communities, prevent femicide, engage men and boys, and strengthen coordinated responses to violence against women and domestic violence.

For questions or expressions of interest, please contact us at info@efjca.eu

Laois Domestic Abuse Service

European Family Justice Center Alliance

Funded by the European Union

8th international EFJCA Conference

Program Day One — 30 November 2026

Family Justice Centres and Multi-Agency Work

09.00 Registration

09.30 Welcome and Start-Up
Bert Groen, president EFJCA;
Marna Carroll, Director Laois Domestic Abuse Center;
Pascale Franck, vice-president EFJCA;
Ellen O'Malley-Dunlop, Adjunct Professor UL, Former CEO of DRCC and member of GREVIO

09.40 Ministrial address
Minister Jim O'Callaghan, Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration Ireland

09.55 CUAN Perspective
Dr Stephanie O'Keefe

10.05 Gender-based violence: EU policy context
Maria Popova, Policy Assistant in the Gender Equality unit of DG JUST

10.15 Local authority
(Speaker TBC)

10.25 News from the Convention of Istanbul and other international/European conventions and directives – *Marijke Weewauters senior strategic advisor of the Institute for the Equality for Women and Men*

10.35 Voices from Ireland and the EFJCA Voices network
Mary-Louise Lynch, SiSi, collective of women survivors of intimate partner violence
Carine Van Hee, Voice EFJCA

11.00 Coffee break

11.30 Panel – Family Justice Centres and multi-agency practice
Moderator: Bert Groen

11.30 - 11.45 Family Justice Centre practice – *Marie Brown, CEO FJC Foyle*
11.45 - 12.00 Same goal, different paths: multi-agency practice across Europe
Dries Wyckmans, advisor Safe Houses Flemish government
12.00 - 12.15 Voices reflections on multi-agency working
Carine Van Hee and Mary-Louise Lynch
12.15 - 12.30 Moderated discussion and audience Q&A

12.30 Lunch break

Working with Perpetrators, Engaging Men and Boys, and Bystander Action

13.45 Engaging men and boys and working with perpetrators
Sean Cooke, CEO Men's Development Network

14.25 Empowering Bystanders: An all of community response to Ending Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence
Louise Crowley, Professor in the School of Law and Director of the LLM (Children's Rights and Family Law) at UCC

15.05 Coffee break

15.35 Panel – Practice and perspectives
Moderator: Christine Lodge, CEO Safe Ireland

15.35 - 15.50 Optimizing the potential for sustainable behaviour change in work with Perpetrators – *John Doyle, Independent Consultant and Psychotherapist*
15.50 - 16.05 Who Can a Man Call Before the Violence Escalates?
Alessandra Paunzc, director European Network Work with Perpetrators
16.05 - 16.20 [Presentation title] – *Detective Chief Superintendent Thelma Watters (TBC)*
16.20 - 16.45 Moderated discussion and audience Q&A

16.45 Closing reflections: Michelle Walsh, CEO MOVE Ireland
Bert Groen, Marna Carroll and Pascale Franck

17.00 End



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Program Day Two — 1 December 2026

Femicide, Risk Assessment and Risk Management, and Forced Suicides

09.00	**Registration**
09.30	**Welcome and introduction** *Bert Groen, Marna Carroll and Pascale Franck*
09.40	**The Family Justice Response to Allegations of Domestic Abuse: The Findings of a Six Country Empirical Study in Europe** *Shazia Choudry, Professor of Law at the University of Oxford*
10.20	**Are DARDRs a feminist endeavour or a tool of the State?** *Davina James-Hanman, Violence against Women Consultant*
11.00	**Q&A with the keynote speakers**
11.15	**Coffee break**
11.45	**Panel – Research, justice and practice** *Moderator: Tanya Hoogwerf, CEO FJC Filomena Netherlands* 11.45 - 12.00 Hidden violence: an exploration of domestic violence in women who died by suicide – *Floor Van Dalen, Forensic Psychologist PHD candidate Leiden University* 12.00 - 12.15 Femicide: Towards a Comprehensive National Framework for 'Non-Fatal Strangulation' the experience in the Netherlands *Jack Menke, MD forensic specialist - MPH - medical director/CMO* 12.15 - 12.30 Can she trust the State? Femicide, justice and the responsibility to protect *Jolande Ter Averest, Family Lawyer* 12.30 - 12.45 Risk assessment and risk management in cases involving severe domestic violence and potential femicide *Joëlle Tetart, Coordinator of DIViCo for the judicial district of Liège* 12.45 - 13.00 Moderated discussion and audience Q&A
13.00	**Lunch break**
Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Emerging Forms of Abuse	
14.15	**The Support Needs of Survivors of DSGBV: Developing Integrated, Best Practice Responses within the Criminal Justice System** *Susan Leahy, Professor, Centre for Crime, Justice and Victim Studies, School of Law, University of Limerick*
14.40	**The role of pornography in fueling violence against women & girls: A focus on sexual strangulation** – *Ruth Breslin, Director SERP*
15.05	**Non-fatal strangulation in the context of domestic abuse – long term health consequences of domestic abuse** *Catherine White, Professor Catherine White, Medical Director, Institute for Addressing Strangulation*
15.30	**Coffee break**
16.00	**Research perpetrators and domestic violence during and after pregnancy/birth** (TBC) *Dr. Anita Byrne from Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)* *or Dr. Loïc Bourdeau from Maynooth University*
16.25	**Designed to Harm? Technology, AI and Gendered Violence** *Maria Bjarnadottir, lead academic in the field of IT law Reykjavík University*
16.45	**Conference closing: Ellen O'Malley-Dunlop** *Bert Groen, Marna Carroll and Pascale Franck*
17.00	**End**

