Ending the postcode lottery: support services for all

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EVAW: An unprecedented coalition

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- Fragmented service provision and public policy
- Understandable pre-occupation on survival
- Limited work across nations and regions
- Aim = space for thinking, action and campaigning, a collective and coherent voice
- EVAW links 50 service providers, organisations and individuals
  - Across the nations and regions
  - Across forms of violence
  - Plus TUC, WI and Amnesty UK

VAW – an issue whose time has come?

- VAW is at the heart of equality and social justice agendas
- Scale and impacts are huge and across government departments
- Labour government done more than any other since 1997
  - Legal reform
  - New policy and practice
- HOWEVER responses are still fragmented
- Third sector in crisis

Making The Grade

- Yearly audit of government responses to VAW cross department
- Three publications to date
- Low scores overall, with too many departments not seeing VAW as relevant and/or not understanding the difference between VAW and DV
- Important exceptions
  - Home Office
  - CPS
  - Department of Health
  - FCO
  - DfID

Map of Gaps: Methodology

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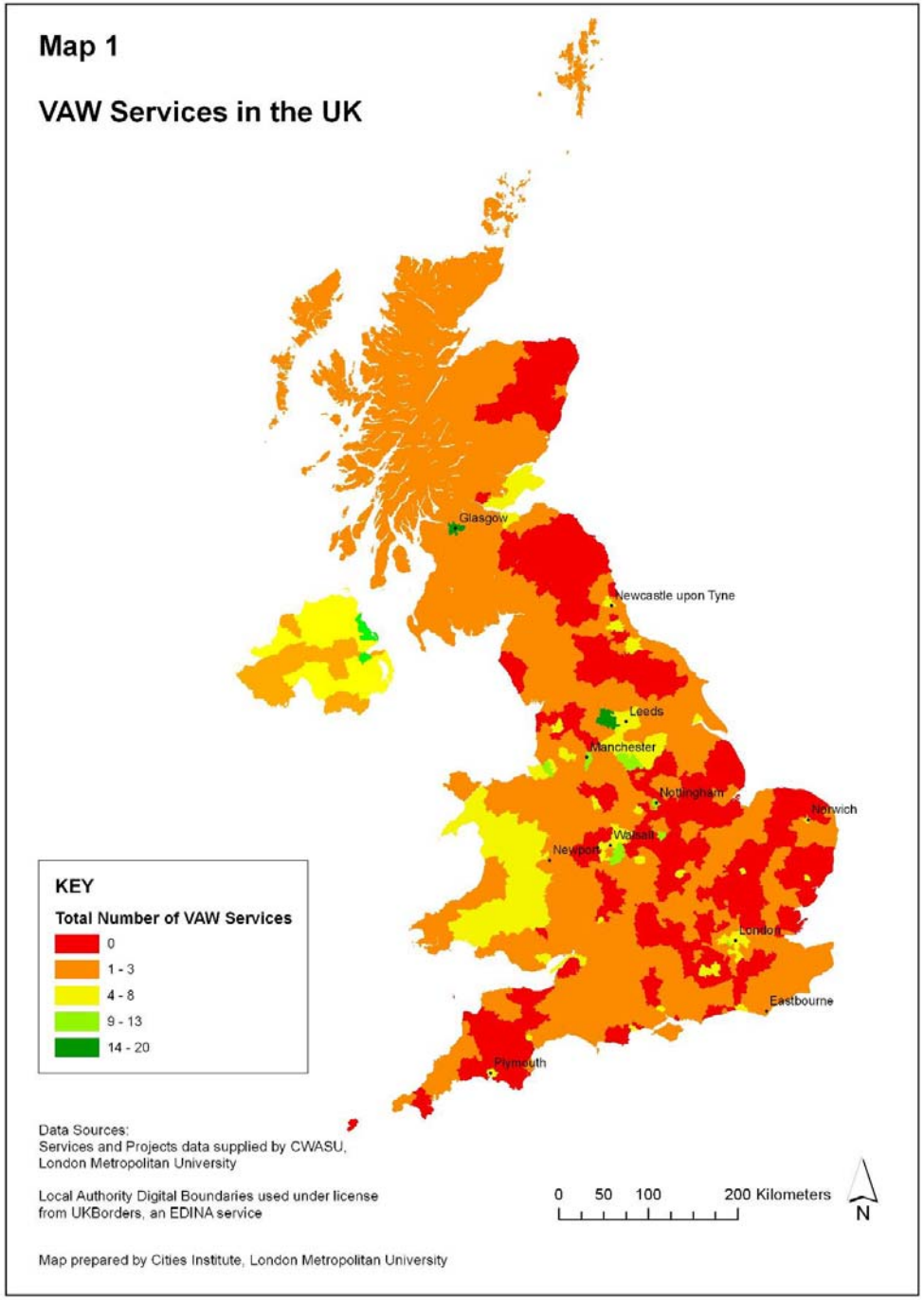
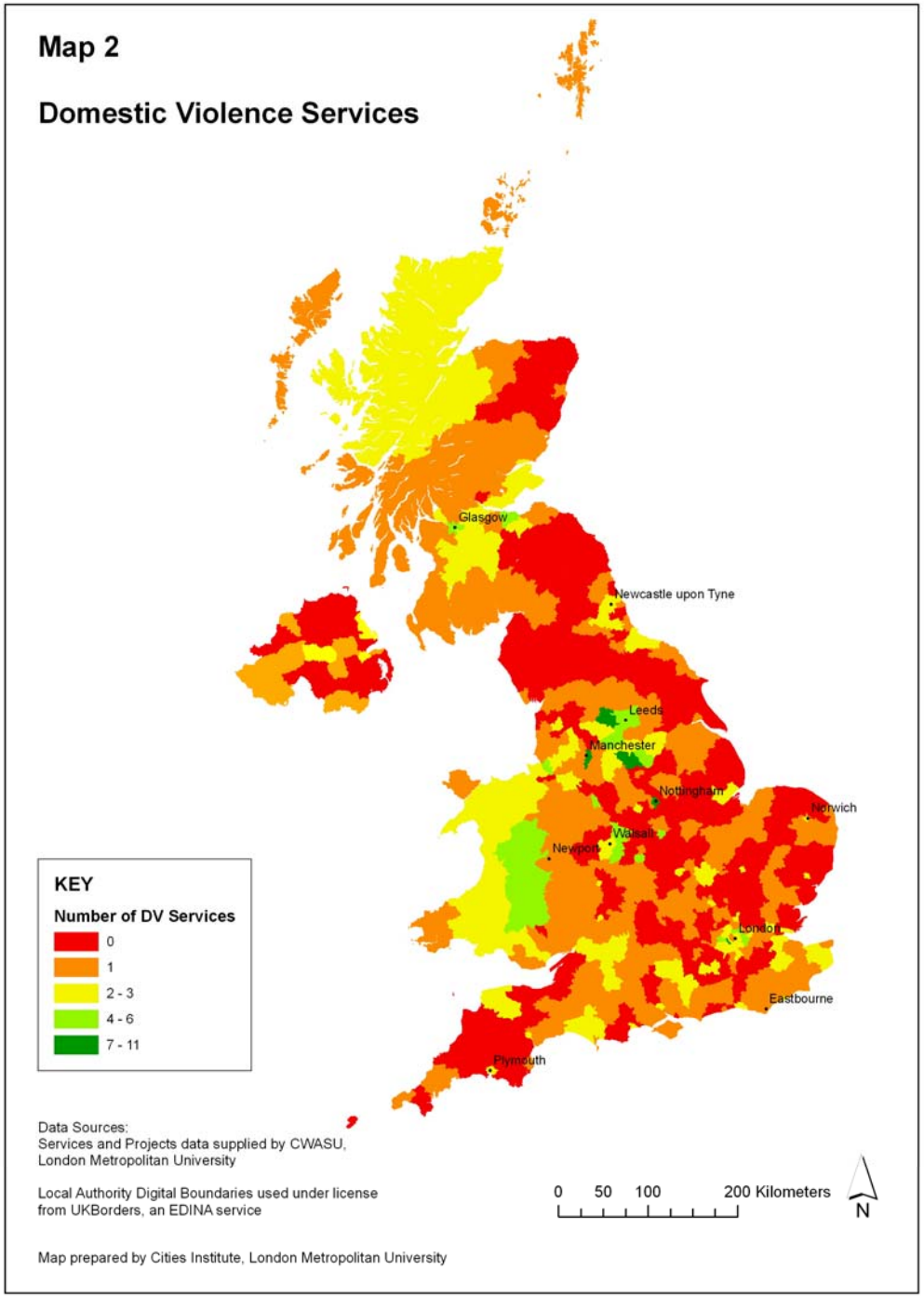
- Data collection
  - Questionnaire distributed to service providers
  - Liaison with umbrella organisations
  - Published listings of services
  - Internet searches
- Data geocoded at local authority level
- No fail safe methodology – no absolute accuracy
- Existence of a service tells us about only one part of availability, nothing about capacity

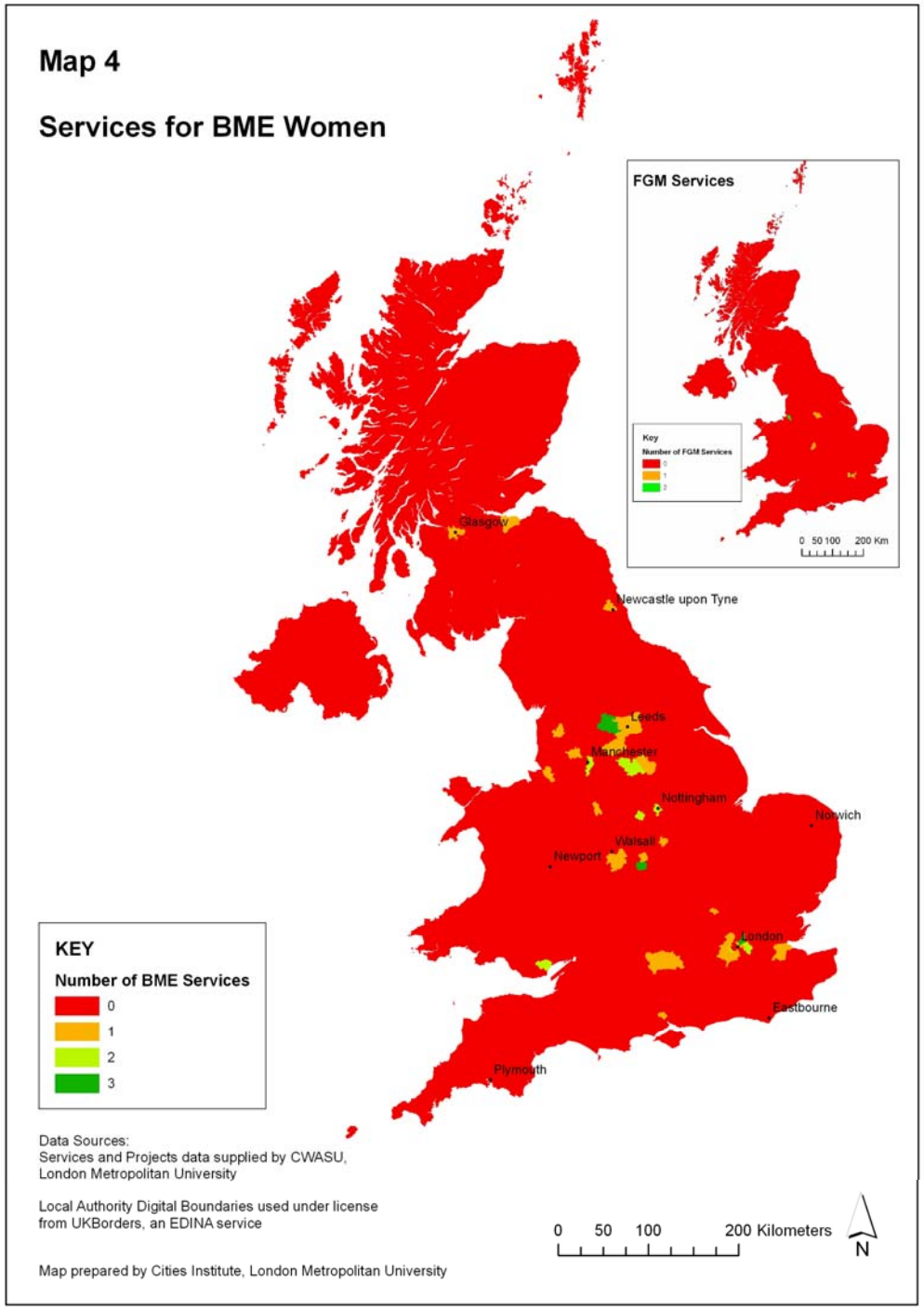
Overall map – all specialised VAW services



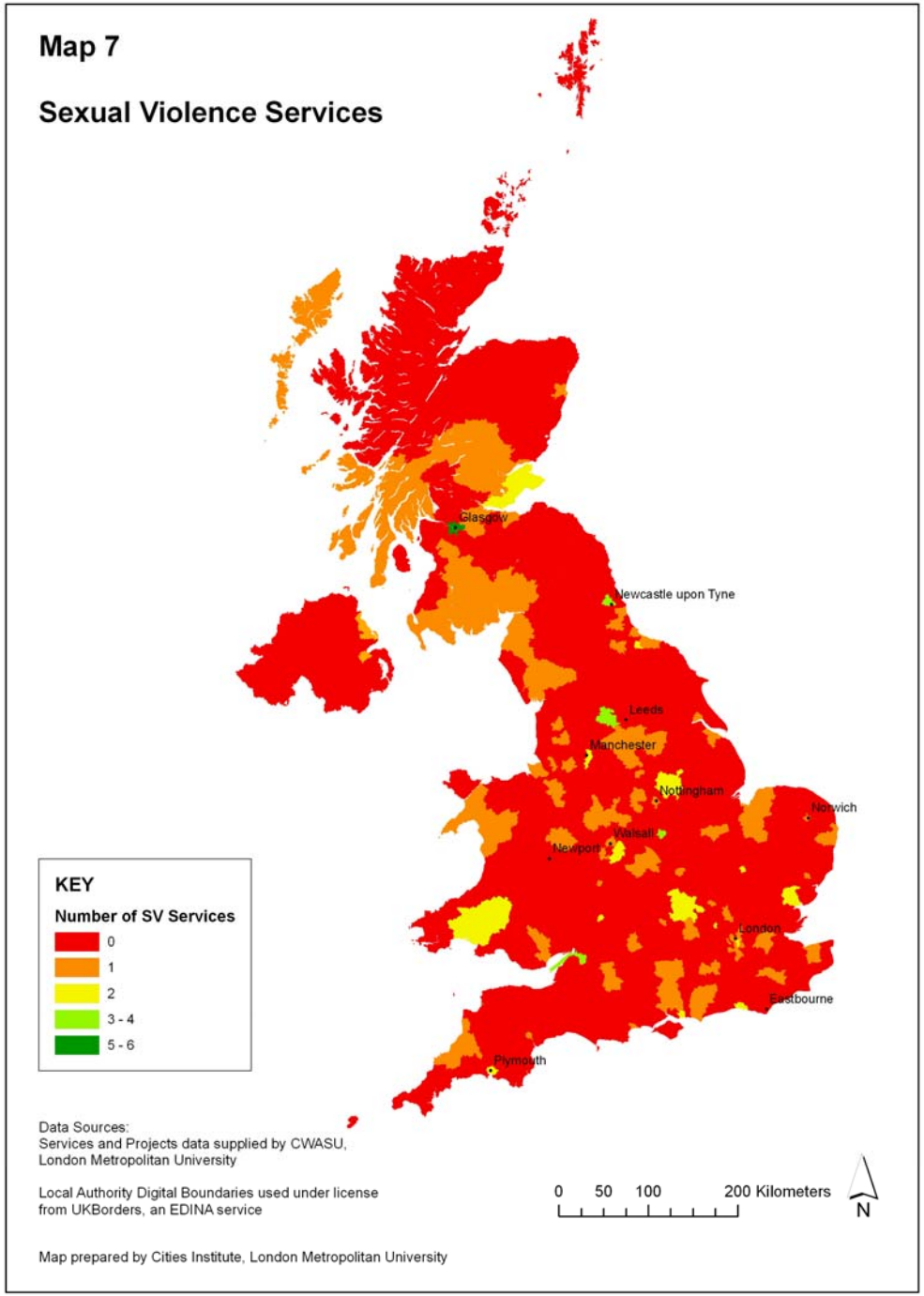
Domestic violence services



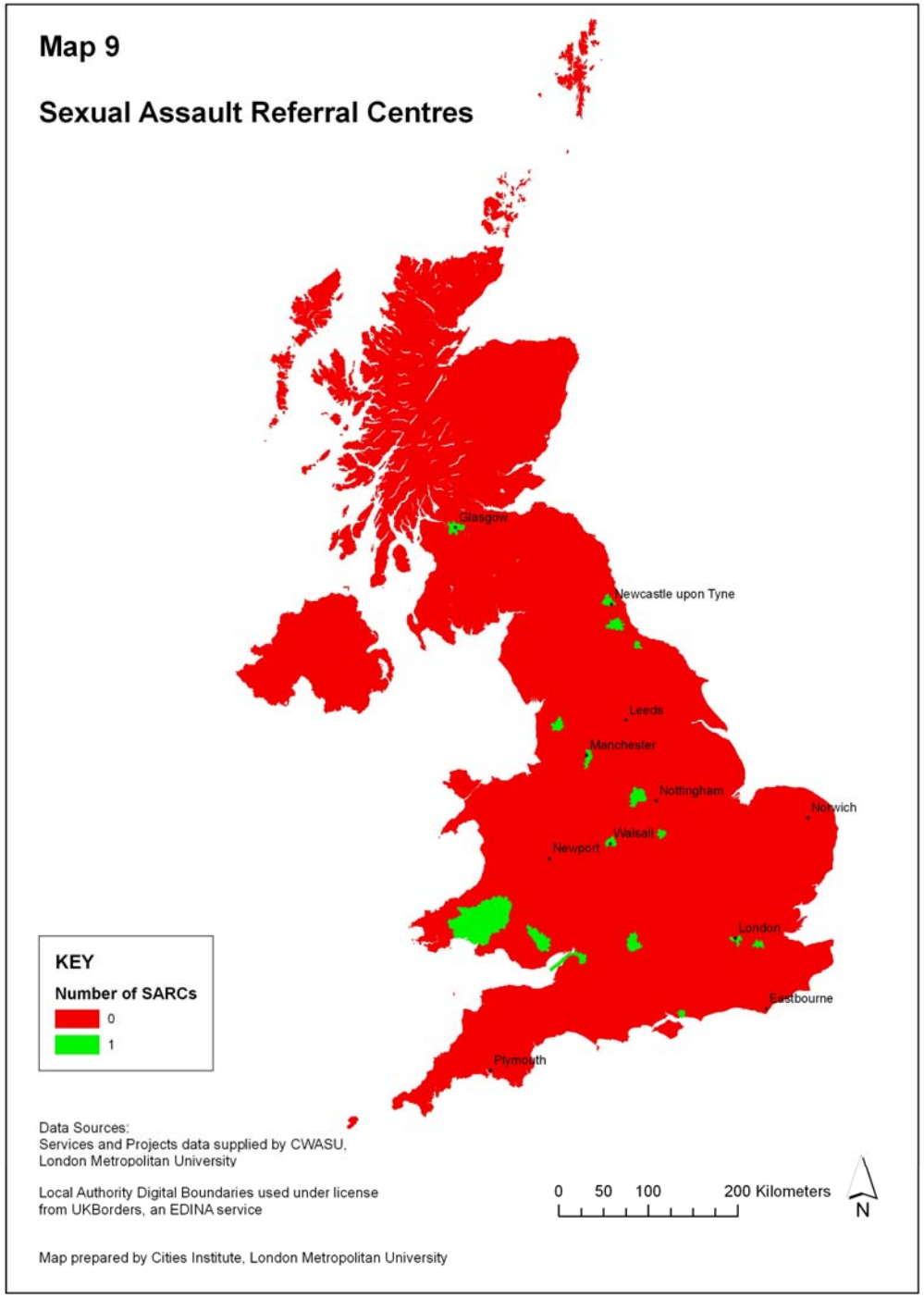
BME women's services



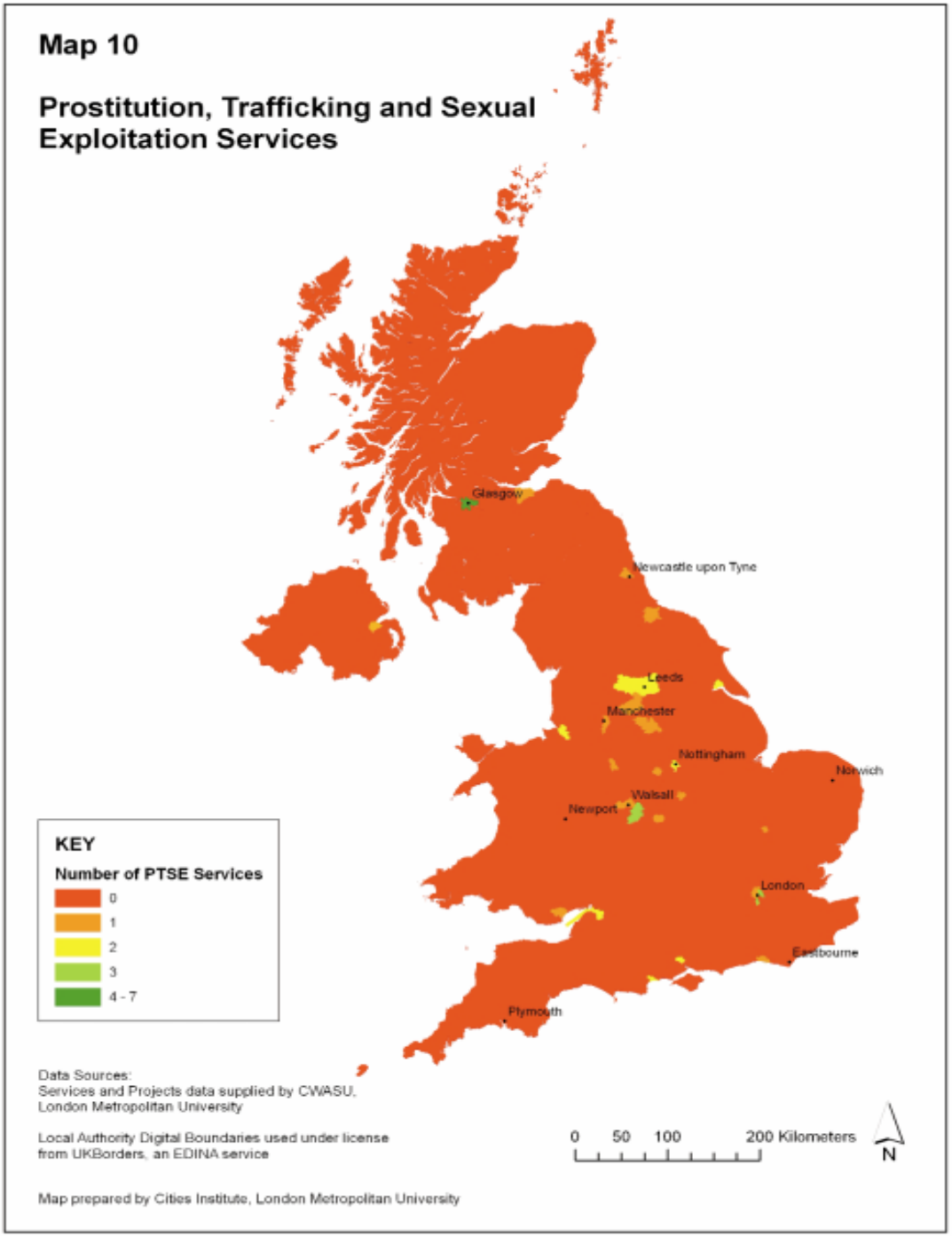
The dearth of sexual violence services



Sexual assault referral centres



Prostitution, trafficking and sexual exploitation



Scotland: a different story

- More equal distribution of provision
- Only part of the UK where there has been an expansion of Rape Crisis Centres.
- Glasgow – the most diverse provision across the UK
- Scottish government strategic approach - a benchmark
  - recognition that violence is a cause and consequence of women's inequality
  - commitment to enhancing capacity and diversity of provision, through a national fund

Policy outcomes

- Confirmation of VAW sector knowledge
  - Postcode lottery means are not enabling women to realise their rights
  - Under-resourcing of sexual violence and BME provision
- Unintended – but also unaddressed – consequences of commissioning
- Expansion in last few years linked to CJS focus – SARCs/SDVCs BUT most women still do not report
- Emergency measures to save what we have

The consequences of unbalanced responses

- Pemberton homicide review published yesterday
- Outcome of concerted campaigning by Julia's family and support services, including Refuge
- Documents systematic failures across the police, health and education services
  - Lack of policy implementation, oversight and support for staff
- A local council failing to develop policy or undertake a serious case review
- Protection and safety not at the forefront

Map of Gaps II

- Partner project with Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Website to be launched early 2009
- Update data AND maps
- Look at:
  - services closed/opened
  - any subsumed into generic services
  - Misinterpretations of GED – provide services for men

An integrated VAW strategy

- EVAW been calling for for 3 years
- Now supported by HAC, EHRC, main opposition parties and CEDAW Committee
  - Government due to make an announcement soon
- CPS has excellent model, Scotland will publish its strategy soon
- GLA will adopt a strategy in April 2009
- *Realising Rights, Fulfilling Obligations*

A fractured response

- Over emphasis on prosecution, overlapping policies, prevention an ‘add on’
- 1 in 3 local authorities don’t have Rape Crisis Centres or other specialised support services

Prosecution

DV, Crime and Victims Act 2004

Sexual Offences Act 2003

FGM Act 2003 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

SDVCs

Non VAW specific legislation i.e. ABH, GBH

Policy

Action Plan for Tackling Violence

Separate initiatives on:

Sexual Violence

Domestic Violence

Trafficking

FGM

Prostitution

Forced marriage

Initiatives such as Supporting People, maternal health

Protection

Civil law remedies

MAPPAs

MARACs

Risk assessment tools

Provision

IDVAs

ISVAs

SARCs

Forced Marriage Unit

FGM Clinics

RCCs

Refuges

Prevention

Perspective

The next steps

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A balanced and logical response

Begin from perspective, overarching policy, prevention at core

Provision of support key – prior to protection and prosecution

Perspective
- Gender Equality
- Human Rights
- Due diligence
- Non-discrimination

Policy
- Integrated strategy on all VAW and intersections
- Agreed definition
- Research and disaggregated statistics
- Analysis of causes of VAW
- Mainstreaming VAW into all policy areas

Prevention
- Education
- Work with perpetrators
- Public awareness
- Self-defence for women and girls

Provision
- Specialised women s sector
- Women s Centres
- Rural provision
- BME women
- Statutory Sector

Protection
- Provision
- Support networks
- Civil law
- Safety in public space
- Non-discrimination

Prosecution
- Data monitoring
- European models of good practice
- Procedural justice for victim-survivors
- Holding perpetrators accountable
- Non-discrimination

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http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/