



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE FACT SHEET & STATISTICS

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Violence against women and their children – Facts and figures

More than 42,000 women were interviewed in the 2014 survey on violence against women of the European Union Agency on Fundamental Rights (FRA) in 27 countries. The results show, that the scale of violence against women is still shockingly high:

62 million women in the EU have experienced violence since the age of 15

- 1 in 3 women has experienced some form of physical and/or sexual assault since the age of 15, translating into 62 million women throughout the EU
- About 13 million women in the EU experienced physical violence in the 12 months prior to the survey interviews. This corresponds to 7% of women aged 18–74 in the EU.
- About 3.7 million women in the EU experienced sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey interviews. This corresponds to 2% of women aged 18–74 in the EU.

Women experiencing physical and sexual violence from their partner or former partner

- 1 in 5 (22%) of all women who is or has been in a relationship has experienced physical and/or sexual violence from the partner.
- Of the women who indicate they have been raped by their current partner, about one third (31%) say they have experienced six or more incidents of rape by their partner.

Violence does not stop in pregnancy and continues after separation

- Pregnant women are especially vulnerable to violence: 42% experienced violence from their previous partner while pregnant (FRA 2014a:22)
- After breaking up with a violent partner, 1 in 6 women continued to be victimised by their former partner.
- 1 in 10 women has been stalked by a former partner.

Children are always suffering from domestic violence!

Children suffer physical and/or sexual violence; and experience psychological violence through witnessing the violence against their mother. According to the FRA survey, 73% of mothers who have been victims of physical and/or sexual violence from a partner indicate that at least one of their children has become aware of such violence taking place (FRA 2014b:13).

WAVE Network and reports

WAVE is working for the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence and the empowerment of women and children in Europe. The network has 117 members in 46 countries, which are mostly national networks of women's helplines, shelters, centres and organisations working to prevent violence against women and domestic violence, as well as individual experts working in this field.

WAVE regularly conducts data collection and research on women's support services in Europe and publishes results in the form of WAVE reports. The following data on women's support services descends from the research conducted in 46 countries for the WAVE report 2015. More detailed data and the full report on all relevant aspects of service provision, prevention, training, government policy and funding, legal measures, and support for women whose partners are in perpetrator programmes is available online:

www.wave-network.org

Istanbul Convention

The main human rights instrument in Europe to eliminate violence against women in Europe is the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). State of signatures and ratification as of 30 November 2016:

- 22 States have ratified the Convention: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey.
- 21 have signed it: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Slovakia, Switzerland, Macedonia, Ukraine and United Kingdom.
- 4 of the 47 Council of Europe Member States are still to sign and ratify: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Russia.

The Convention sets out concrete standards for providing specialist support to women victims of violence and their children. According to the Convention, "Parties shall provide or arrange for specialist women's support services to all women victims of violence and their children." (Article 22).

Monitoring:

In 2016 the group of independent experts of the Council of Europe GREVIO started to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. The monitoring started with Austria and Monaco. In 2017 it will continue with state reports from Albania and Denmark (January), Montenegro and Turkey (May), Bosnia and Herzegovina and Portugal and Sweden Portugal and Sweden (September). Women's NGOs are welcome to submit shadow reports. All other countries please see: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/grevio>

The first NGOs shadow report of Austria is available on the WAVE website: http://files.wave-network.org/home/Austria_NGOGREVIOSshadowReport_September2016.pdf

National Women's Helplines

As the survey on violence against women reveals, the foremost need of women survivors of violence is to have someone supportive to talk to (FRA 2014). Therefore, an easily accessible and widely publicised helpline number is for many women the first step towards the help and support they need.

National women's helplines are essential in aiding women in need to quickly access information on services available locally. A national women's helpline provides counselling for women seeking help, and also for friends, family, members of the public and professionals, seeking advice and information for women they know, or suspect, are experiencing violence.

The Council of Europe Istanbul Convention requires that

at least one national helpline should be available in each country, around the clock and free of charge (Article 24):

- **Available 24/7:** This is obviously important for women in crisis situations who may require emergency assistance.
- **Free of charge:** Calls being free of charge from landlines and mobile phones is crucial to ease access for women to support services.

Existence of women's helplines:

Region	Total Number of National Women's Helplines	National Women's Helplines Free of Charge (n=32)	National Women's Helplines Operating 24/7 (n=32)	National Women's Helplines Free of Charge and Operating 24/7 (n=32)
Europe (46)	33	26	22	17 52%
European Union (28)	19	16	12	10 53%
Countries outside the EU (18)	14	10	10	7 50%

KEY FINDINGS:

- Only 17 countries have a 24/7 helpline free of charge and meet the standard of the Istanbul Convention.
- Only 10 countries in the European Union meet the standard.

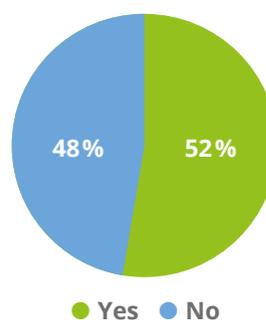


FIGURE 1 – National Women's Helplines Operating 24/7 and Free of Charge

Conclusion:

EU countries need to urgently increase the number of 24/7 helplines free of charge, since currently not even 1/3 of the countries are providing this core service. Women's helplines need to be staffed with trained professionals to provide empowering support for women survivors of violence and should also work closely with other victim support agencies in order to ensure appropriate and effective referrals for both short and long-term support.

Women's Shelters

Women's shelters provide safety, accommodation, counselling and support to women survivors of domestic violence and their children, if any. During the last decades, women's shelters have been established in all but one European country. The WAVE report 2015 was aiming at identifying specialist women's shelters which are fulfilling the standards of the Istanbul Convention to be gender-sensitive and to focus on the human rights of victims. Women's shelters should not only provide "a roof over the head" but offer comprehensive services based on feminist principles of gender equality and an ethic of care (independence, immediate access, non-discrimination, respect and safety at the centre, confidentiality, self-determination, autonomy, empowerment and participation of survivors, support for children, mid- and long-term support,...). The WAVE report was not able to go in-depth regarding the quality of services, thus further research would be needed.

It is of utmost importance that women's shelters are available 24/7 and provide immediate access to women victims of violence and their children. Any bureaucratic or legal barriers slowing down or blocking immediate access of women and children to women's shelters can jeopardize their life, health and freedom, and need to be avoided.

According to the recommendation in the explanatory report of the Istanbul Convention, one place per 10,000 inhabitants should be available (p-81).

Statistic on women's shelters in Europe:

Region	Total population	Number of women's shelters	Number of beds available*	Number of beds missing
Europe (46)	831,096,000 ¹ (100%)	1,842	26,780 ² (32%)	47,560
Countries outside the EU	324,000,000 (39%)	354	5,950 (18%)	22,070
European Union (28)	507,095,000 (61%)	1,481	20,830 (41%)	19,480
"Old" EU countries**	402,201,000 (80% of EU)	1,321	17,900 (45%)	11,500
"New" EU countries**	104,894,000 (20% of EU)	167	2,930 (28%)	7,970

* Beds available" and "beds missing" do not add up to 100% as a surplus in one country does not ameliorate a deficit in another.

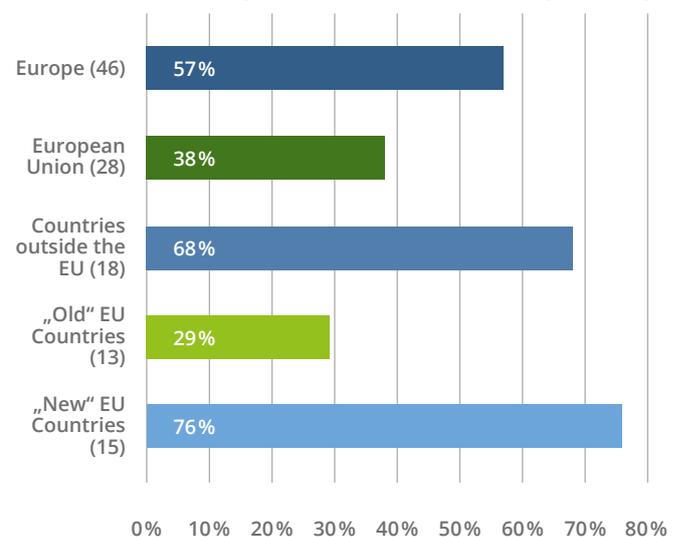
** "Old" EU countries are defined as countries that were EU members before 2004. Countries which became EU members after 2004 are considered as "new" EU countries.

The table above shows the total amount of women's shelter bed spaces available and how these are distributed throughout Europe. As represented above, only one third

of the accommodation in women's shelters, which the Istanbul Convention considered to be the minimum required service provision is available. Out of the 41 countries from which WAVE was able to gather data in 2015, only 5 countries met this minimum standard of provision.

These resources are, however, not evenly distributed throughout Europe and are mostly concentrated in the 28 EU Member States. Within the EU there are more women's shelter resources available in the 15 EU Member States which joined before 2004, whereas the EU Member States that joined after 2004 are still missing almost three quarters of the shelter beds they require.

FIGURE 2 - Percentage of Shelter Places Missing in Europe



KEY FINDINGS:

- About 1,842 women's shelters are available in Europe
- These provide approximately 26,700 places for women survivors of violence and their children
- 57% of the minimum standards for shelter places are missing in Europe.
- 38% of minimum standards for shelter places are missing in EU Member States.
- 76% of minimum standards for shelter places are missing in "new" EU member states.

Conclusion:

There is an urgent need to expand the quantity and accessibility of women's shelters throughout Europe, particularly in "new" EU countries and European countries outside of the European Union. Furthermore, services need to be expanded to more adequately meet the needs of differently abled women and migrant women, particularly undocumented migrant women.

¹ Approximately

² Approximately

Women's Centres

Next to women's helplines and women's shelters, women's centres providing counselling and support belong to the most important specialist services for women survivors of violence.

The definition of women's centres comprises of different types of support such as: women's centres for victims of all forms of gender-based violence; rape crisis and sexual assault centres; centres for girls who have experienced sexual violence; intervention centres; regional crises centres for victims of domestic violence; centres for black, migrant or ethnic minority women; centres for women victims of trafficking, and other kinds of women's services such as domestic or sexual violence advisers (IDVAS, ISVAS) (see WAVE report p. 96).

While not all of these services are only for women, they all serve predominately women, since women are disproportionately affected by domestic and sexual violence.

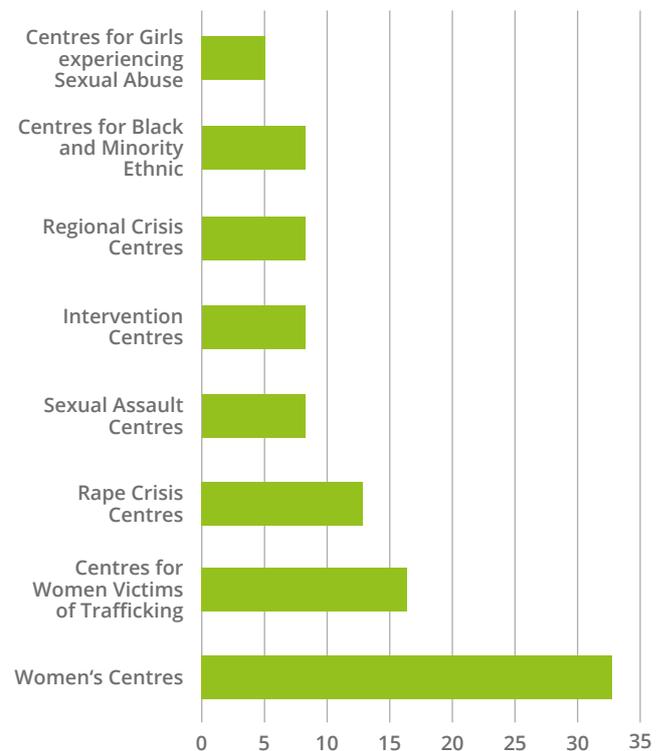
Region	Total Population	Total Number of Women's Centres
Europe (46)	831,096,151 (100%)	2,937 (100%)
European Union (28)	507,095,479 (61%)	2,692 (92% of all centres)
Countries outside the EU (18)	324,000,672 (39%)	245 (8% of all centres)
"Old" EU Countries (15)	402,201,084 (80% of EU)	2,522 (86% of all centres)
"New" EU Countries (13)	104,894,395 (20% of EU)	170 (6% of all centres)

KEY FINDINGS:

Of the 2,937 non-residential specialist support services for women experiencing gender-based violence in Europe, the distribution of these services is very worrying:

- 92 % of all women's centres are located in EU countries and only 8% in other European countries
- Of the centres located in EU member States, 86% are situated in the 15 "old" European Union Member States.

FIGURE 3 - Number of Countries providing particular types of service



As illustrated above, the most common type of services are women's centres existing in more than 30 countries. The women's centres serve survivors of all types of violence, including sexual violence. Other centres specialize on the support of victims of specific forms of violence or of specific groups of victims.

Conclusion:

Women's centres providing advice, advocacy, counselling and information for women who have experienced gender-based violence need to be available in all regions in Europe. There is a profound lack of women's centres, especially in Eastern European countries and in "new" EU countries.

Standards and Recommendations

As findings from the WAVE report³ indicate, there is still a concerning lack of specialist services for women survivors of violence in Europe. Many countries have worked to improve their level of service provision during the recent years, however, most are still not able to provide an adequate level of specialist services to victims in all geographical regions.

In addition to the inadequacy in quantity of specialised women's support services, there is also a concerning lack of quality of these services. WAVE experts are reporting that in some regions, women's support services can only provide very low standards of support due to lack of resources. It is not sufficient for survivors to have 'a roof over their head'; women survivors of violence and their children need quality support services, that are independent, base their work on the human rights of victims, focus on their protection, and provide empowering and gender-specific support. General services play an important role in providing emergency assistance, however, they are not sufficient.

Effective protection and support for victims of gender-based violence, and decrease in the prevalence of this widespread form of human rights violation, will not be reached without investing adequate financial resources. Given the high financial costs induced by gender-based violence on the society, investment in tackling the issue pays off:

Investment in the prevention of violence pays off

- The European Added Value Assessment estimates that the annual cost to the EU of gender-based violence against women in 2011 was about EUR 228 billion (1.8% of EU GDP)⁴;
- This amounts to about EUR 450 per European citizen each year;
- An investment of only 10% of this cost (or EUR 45 per citizen, per year), would significantly contribute to reducing the financial impact of gender-based violence on national budgets, i.e. through investment in prevention of violence.

Minimum standards for specialised women's support services

The following recommendations are based on principles established in the Istanbul Convention, the EU Victims' Directive, and the experience and knowledge gathered by specialised women's support services in Europe.

Principles of service provision

- Services to victims of GBV and their children need to be provided by independent, specialist women's support services, which apply a human rights-based, gender-specific, and empowering approach.
- Staff working at specialised women's support services should have professional knowledge and training, enabling them to best assist women survivors of GBV and their children.
- Every woman victim of gender-based violence and her children should be guaranteed effective protection and adequate support, regardless of age, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, residence status, ethnicity or any other ground, following the principle of non-discrimination.

Specialised women's support services

- At least one national women's helpline addressing all forms of violence against women, operating 24/7 and free of charge.
- A national network of specialised women's shelters accommodating women and their children.
- Provision of 24/7 and immediate support at women's shelters.
- At least one shelter place per 10.000 of inhabitants.
- Qualitative minimum standard of one room, including bathroom, per family.
- One women's centre for survivors of sexual violence per 200.000 women.
- One women's counselling centre per 50.000 women, providing crisis intervention as well as short and long-term support to women victims of GBV and their children, as well as specialised support for more vulnerable groups, i.e. black and minority ethnic women, migrant and undocumented migrant women, young women, asylum-seeking women, women with disabilities, older women, and others.
- Sufficient number of specialised services addressing the specific needs of migrant and minority ethnic women, as well as refugee and asylum-seeking women.
- One intervention centre focusing on VAW and DV per court district, providing pro-active support and advocacy to women survivors of violence after police interventions or interventions of health, or other agencies.

³ See WAVE Report page 97.

⁴ European Parliament (2014): European Parliament resolution of 25 February 2014 with recommendations to the Commission on combating Violence against Women (2013/2004(INL), Para R.

- Every woman victim of violence should have the right to free support and representation by an independent advocate, throughout all legal and institutional proceedings.
- Outreach services should be made available to women victims of violence in rural areas.
- Short- and long-term support, including psychological support and therapy, should be provided to victims in order to overcome traumatic experiences of violence.
- All specialised women's support services should be free of charge and aim at empowering women and ensuring their safety; they should also have access to the necessary resources to provide adequate support to the children of women victims of violence.
- Funding also needs to be provided to national networks of women's organizations in order to develop and implement common standards, carry out coordinated activities, and provide national data.
- Access to culturally sensitive services, including multilingual information and counselling, as well as gender- and culturally-sensitive interpretation support, should be provided.
- Access to an independent residence permit for women survivors of violence and their children should be facilitated.
- Access to women's shelters by the children of women survivors, up until the age of 18, should be guaranteed, with no restriction based on sex.
- Availability of appropriate and empowering shelter conditions and arrangements should be guaranteed.

Funding for awareness-raising, prevention activities and data collection.

- Specialised women's support services do not only provide support to survivors. As civil society organizations, they also engage in awareness raising and prevention activities as well as training, thus making an important contribution to social change in society, and to the elimination of the root causes of gender-based violence. States should therefore provide adequate funding to support the work in awareness raising and prevention of violence.
- An important lack of administrative data on support services in most countries, and the lack of homogeneity of such data, makes comparative analysis on the national level impossible. Hence, states should provide adequate funding to support national networks of women's support services and develop their capacity for systemic data collection, and promote the exchange and dissemination of information.

Right to support and protection for black, minority ethnic, migrant and asylum-seeking women

- Access to justice, as well as access to general and specialised women's support services should be guaranteed for all women survivors of violence, regardless of their legal or residence status, or country of origin.
- Access to state funding by women's shelters to support all women and children seeking help from violence, regardless of their legal or residence status, should be guaranteed.
- Access and freedom to remain in women's shelters as long as needed, should be guaranteed for all women victims of violence and their children.

Victims' empowerment, and access to social and economic rights

Social and economic rights should be guaranteed for all women victims of gender-based violence, so that they have a chance to live empowered and independent lives. This aspect is particularly important in the prevention of violence, since women who are dependent on a partner or the family are at higher risks of victimisation by domestic violence. Social and economic rights are also essential in providing victims with a way out of violent relationships, which is made easier when a woman disposes of her own income. It should also be taken into account that women are often the primary caretakers of the children.

Consequently, the following social and economic rights should be guaranteed for all women:

- Right to affordable housing: women survivors of violence should not be compelled to live with a violent partner, especially after separation, because of the lack of affordable housing. Similarly, survivors of violence and their children should not have to remain in women's shelters due to the lack of affordable housing.
- Right to free or affordable childcare.
- Right to education and training, including free language courses for migrant and refugee or asylum-seeking women.
- Right to support in accessing the labour market, to guarantee the subsistence of women and their children.
- Right to adequate financial aid (at a level that ensures subsistence) for all women who do not have access to sufficient income.
- Access to free health care for all women survivors of violence and their children.

By fully enforcing these recommendations, states will further ensure the improvement and effectiveness of specialised women's support services.

#StepUpWAVE



Step up!
CAMPAIGN

www.wave-stepup.org

WAVE Step Up! Campaign on the rights of women survivors of violence and their children to receive support and protection

WAVE demands that all governments in Europe, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the OSCE, the United Nations and all other relevant bodies step up their efforts and considerably increase their investments in the elimination of violence against women and their children.

How can you join the Campaign?

WAVE is committed to ending violence against women and domestic violence and to promoting the establishment of specialist quality support services for women and their children everywhere in Europe.

We cannot reach these goals alone – we need YOUR support!

There are many ways of joining!

Please contact us to discuss how you can get involved.
Email: office@wave-network.org

We welcome interested persons from all fields – institutions and civil society, organizations, governments and women's NGOs, networks, companies, the media and others.

One way of supporting the WAVE Step up! Campaign is to make a donation.

Thank you for helping us building societies in which women and girls can live without violence and without fear of violence! For further information see Blue Print of the WAVE Step Up! campaign www.wave-stepup.org

WAVE Information Centre

The WAVE Information Centre provides direct support to persons seeking information and help, to survivors as well as to other persons. Violence against women and their children are not crimes that stop at borders. Migration and the growing mobility of people in European countries have increased the number of cases of violence against women with cross-border dimensions.

The WAVE Information Centre also provides information to persons from different organizations and institutions seeking contacts to organizations in other countries for cross-border cooperation and exchange. Additionally, the Centre answers requests from governments, academics, the media, and the general public.

Opening hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00 to 14:00 (CET)

Phone: +43 (0) 1 548 2720 | Fax: +43 (0) 1 548 272 027

Email: office@wave-network.org

How to donate to WAVE?

If you wish to support WAVE's work by making a donation, there are two possibilities:

By credit card:

If you have a credit card, you can transfer the donation via Paypal on the WAVE Website:
www.wave-network.org/content/donate

By bank transfer to:

Bank account name: Association WAVE (Women Against Violence Europe)
Bank: Bank Austria
IBAN: AT75 1200 0006 1078 2021
BIC/Swift Code: BKAUATWW

How to become a WAVE Member

Non-governmental women's organizations, women's network organizations, and individual experts on violence against women from around Europe have the possibility to become a WAVE Member. If you are interested in becoming a Member of the WAVE Network, please contact our office: office@wave-network.org

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PHILIP MORRIS AUSTRIA GMBH

WAVE Network and European Information Centre against Violence (ZVR: 601608559)

Bacherplatz 10/6 1050 Vienna, Austria | Phone: +49 (0) 1 5482720 | Fax +43 (0) 1 5482720 27 | E-mail: office@wave-network.org | www.wave-network.org