



WAVE Newsletter January-February 2021

Upcoming Events

CSW65 Parallel Event: Rollbacks on women's rights: Challenges versus Strategies Pre- and Post-Pandemic

In collaboration with The Advocates for Human Rights, WAVE is organising a parallel event for the NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum **at 3:30 PM CET on Thursday, March 25th**.

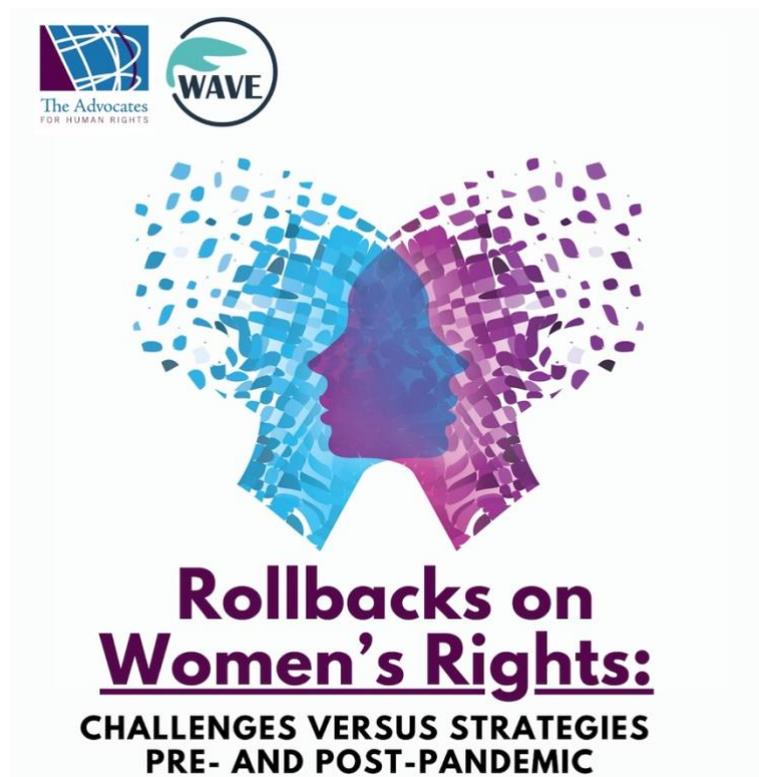
You can see details for the event here: [NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum: Virtual Meeting Details \(pathable.com\)](https://pathable.com).

To engage in the NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum, you must register to become an advocate for free. This includes: registering for and attending events; creating posts in the Public Forum; event and organization pages; and visiting the virtual Artisan Fair. Anyone without a profile on the virtual platform **cannot** attend any Parallel Events. If you have registered for CSW65 via the platform Indico, you must still register to become an advocate in order to attend parallel events. You can register here: [NGO CSW65 Forum Advocate Registration Tickets | Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com). Although the registration form gives you the option to give a donation, you are not required to and registering to attend the Virtual Forum is **free**.

You can also watch the following tutorial to help you understand how to register to become an advocate and how to create your profile in order to attend the Virtual Forum: [NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum Tutorial Video Series: Advocate Tutorial - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com).

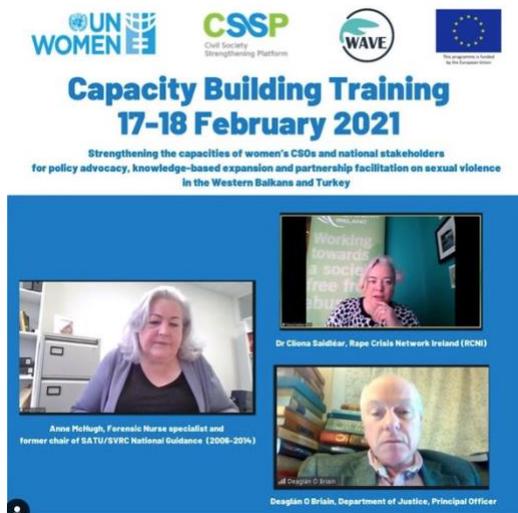
Registration is open now and throughout the CSW65, 14-26 March, and closes on the last day of the Session (26th of March).

We would encourage all Members to register in order to attend parallel events including the one WAVE is co-organising.



CSSP Capacity Building Training: Strengthening the capacities of women’s CSOs and national stakeholders for policy advocacy, knowledge-based expansion and partnership facilitation on sexual violence in the Western Balkans and Turkey

From 17-18 February, WAVE conducted the CSSP Capacity Building Training which is aimed at promoting good practice standards in supporting victims of sexual violence, amongst women’s specialist support services supporting victims of sexual violence, as well as other women’s CSOs and policymakers. The training represents a good opportunity for all broadly used existing standards, to be transposed and adapted to the specific needs of the seven project countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey.



On day one, Dr Cliona Saidleir, Executive Director from the Rape Crisis Network Ireland, one of the trainers of the CSSP Capacity Building Training, shared with our almost 70 participants the need to develop survivor centred specialist responses and how this can be done effectively. Deaglan O Briain and Anne McHugh shared their expertise concerning government responses, national strategies and the importance of building a multiagency response. Andrew Payne, Principle officer in Transparency, Department of Justice, closed the first day by sharing insight on a national prevention campaign carried out in Ireland.

The second day of the training focused on presenting the standards adopted by the rape crisis centres established in Serbia. The trainer for the second day was Biljana Stepanov, Director of the Center for Support of Women (CSW), Rape Crisis Centres in Serbia. The day welcomed also interventions from Danica Todorov (RCC Coordinator), Radoslava Aralica (Consultant RCC Zrenjanin) and Doc. Dr. Stevan Milatovic (RCC in Clinic for Gynaecology and Obstetrics, Clinical Center of AP Vojvodina), who gave an overview of specialized services for victims of sexual violence by familiarising the participants with the Rape Crisis Centre (RCC) Serbia model.



The training was organised as part of the ongoing EU/UN Women programme ‘Implementing norms, changing minds’. As part of the programme, the Civil Society Strengthening Platform (CSSP) was established in 2017, currently consisting of nine women’s civil society organisations in the Western Balkans and Turkey. The goal of the CSSP is to strengthen women’s voices and agency, including that of women’s organisations working with and representing women from disadvantaged marginalised groups, at a regional level.

A detailed description of the training is available [here](#). Find out more about the activities of the CSSP [here](#).

International News

Kick-off of a new EU co-funded project SafeShelter – Strengthen child safeguarding in women’s shelter networks



SafeShelter is an EU co-funded project that aims to provide capacity building training on developing, implementing and enforcing child safeguarding policies and frameworks for shelter and multisectoral staff working with shelters. SafeShelter project runs from January 2021 until end of 2022 with its Kickoff meeting online in February 2021.

The project is coordinated by Austrian Women Shelter Network (Verein AÖF) with the following partners: Psytel (France), Gesine (Germany), Conexus (Spain) and the European Family Justice Center Alliance (EFJCA).

Through capacity building training the project aims at creating change in awareness and knowledge of the importance of child protection measures throughout Europe.

SafeShelter team is looking forward to sharing with you further news and relevant outputs of the project. Find out more [here](#).

An Olympic medalist’s testimony of sexual assault has sparked a #MeToo reckoning in Greece, one of Europe's most conservative nations.

Since Greek sailing champion Sofia Bekatorou’s revelations in January against a top official in the sport, a wave of new accusations of sexual misconduct and other abuses by high-profile figures, including athletes and actors, has rocked several sectors in Greece. Bekatorou, 43, alleged during an online conference in January that she was sexually assaulted by a high-ranking, Hellenic Sailing Federation (HSF) official in 1998, when she was 21 years old.

“There’s ... a lot of victim-blaming, a lot of slut-shaming,” said Diana Manesi, senior researcher with Diotima, a long-standing feminist nongovernmental organization in Greece. “The environment around is very hostile for [women coming forward].” Manesi said this is all painful to watch. But at the same time, she’s relieved that the country is finally talking. She says many women she knows have firsthand experiences with abuse, such as being followed on the street or harassed by university professors. “I have stories to say, also. I think that’s important,” she said. Manesi said gender violence starts with inequality — and until the Greek state gets serious about implementing policies to address it, she does not expect to see a real shift in Greece.

Meanwhile, dozens of people continue to come forward. Currently, the spotlight is on the arts and entertainment industries, where almost daily, new allegations emerge against powerful directors, actors and other men in the field. Thalassini Vostatzoglou, a young actor who is just beginning her career, said she is thrilled to be entering the industry at a time when complacency, silence and abuse are finally being challenged. Vostatzoglou’s mother, Dimitra Papadima, is one of the women who has come forward in recent weeks with sexual abuse allegations on the job. Vostatzoglou said for years, the expectation in the industry was that abuse was part of the system. “But a change is happening now,” she said. “And it is a big change.”

Read the full story [here](#).

Exchange of good practices in handling domestic violence cases and protecting abused women and their children between Greece and Iceland

On January 2021, a **cross-sectional two-day Working Group** was held in the framework of the bilateral initiative between **European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN)** and the **Icelandic Police**, that was conducted in the framework of the Active citizens fund. The results were presented during an online press conference.

The aim of the Working Group was the exchange of good practices between Iceland and Greece in handling domestic violence cases and protecting abused women and their children, with the participation of the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police and representatives of Greek institutional authorities (e.g. Police, Ministry of Justice) and NGO's that provide support and protection to victims of domestic violence.



The delegations of the two countries presented the methodology and tools they are using to protect and provide quality services to victims of domestic violence, especially women and children. The situation in Greece and the needs, the challenges that both countries face for the improvement of services provided to survivors of domestic violence and, finally, ways to promote an effective cooperation between the two countries and further consolidation of this cooperation were discussed in depth.

The statement of the National Police Commissioner of Iceland, Sigríður Björk Guðjónsdóttir, is available [here](#) in English. More information can be found [here](#).

Safe Gigs Ireland: Creating a 'new normal'

Safe Gigs is a new initiative by the Sexual Violence Centre Cork Ireland to make gigs and nightlife safer for women by creating a zero tolerance environment for sexual violence. Our aim is to work with people across the nightlife and live music industry - from musicians to venues to security guards - to achieve this goal. In a European study conducted in 2018, 56% of nightlife participants had experienced some form of sexual violence in a nightlife setting. Nightlife and the live music scene has been on pause across the world as a result of the pandemic and we are taking this opportunity to make a change. When we return to normal, we want to create a new normal - a safer normal, for everyone. You can follow our campaign on Instagram by searching for @safegigsireland or by following this [link](#).



A listening ear at your fingertips; A French study on the different paths and profiles of young victims of domestic or family violence through online chat



For En avant toute(s)*, it was of utmost importance to conduct a thorough analysis of the reality of young people’s lives when they experience violence within a relationship or their family, as such a study had not yet been conducted in France.

This data is invaluable in the sense that young people usually go “under the radar”. Different factors can explain this: young people can struggle to identify themselves as “domestic violence” victims.

Moreover, young people do not use the same means of communication as the organizations in charge of fighting violence and supporting victims. Finally, their problems often go unnoticed by the adults around them.

*En avant toute(s) (“Go forward, women!”) is an organization fighting for gender equality and to end violence against both women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

The association’s work is aimed at young people, regardless of their social class, gender, sexual orientation, culture, or belief.

Read the study in English [here](#).



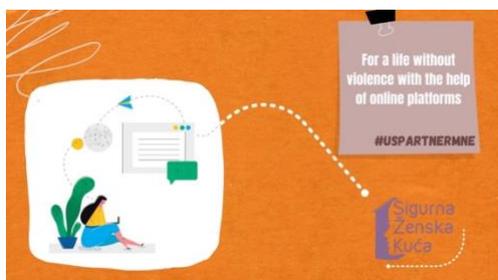
Resistance to the pandemic and violence against women in Montenegro

During the Covid 19 pandemic our organization expanded shelter capacities. With the support of UNDP in Montenegro we were and still are able to afford additional apartments where women and children victims of violence were accommodated out of our shelter.

Also, in order to properly answer to the crisis caused by this pandemic, our organization made it possible for women victims of violence to contact us via an online platform, i.e., through video calls where we provide free psychosocial help and support, legal aid and yoga workshops.



This form of communication is important because sometimes it is safer for women to contact us from home and allows us to prevent the spreading of the virus. This form of support is funded by the US Embassy in Montenegro which recognized this as an important way of providing help and assistance to women who have experienced violence in Montenegro.



Find further information about our activities in online platforms related to the project for providing online support and help [here](#).

Mirjeta came out of the violence cycle. Don't be silent. Report!



In February 2021, Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC) launched the awareness raising campaign on the protection of victims' rights. As an organization that works with victims and survivors of gender based violence in Albania through the provision of dedicated services, and in the framework of the PREVICT project, HRDC, in cooperation with Transcendent Media Capital, prepared the awareness video "[I am Mirjeta](#)".

Mirjeta's story is based on a real victim testimonial of a woman who was subject to domestic violence in Albania and is supported by HRDC through legal assistance, free of charge court representation and is assisted in accessing and enrolling in available economic schemes, including housing. It is expected that this video will help increase reporting on domestic violence incidences in Albania, especially given the restricted measures caused by Covid.

PREVICT is a pan-European campaign for the Promotion of the Rights of European Victims, funding by the EU DG Justice programme. It airs across 6 countries; Portugal, Malta, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania and Albania. It is an impact study addressing best practices in media and information dissemination to support the rights of victims of crime in Europe.

The project is financially supported by the Justice Program of the European Commission.

Roks takes Sweden to court



On the 10th of February Roks (National Organisation for women and young women shelters in Sweden) filed a lawsuit against Sweden for violations of the European Convention and for women's human rights.

Roks is invited to various contexts where we get to inform about our experience and knowledge, but this is later overlooked and not used when it matters.

One example of this is that for 37 years we have fought for society to use the term 'men's violence against women' to show the systematic violence to which women are exposed. Even though we have done so, Sweden is more inclined to use gender-neutral terms.

Sweden is often seen as one of the world's most equal countries. However, Rok sees that Sweden is taking the wrong direction. Sweden is not taking responsibility for protecting every woman by giving her the justice she deserves.

We have therefore filed a lawsuit against Sweden for violations of the European Convention and violations of women's human rights. The article regarding the lawsuit can be found [here](#).

We hope you can help us spread the news regarding our action.

BEE - Boosting Gender Equality in Education

"Boosting Gender Equality in Education" is the title of a recently launched transnational project on the topic of gender equality education in early childhood, funded by the European Union under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program, involving NGO partners from Italy, Romania, Lithuania and Cyprus.



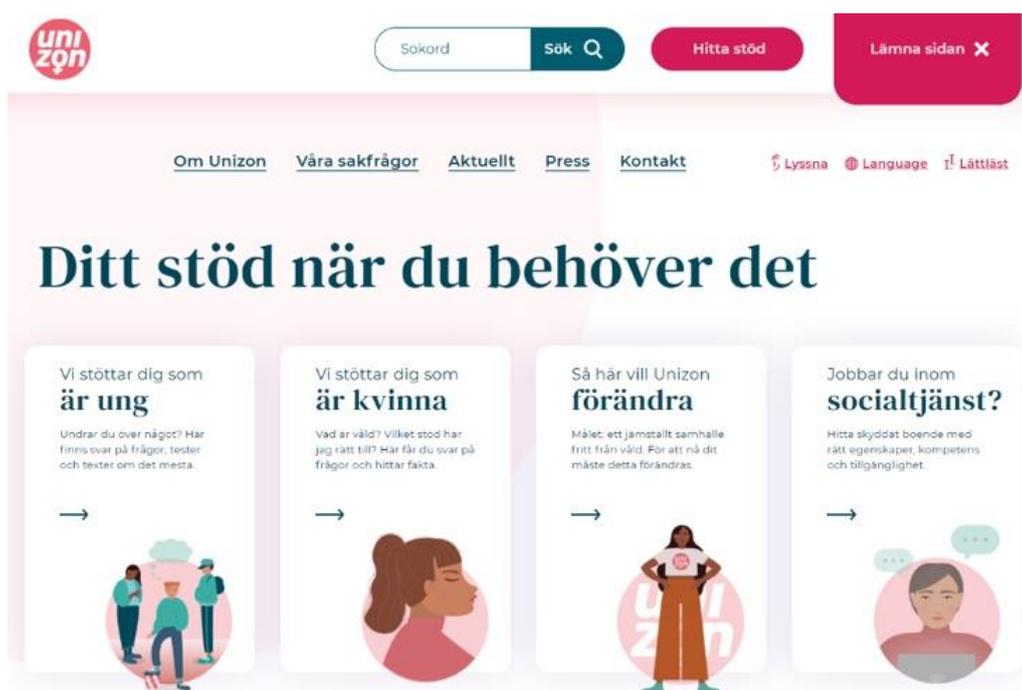
The project will offer kindergartens and primary schools training opportunities for educators, administrative staff and decision-makers in addressing gender stereotypes in various educational contexts. The trained staff will also participate in designing and testing educational toolkits adapted to their national contexts.

The project supports the implementation of the EU Strategy for Gender Equality for the timeframe 2020-2025 and emphasises early childhood interventions for the prevention of violence against women and girls. The project is lead by COSPE in Italy and includes the following partners: Association for Liberty and Equality of Gender - A.L.E.G. (Romania), Women's Information Center (Lithuania), Mediteranean Institute for Gender Studies (Cyprus), and Casa delle Done in Pisa (Italy). Project timeframe: 2021-2022.

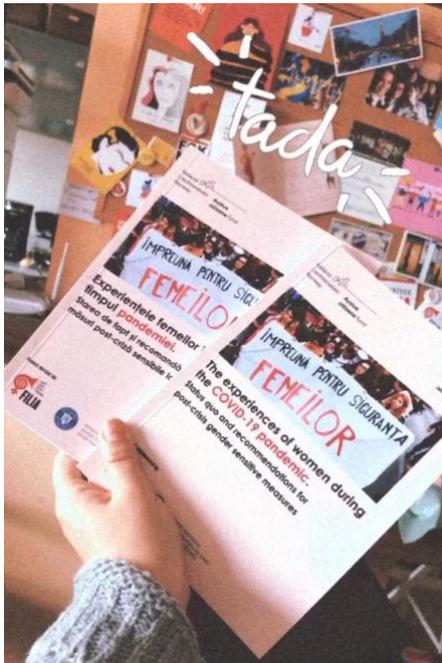
Welcome to Unizon's new web platform UNIZONJOURER.SE!

Unizon brings together over 130 women's shelters, young women's empowerment centres and other support services working for an equal society free from violence.

We have now launched our new web platform [UNIZONJOURER.SE](https://unizonjourer.se) accumulating the unique knowledge and expertise of Unizon's member organisations that are there to provide help and support to anyone who needs it. The web platform can be used to ask questions, take a relationship quiz, read guidelines and report and chat directly with Unizon's member organisations. Those who work in the sphere of politics and social change can use [UNIZONJOURER.SE](https://unizonjourer.se) to learn more about Unizon's work, our statements and position papers and get some practical tools and ideas on how we together can combat men's violence against women and children and create an equal society free from violence.



The experiences of women during the COVID-19 pandemic. Status quo and recommendations for post-crisis gender sensitive measures.



In periods of crisis when public attention is focused only on one topic, the specific experiences of women and other vulnerable categories of people tend to be ignored and gender inequalities tend to deepen. In the first months of the pandemic, [FILIA Center](#) started [a campaign to collect women's testimonials](#) about their experiences during this period. Later we conducted [an explorative research](#) that reveals diverse experiences of women who lost their jobs and incomes in the pandemic, faced physical and mental exhaustion, domestic and workplace violence, inadequate living resources, and increased care activities. The data also capture the respondents' skepticism towards the authorities, the low degree of trust in the authorities and the placement of informal networks (family, friends) in the list of preferences for mutual help.

This research aims to support the authorities by providing information on the specific challenges that various women faced during this period and recommendations for post-crisis gender sensitive measures.

Iceland
Liechtenstein
Norway

Active citizens fund

January, 2021

ÎMPREUNĂ PENTRU SIGURANȚA FEMEILOR

The experiences of women during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Status quo and recommendations for post-crisis gender sensitive measures

Project implemented by:

AGENȚIA NAȚIONALĂ PENTRU EGALITATEA DE ȘANSE ÎNTRE FEMEI ȘI BĂRBAȚI



*Our research is also available in English and can be read [here](#).