2/2001 N° 2

Envoi à taxe réduite
Bureau de poste 1053 Wien
(Autriche) Taxe perçue

Feminpower.

Magazine published by the European Centre Against Violence/ WAVE Office - a DAPHNE Programme Project

FOCUS
EU enlargement

INTERNATIONAL
OSCE adds violence prevention to its agenda

NGO ACTIVITIES

LEGAL ISSUES

CONFERENCES

FOCUS

EU enlargement

Women's rights not a requirement? Screening the EU enlargement process from a gender perspective

"The enlargement process is irreversible." This appraisal by the Swedish EU Presidency, dating from June 2001, must be welcomed as a positive statement. Nevertheless, it is necessary to question to what extent measures to combat violence against women and children are being included in the accession negotiations. Does the prevention of violence in marriage and intimate relationships even feature on the agenda?

The Copenhagen criteria define the requirements for full membership of the European Union:

1. Specifically, the stability of a country's democratic institutions: the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorites
2. A functioning free market economy
3. Adoption of the European Union's acquis (acquis communautaire), which comprises 31 chapters, including social policy and co-operation in the fields of justice and home affairs.

Violence against women should be included both in terms of the political requirements as a human rights violation, and in terms of the acquis communautaire as an obstacle to full gender equality. The ratification of the Amsterdam Treaty added a number of new terms to the legal acquis, based on the following principles:

Article 2: Equality of men and women as one of the Union's aims

Article 3,para 2: Elimination of inequality in all employment strategies and Union

>

Editorial page 2

FOCUS

EU enlagement page 1
No cause for euphoria page 4
No adverse criticism please page 5

INTERNATIONAL

OSCE adds violence prevention to its agenda page 6
Lobbying for a 5th World Conference on Women in 2005 page 7

NGO ACTIVITIES

Women's Information Centre, Georgia by Helen Russetsky page 8

LEGAL ISSUES

New Lawyers' Network by Cecilia Cortesi page 10

CONFERENCES

Seminar on Violence Against Young Women page 11

READERS LETTERS

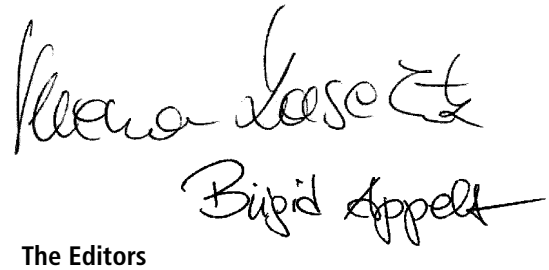
Reader's letters page 12

Publisher: WAVE Office/
European Information Centre Against Violence
Bacherplatz 10/ 4,A- 1050 Vienna
phone:+43-1-5482720,e-mail: **office@wave-network.org**
editors:Birgit Appelt & Verena Kaselitz
translation: Paul Catty
design:Pia Mœst
layout:Sabrina C. Kaselitz
print: TELEKOPIE® - Austria
WAVE Bank-Account Number:610 782 021,Code:20151
Swift-Code:(for payments within the European Union) BKAUATWW

Editorial

WAVE has from the start been a European network.Its founder members came from both Western and Eastern Europe, from the South and from the North of the continent. Today there are women's organisations functioning as WAVE Focal Points in virtually every European country. They all perform valuable work networking endeavours to eliminate violence against women and children. Meanwhile, WAVE itself continues to grow: our new Georgian Focal Point is introduced in the present issue.

The main thrust of our networking efforts has always been to exchange experience and thus to learn from each other. The activists and experts in countless Central and Eastern European countries, in the successor states of the Soviet Union and in the Balkans are all too familiar with the difficulties entailed in raising state support for urgently needed prevention measures to combat violence against women and children.The enlargement of the European Union affords the opportunity to bring up the issue of these obstacles. In the present FEMPOWER we thus focus on the question of whether and where violence against women and children features on the enlargement agenda of the EU institutions.



The Editors

measures

Article 13: Combating discrimination on the grounds of gender or sexual orientation
Article 137: Promotion of gender equality in terms of opportunities in employment and treatment at work
Article 141: Application of the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women, equal remuneration without discrimination on the grounds of gender, and implementation of measures providing for specific preferential treatment "to facilitate vocational opportunities for the under-represented gender or to prevent or offset vocational disadvantages".

In addition, several EU directives and action programmes deal with equal treatment and opportunities for women, although these primarily focus on the employment market (such as EQUAL 2000-2006 and the new EU Gender Equality Programme 2001-2005, http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/).

Programmes on the prevention of violence

Concrete programmes and strategies to prevent violence against women do exist:
The DAPHNE Programme 2000-2003 derives from the DAPHNE Initiative, which was first implemented in 1997. This programme focuses on combating violence against women, young people and children. The term "violence" is understood here in a broad sense, extending from domestic violence and the sexual abuse of children to trafficking in women. Existing programmes like DAPHNE have been made accessible to the candidate countries in advance. However, the refusal of some Eastern European governments to reallocate PHARE programme funds has made it impossible to carry out projects on an on-site basis. Nevertheless, women's NGOs from these countries have been contributing to measures to combat violence against women, young people and children for years now, under the auspices of partnerships. WAVE is one of those organisations which have regarded Europe as a geographical entity from the very start.

The institutions of the European Union devote particular attention to combating trafficking in women, not least because of its cross-border scale. MEP Patsy Sörenson has submitted a detailed report to the European Parliament under the title "Further actions in the fight against trafficking in women" (COM(1998)726 – C5-0123/1999 – 1999/2125(COS)). On International Women's Day the Commission's Justice and Home Affairs General Directorate published a comprehensive European strategy to combat trafficking in women (http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/8mars_en.htm). The STOP II programme (2001-2002) provides financial support for measures against human trafficking (http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/project/stop_en.htm). A directive on combating "Trafficking in Human Beings and the fight against sexual exploitation of children and child pornography" is currently being drawn up.

The European Parliament has formulated its position on violence against women in armed conflicts (Report of the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities 2000/2025(INI)), which states: "The European Parliament condemns systematic rape, forced impregnation, sexual slavery and all other forms of gender-based violence in situations of armed conflicts". The EP also calls on the member states to incorporate a gender perspective in their asylum and immigration policies. The European Parliament has likewise passed a resolution on the human rights violation constituted by female genital mutilation (last published in the Annual Report on human rights in the world in 2000 and the European Union Human Rights Policy, Art. 97, 11317/2000 – C5-0536/2000 – 2000/2105(INI)).

A value-based community is impossible without realising women's rights

The European Union is increasingly changing from an economic to a value-based community. This transformation is reflected in, for instance, the fact that the EU institutions have explicitly declared their intention to combat violence against women and children in every form. True, work still needs to be done in the present member states in terms of providing information and enlarging and assisting

women's support organisations. However, with the need to combat violence against women and children being ever more unequivocally stated in the acquis, this requirement will and should also be applied to the candidate countries in the near future.

The European Union has instituted special programmes designed to assist the candidate countries in their preparations for accession to the Union. PHARE is the main financial instrument for the Central and Eastern European candidate countries (separate financial arrangements have been agreed with Cyprus and Malta). PHARE also provides assistance in the implementation of the *acquis communautaire* in the non-governmental sector, notably for projects designed to include and involve individuals or groups threatened with social or political marginalisation. Women's shelters, centres and support facilities in the candidate countries urgently need financial assistance to enable them to launch prevention and victim support programmes and to expand their infrastructure. Given that such programmes explicitly encourage trans-national co-operation, this would be an ideal opportunity to carry out cross-border projects on behalf of women and children in need and to conduct information and awareness-raising campaigns on the issue of violence against women.

Governments decline to help

In many cases, however, women's organisations are prevented from participating in these programmes. As the DAPHNE programme has amply illustrated, the problem is not a lack of commitment on the part of the NGOs and the women involved: they are only too eager to take on projects, generally on an unpaid basis. The obstacle is the refusal of governments to provide their support. Many governments fail to recognise violence against women and children as the virulent social problem which it is. These governments are failing to meet their obligations to protect women and children from violence.

The EU has clearly not adequately conveyed how important the elimination of violence against women is in a peaceful, democratic society founded upon equality and respect for human rights. Instead, it would seem that too much attention is being paid to compliance with the economic and legal requirements. The process of annual screening to monitor the candidate countries' implementation of the Copenhagen criteria would afford an ideal opportunity to point out any deficiencies in the field of violence against women and children and to call on the governments concerned to support the women's NGOs in their countries and to lay the legislative foundations for prosecuting violence against women, notably in the domestic sphere.

It would be wrong to miss the chance afforded by the enlargement of the EU by letting concern over inflation rates and budget deficits divert our attention away from the European values and the need to support civil society in its commitment to these values. Endeavours to combat violence against women and children need to be placed right at the top of the political agenda.

Links:
Website of the Commission on Enlargement
http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/enlargement/index_en.htm

FOCUS

No cause for euphoria

Many women's organisations working in the field of violence prevention say they have little reason to feel euphoric about their countries' prospective accession to the European Union. They have only modest hopes and expectations – if at all – that EU membership will improve the plight of battered women and of women's support facilities. Any progress that has been made and any undertakings which the political establishment has given appear to be more the upshot of persistent lobbying on the part of the experts and activists than the result of compliance with EU law and membership criteria.

There is good reason for this sobering appraisal. EU law puts governments under no hard-and-fast obligations to take action on violence prevention, nor even to provide the requisite infrastructure – such as shelters, counselling centres and emergency hotlines – with adequate financial resources.

> A more realistic prospect seems to be that women's support organisations in the candidate countries can refer to good-practice standards and legislation in EU member states and demand that their governments adopt these as minimum requirements. In view of this, cross-border solidarity and mutual assistance among women's support facilities appears more important than ever.

FOCUS

No adverse criticism please!

In mid-June an international conference entitled "WoMen and Democracy" was held in Vilnius. Its declared purpose was "discuss key issues related to the full voiced participation of women and men in the democratic processes". According to the organisers, the target was "to encourage and enhance the dialogue between politicians, researchers, civil servants, NGO's and other experts in the field from all the participating countries". As one of the delegates from an EU candidate country reports, the conference failed to produce satisfactory results despite the advance rhetoric.

Impressions of an NGO participant

It was a government-organised conference with official delegations from the Nordic states, with very few NGOs among them, often rather GONGOs than NGOs, and anyway, the participating NGOs within the delegations were selected by the governments, so they were not necessarily those who tend to be critical of their governments.

Not that even critical voices would have had a chance to express their views. For two days we listened in the plenaries to shorter and longer lectures from very high-level government officials (ministers and state secretaries) about how important this issue is. As you would expect, nothing of weight, nothing of consequence, mainly hot air and verbalised good intentions were uttered. Very little mention was made of the past and present role of NGOs or the women's movement per se, even though some of these men and women have their present jobs only due to the international women's movement. No space was given to non-governmental voices in the plenaries.

Of the 12 workshops, only one dealt explicitly with violence against women, and that only with trafficking in women. This was the biggest workshop, altogether more than 40 people. It is not possible to have a workshop with so many people in the first place, but no kind of interactivity was actually envisaged: some 90% of the workshop time was filled with presentations. We listened to longish presentations with statistics and more statistics and about trafficked women not being immoral, and such stuff: on the first day there was absolutely no time left for discussion, only a few minutes remained for questions. On the second day there was some NGO input from delegated NGOs (Russia, Lithuania, but they only spoke about their activities, probably they were chosen because it was known that they would not dare to make any kind of criticism). Then the chair, the Swedish minister for gender equality, declared that since we were too many, we cannot agree on conclusions, and she was going to hand in "chair's conclusions". In these conclusions there was a lot of talk about "discussions" in the workshop and about "both speakers and participants found it important", which is very peculiar. But nobody pointed out that
a) there had been no discussions
b) as a result of this it was hardly possible to know what the participants would have found important.

As I learned from the workshop reports, another workshop on education and young people also brought up the topic of violence, but since the title made no reference to violence, participants had no idea when they had to enrol for the workshops. As

I think that workshop topics and names send out clear messages, I find it very disheartening that a) under violence against women only trafficking is discussed, b) when it comes up at another workshop, it is more by chance than by intention.

The only useful day of this conference was the NGO meeting organised by EWL. It became quite clear that grass-roots women's NGOs in the accession countries share very similar experiences regarding their relationship with their governments. Much of what we suggested to the Lobby regarding the accession process therefore concentrated on lobbying for raising the importance of women's issues among the conditions of accession, and for involving women's NGOs as acknowledged experts on such issues in the various countries.

web link: www.womenanddemocracy.lt

International

OSCE adds violence prevention to its agenda

As it redefines its position on current issues, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) is devoting ever greater attention to humanitarian activities. The field most recently added to its agenda is that of violence against women. At a working meeting held in Vienna in early June, the members of an informal Gender Equality Working Group discussed the scope for OSCE action to combat violence against women in the fifty-five member states. As one of the leading NGOs in the field, WAVE was invited to deliver a paper.

The OSCE body responsible for humanitarian affairs, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), already supports projects and NGOs which are active in combating violence against women. These activities are currently focusing on the Balkan countries and the Caucasus (http://www.osce.org/odihr/unit-gender.php3). In these regions the OSCE operates field units whose purpose is to assist the local population in building up and developing democratic structures, to prevent or resolve conflicts, and to help in the maintenance of law and order. The field units can offer to implement anto-violence initiatives, but – as was pointed out during the discussions in Vienna – they exist only in crisis areas, while violence against women is a grave problem in all the OSCE member countries.

The WAVE Office sought to draw attention to the activities and experience of women's NGOs in violence prevention. The OSCE has not yet stated which action – if any – it will take. On the WAVE website (http://www.wave-network.org) we will try to publish information on OSCE measures to combat violence against women. The OSCE website (http://www.osce.org) provides up-to-date information, background material and lists of contacts.

Lobbying for a 5th World Conference on Women in 2005

Six years have passed since the last World Conference on Women in Beijing, and only some of the objectives defined in the Platform for Action have been achieved. At the same time new obstacles have emerged to impede women's realisation of their human rights. New initiatives and strategies are thus needed. Women's organisations the world over are therefore calling on the international community of nations to hold a fifth World Conference on Women in 2005. The involvement and participation of NGOs will be a decisive factor if the conference is to define concrete targets and ensure their attainment.

The NGO community calls attention to paragraph 9 of the Political Declaration of the 23rd General Assembly Special Session on Beijing+5 (June 2000), in which governments unanimously agreed "to regularly assess further implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with a view to bringing together all parties involved in 2005 to assess progress and consider new initiatives, as appropriate, 10 years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action and 20 years after the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies." The NGOs attending the 45th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2001 again endorsed this call and decided to bring it to the attention of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) substantive session of July 2001.

During the 45th session of the CSW in New York City in March 2001, the NGOs taking part agreed on a joint declaration which formulates the central aims of the next World Conference on Women.

- review and appraisal of the progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Outcome Document of the UNGASS on Beijing+5;
- assessment of the progress made in gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the other major United Nations conferences and Summits, including their reviews and appraisals, in 1990–2005;
- development of new strategies to meet the needs of women arising from new global trends, related in particular to economic globalisation, trade, information technology, armed conflicts and the threats posed by HIV/AIDS;
- empowerment of women to ensure their full participation in shaping the policies for integrated and co-ordinated implementation of the Global Agenda for development in the 21st century.

The women's organisations also call on governments to ensure adequate funding to enable local and grassroots women to take part in the conference and the preparatory process.

If you would like to be involved in the campaign and/or would like to receive more information,you can contact:
Hilkka Pietilä,Sisterhood is Global Institute (SIGI),e-mail:hilkka.pietila@pp.inet.fi
or Annette Lawson,National Alliance of Women's Organizations (NAWO) in the UK,
e-mail:NAWO1@yahoo.com.

NGO activities

Georgia: Women's Information Centre,

by Helen Russetsky

The Women's Information Centre was established in April 2000, the instigation of the women – members, employees, and volunteers – of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly National Committee of Georgia (HCA Georgia), an organisation with long-term and wide-ranging experience in the South Caucasus region.

Basic goals of the organisation:

- Raising the gender awareness of the population of Georgia
- Raising the civil activity of the women of the South Caucasus and involving them in decisions relating to urgent social issues
- Enhancement of the effectiveness of the activity of women's NGOs in the South Caucasus

The WIC sets out to achieve its goals by means of supplying information to the target groups and carrying out research work, educational programmes, and publishing activities.

WIC belongs to the Coalition of Women's NGOs of Georgia created on October 11, 2000 under the auspices of the OSCE. The work of the Coalition promotes the dissemination and exchange of information. One of the first things which WIC did was to compile a database of women's NGOs in Georgia and carry out research on the number of women leaders in Georgian NGOs, and later compile a database of women's NGOs on the South Caucasus. At the same time, we have collected the publications by women's NGOs and have arranged for them to be made available within the framework of the World Action Against Gender Violence in November 2000. Within the framework of the same campaign, with the assistance of HCA and IKV (Netherlands), we carried out a humanitarian campaign for the "Dzegvi" children's house.

The campaign "No more violence"

One activity concerning the elimination of violence is to raise awareness of the problem of violence and of special measures to combat violence among adolescent victims of violence as well as among children from normal families: WIC was the initiator and organiser of the campaign "No more violence", which was carried out throughout Georgia, including the conflict zones. The purpose of the project was to raise public awareness of the issue of gender violence in Georgia. In carrying out the campaign we involved homeless children, who despite having at least one parent live in the children's shelter "House of the future". We visited the shelter, told the children about the campaign, and they helped to distribute the posters in the Georgian capital Tbilisi. After the distribution was finished, the WIC representatives handed over gifts to them.

Violence is manifested in various ways

The problem of violence against women in Georgia is manifested in various ways. The political and social crises, ethnic conflicts, and a

>

painful process of the reassessment of values have had a negative impact on our society, especially on women's lives. Apart from being mother and having to run the household, women now have to contribute to the household income as well. In a family women work three times as much as men, although this is not reflected in the statistics. Besides, household work is not considered to be work, which is already an infringement of women's rights. Although Georgia ratified the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1994, the level of legislative adaptation and the awareness of women's rights in society and among women is very low.

There is a tendency to ignore the problems

In Georgia, there are no official statistics on the incidence of violence against women. There are no exact criteria for ascertaining when a woman is considered to be a victim of violence. According to research done by Georgian NGOs, the number of injured women victims of violence varies from 19 to 26 per day. 85% of injured women do not ask for help from the law-enforcement institutions because they have no trust in them. There is a strong patriarchal culture in Georgia; there is a tendency to ignore the problems related to the discrimination of women both in sections of society and in the State structures.

Violence has become a customary way of solving conflicts, in society and in the family as well. Still today family violence and sexual abuse are not investigated. It very rarely happens that sexual abuse leads to a court case.

The problem of trafficking

With the growth of socio-economic pressure, migration for economic reasons has increased – and as a consequence, the problem of trafficking has begun to grow. Many economic migrants, especially women, become victims of trafficking. The majority of the population is not aware of what trafficking actually means. This term only recently began to be used in the mass media. Articles are now appearing in the press, on TV channels there is a commercial explaining in a simple and intelligible way the meaning of trafficking: "Trafficking is a trade in people".

The Transcaucasian Women's Virtual Network "Woman Against Violence".

The work of WIC in the South Caucasus has shown that the problem of violence against women is urgent in all three states. WIC became the initiator of the Transcaucasian Women's Virtual Network "Woman Against Violence". The project will seek to raise awareness of the problem of violence against women in Transcaucasia among governments, public authorities and international organisations, and also propagate a culture of non-violence in the South Caucasus. Within the framework of the project the bulletin "Woman and violence" will be issued with a chronicle, facts and comments. WIC has carried out the necessary preparatory work: partner organisations have been found, and the pilot issue of the bulletin with the materials on Georgia has been published. We are trying to find resources to continue the network.

The Women's Information Centre in Georgia is the new WAVE Focal Point for the Caucasus. We extend a cordial welcome to the women of WIC.

Women's Information Centre
Helen Russetsky
40 Tsinamdzgvrishvili Street
380002 Tbilisi
Georgia
Tel.:(995 32) 952934
Fax:(995 32) 961514
E-mail:mika@access.sanet.ge
w_i_center@hotmail.com

Legal Issues

New Lawyers' NetworK

by Cecilia Cortesi

At a Council of Europe seminar on "Violence against young women in Europe", which was held in Budapest in May 2001, a group of young lawyers decided to share information about legislation in different countries in order to support women and their rights. All the lawyers present at the seminar are active in NGOs at a grass-roots level, combating every kind of violence against women. What emerged from the seminar was that there is a lack of information about various legislative situations as they relate to such issues as the trafficking of young women in European and from non-European countries.

The young lawyers attending the meeting therefore decided to form a coalition of young lawyers active in the field of women's rights, with the primary goal of providing mutual assistance and supporting all the women needing legal aid.

The aims are basically practical:

1. The first aim is to share information about legislation, NGOs at grass-roots level, and shelters so that it is possible to find help in each country. Sometimes it is very hard to defend the rights of women in separation and divorce if they come from another country that has different legislation from that of the guest state. Lawyers cannot count on Embassy and Consulate because they hardly collaborate and mainly protect the male interests. This is especially true in migrant countries, where male interests predominate at all power levels of society and embassies are one of these levels.

2. To create awareness within the various fields of law in which lawyers work of the need for prevention and to document the obstacles to women securing their rights in courts of law and state institutions.

3. To involve high-level national and international bodies such as the Council of Europe, the European Union, the United Nations and local governments in the promotion of women's rights at all levels, such as universities and high schools.

4. To create partnerships with universities and law schools, to introduce Gender Studies as a study course within the faculties of law, and to provide resources to women and young persons, notably on women's rights.

5. To raise sponsorship, financing and partners to apply for EU projects such as EQUAL, and to work for affirmative action at universities and faculties of law.

I hope you appreciate our work and will collaborate to held our project achieve greater success.

For more information,please contact:
Cecilia Cortesi: venturini_cortesi@iol.it
Basia Godlewska:basia_god@poczta.fm
Website:http://www.coollist.com/group.cgi?l=lawyersforwomen

Conferences

Seminar on Violence Against Young Women

European Youth Centre Budapest, 21-27 May, 2001

In late May the European Youth Centre in Budapest hosted a five-day seminar on Violence Against Young Women. The event provided an opportunity for the participants to exchange views and compare approaches. The Council of Europe had invited over seventy representatives of women's, young people's and human rights organisations, mainly from European countries but also from Asia and Africa, to attend.

The aims of the seminar wer e:

- To identify educational and social strategies to address these issues at the European level
- To explore the role of human rights mechanisms and of human rights education in preventing violence against young women
- To discuss the role of youth policy in relation to violence against young women

The Final Document formulates a number of important statements, concerns and recommendations. These include:

· *Human rights education must embrace education about women's rights and about gender equality as pillars for awareness of the universal dimension of human rights and its practical application to individual acts. Women's rights must therefore be fully incorporated in any curriculum or educational programme dealing with citizenship or human rights.*

· *Combating gender-based violence and promoting gender equality requires education and active involvement of all sectors of society, especially young women and men and members of minority groups, from the beginning.*

· *There is a need for men to be actively involved in the education and action against violence against women.*

· *The realities and needs of survivors and the experience of people who work with them can be the basis for the development of education material and methods.*

· *Awareness and education must be combined with multi-level prevention measures on specific issues, such as on trafficking, and with effective means of support for victims and survivors (e.g. shelter centres, legal assistance, etc.).*

The document called on the competent bodies within the Council of Europe to include violence against young women as a major issue in their political agenda and to incorporate it in Europe's youth policy, specifically in the Youth Programme on Human Rights Education. The participants also put forward the proposal "to create the post of an Ombuds(wo)man to monitor violence against women; this office should be directly accessible to women's NGOs across Europe."

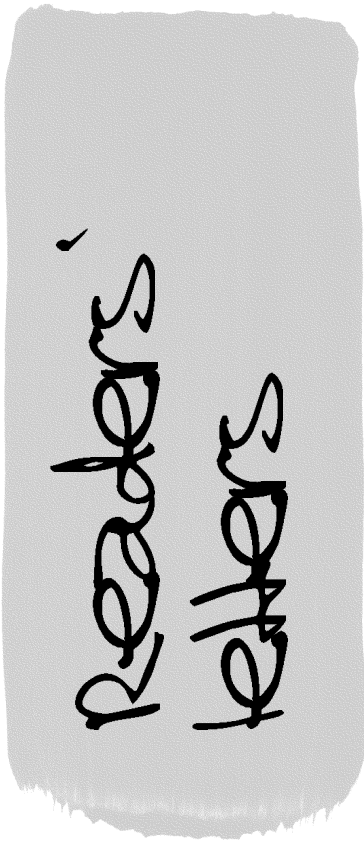
States were called upon to finance free legal counselling, safe shelters and other services for women survivors of violence provided by women's NGOs. The national policy-formulation processes should include regular consultations with grass-roots NGOs.

The full Final Document can be requested from:

Rui Gomes
Council of Europe – Directorate of Youth and Sport
European Youth Centre Budapest
Zivatar utca 1-3, H-1024 Budapest
E-mail:rui.gomes@coe.int

or

European Information Centre Against Violence / WAVE Office
Bacherplatz 10/4, A-1050 Vienna,Austria
Phone: +43 1 5482720
E-mail:office@wave-network.org



Dear Verena Kaselitz and Birgit Appelt!
As a women's organisation which has been working to combat trafficking in women at the national and international levels for almost a decade now, LEFÖ considers it important that a large number of women's organisations concern themselves with the issue of trafficking in women. This problem must be met by a wide body of opinion, a strong lobby and close co-operation, because trafficking in women is a violation of women's rights – with diverse implications relating to exploitation – and its prevention calls for effective long-term measures.

Unfortunately, this will be impossible if the many years of work put in by women's organisations is ignored, as was the case with the list of organisations "at the forefront of the fight against trafficking in women/human beings" published in your FEMPOWER No. 1. In our view, thast list was based on an unfounded selection.

If we are to attain our common goals as women's organisations – notably against the background of the current political situation in Austria – then we need considered co-operative endeavours which take account of the existing differences in terms of available resources and declared aims as women's organisations.
Regards,
LEFÖ-Frauen
LEFÖ (Lateinamerikanische Emigrierte Frauen in Österreich / Latin American Migrant Women in Austria), e-mail: lefoe@aon.at

Solwodi e.V. in Germany sent us a similar reaction. We would therefore like to reply with the following comments:

The FEMPOWER article referred to contained a list of those NGOs which were involved in the reformulation by the Human Rights Caucus of the Protocol to Prevent,Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime. It was not our intention in any way to denigrate other women's organisations who have also been doing pioneering work in the field for years now. Our database (www.wave-network.org) provides a platform for all women's organisations combating violence against women.

Dear colleagues,

Thank you for sending your publication FEMPOWER, and congratulations on producing such an important information and communications resource – and on its design.

Thanks and regards,

Sabine Klein-Schonnefeld
Arbeitsstelle gegen sexuelle Diskriminierungen und Gewalt - Universität Bremen, Germany

Dear Verena and Birgit!

Thank you very much for sending us the first edition of the magazine FEMPOWER. We found it really interesting and full of useful information for our organization. We can't wait for the next issue of the magazine.

With best regards,
Ludmila Gorova,
President of the Donetsk Regional League of Business and Professional Women

Dear great women in Vienna!!
This FEMPOWER will eat my time today, here at work..... and I'll send it around Denmark. Looks so gooooood. Congratulations to you.

love Jytte Mejnholt, LOKK, Denmark