



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE
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Speaking Notes: Marcella Pirrone, President of WAVE Gender equality and the Istanbul Convention – A decade of action Berlin 11th May 2021, Germany (online)

Distinguished colleagues,

WAVE network, representing its 160 member organisations in 46 European countries, is honoured to celebrate with all of you the anniversary of IC and its role as a major human rights treaty to ensure women's right to be free from violence. Wave recognizes the extent to which this Convention has helped our everyday work to protect women and girls from violence.

WAVE, as a network and with its members in single regions/nations across Europe, strongly **supports with own campaigns and actions, I.C.'s request to all States** that they adopt a holistic response to VAWG and DV applying the "4 Ps" approach of the Convention; Wave never stopped – at European and national level - **promoting the ratification of every single State, the EU accession and - not to forget! - the practical implementation of I.C.**

That is why WAVE members, as women's specialist support services, have seriously engaged (and will do in future) with GREVIO in the monitoring processes by contributing to Country "Shadow reports", providing a valuable **expert perspective from the frontline about national context-specific issues regarding the implementation of the Convention's aims.**

While WAVE will continue **to raise awareness about the I.C. at every opportunity, we will also strongly engage against every attack** coming from the increasing ideological and political forces which are very dangerously trying to bring back a view of the "traditional family" where women's basic rights and freedoms are questioned and thrown back decades, at same time combatting every instance of gender equality.

2. The IMPLEMENTATION of the I.C. and of the GREVIO Recommendations is a key aspect for Wave network

Most countries who have ratified the IC have committed themselves in "making laws" as a measure of implementation. We recognize that for many countries this is an important first step, but at same time Wave would suggest that law making costs little. In fact, despite new legislative measures, the practical application shows many gaps, as GREVIO have repeatedly underlined, last in yesterday's Horizontal review study.

Wave network must evidence that currently too many countries face NONE or not sufficiently guaranteed implementation of the main principles of I.C. and the GREVIO recommendations.

A connected problem is the continuing absence of funding for all necessary measures to tackle male VAWG; States must invest more funds, otherwise this problem cannot be prevented. Research clearly demonstrates that if investments are made, the benefits outweigh the consequences and cost of violence.

Covid -19 crisis has clearly evidenced the lack of adequate and appropriate services in too many areas of Europe, a reality documented by Wave Country Report 2019, before this health pandemic: the number of shelter spaces within Europe had fallen short of European standards (1 bed for 10.000 people), with 52.000 spaces (62%) lacking! Wave members report now that this situation has deteriorated significantly because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, where already insufficient funds have been reallocated to other emergencies.

I will conclude my short exposition highlighting some other issues Wave's expert perspective and experience from the frontline can evidence with reference to a missing or insufficient implementation of I.C.

The main issues are:

- **Awareness-raising and attention to the I.C. principles and values in education, including effective prevention campaigns;**
- **Qualified gathering data and research;**
- **Adequate and long term funding for women specialized services;**
- **Regular women and victim centred training to all relevant professionals** in cooperation with experts from the WSS;
- **Effective access to justice for women and girls victims of male violence, preventing all risks of secondary victimization** in their difficult "journey" to escape violence;
- **Protection of women's and children's right to live free from violence** with adequate measures i.e. protection orders, appropriate child's custody decisions.

This list is not intended to overshadow the importance of everything positive that has happened since 2014, the date of entry into force of the I.C. in first ratifying countries, but Wave wishes to offer a perspective from the point of view of the real lives of the women who ask for our help. They deserve our common commitment and attention so that not only this I.C. is spread as widely as possible, but that its **effective implementation** really improves the quality of life and freedom of all women and their children.

Joining GREVIO's quote from their Horizontal Review Study (published yesterday) *"It is possible to significantly stem violence against women"*, Wave will always be strongly present and join this commitment, thanking all international and national institutions and representative of civil society cooperating with us for this challenging task.

Thank you!