



WAVE NEWSLETTER

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY THE WAVE NETWORK



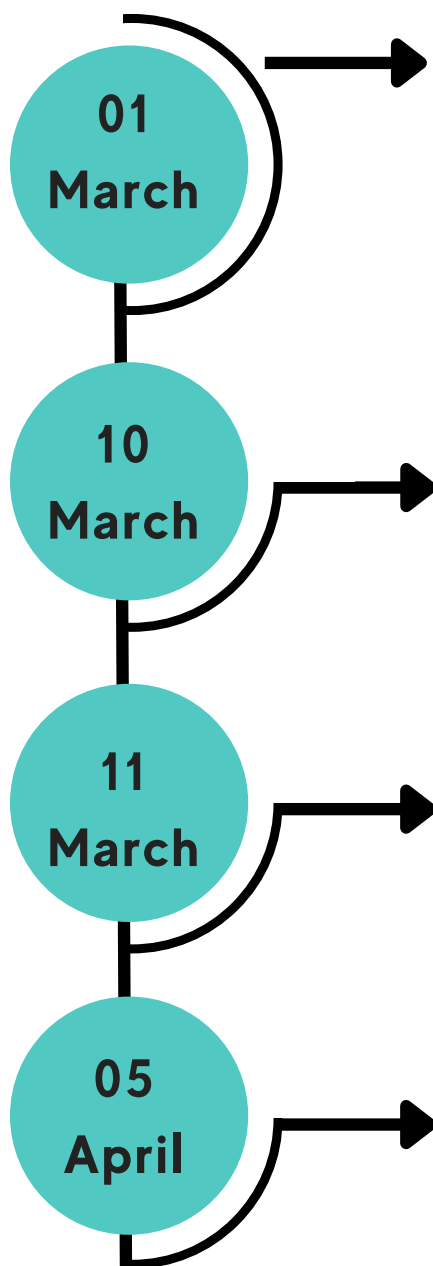
MARCH-APRIL 2022

PROPOSAL FOR AN EU DIRECTIVE ON COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On 8 March, the **European Commission** published a **proposal for an EU Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence**, aiming to support and protect victims/survivors, guarantee access to justice, and hold offenders to account. This proposal seeks to create a dedicated EU legal instrument to mobilise all Member States in developing a coordinated approach to safeguarding women and children from gender-based and domestic violence, identifying the most appropriate support services and harmonising EU law with established international standards.

As an active feminist civil society organisation, the WAVE Network advocates for a stronger survivor-centred approach in the Directive, calling on the Commission and other civil society organisations to join forces and strengthen the text by adopting a holistic approach to gender-based violence against women, including stronger prevention and protection measures and reinforcing the articles pertaining to the collaboration between the Member States and feminist civil society organisations at the national level. The final text of the Directive will have an immense impact on the lives of women and children victims of gender-based and domestic violence, as well as in the everyday work of our network members, specialist support services such as shelters, women's centres, helplines, rape crisis and sexual violence referral centres. More [here](#).

WAVE EVENTS



Nearly **100** participants joined the final MARVOW conference "At the crossroads between violence against women and elder abuse – solutions to protect older women survivors through multiagency cooperation". The conference welcomed stakeholders, policymakers, healthcare professionals, hospital administrators, representatives of the judiciary and the police, and more. Technical support provided by ONEvents.

Around **150** representatives of national civil society organizations, government officials, youth and artists from the Western Balkans and Turkey settled on the next key steps for advancing national and regional commitments to end sexual violence at the virtual regional conference "Partnering to prevent and respond to sexual violence".

WAVE Youth Ambassadors' webinar "Young Women Act: Towards Climate Justice and Women's Rights" presenting different aspects of climate justice in the framework of women's rights and introducing young female climate activists who are successfully tackling climate change.

WAVE Executive Manager, Stephanie Futter-Orel, and WAVE Advocacy & Campaign Coordinator, Eliana Jimeno, were in Brussels to discuss the proposal for the EU Directive with the Gender Equality Unit of the European Commission along with Carla Pambianco, Martina Törnkvist and other members of the DG Just Gender Unit. The advocacy meetings continued the following days with partner civil society organizations such as European Women's Lobby, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), ILGA-Europe and the Prospera Network.

UPCOMING IN MAY: PROSPERA – WAVE joint webinar
Preventing and Tackling Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence in Partnership with Civil Society Organisations

Tuesday, 17 May 2022 | 10:00-12:00 (CEST)
online via zoom

SAVE THE DATE: 24th WAVE Conference
Women's specialist support services as pillars of peace in times of crisis and beyond
10-11 October 2022 | Prague, Czech Republic

WAVE NEWS

2 NEW PROJECTS WITH WAVE MEMBERS



Read about the **WAVE Child Safeguarding & Movement Building Project** [here](#).



Supporting women survivors of violence in conflict and post-conflict areas - Read more [here](#).

NEW WAVE MEMBER: WELCOME TO THE NETWORK



Welcome to our newest WAVE member from Sweden: **Uppsala Kvinnojour** (Uppsala Women's Shelter). We look forward to working with you!

UPDATE: UKRAINE AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

Since the outbreak of the war, Thursdays have become the symbolic milestones of grief. **To raise awareness on the situation of our colleagues, as well as amplify their voices and share their stories, we post updates from them on Thursdays on our online [Magazine](#).**

We also **aim to highlight the work of our colleagues in the neighbouring countries.** They have been experiencing a dramatic increase in demand to their support services, particularly in countries such as Poland, Moldova, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.

We at WAVE have been regularly meeting with our colleagues, facilitating interaction and knowledge exchange, sharing information and contacts. Many of them have created information brochures, opened Ukrainian support hotlines and additional support services. **To share this vital information widely, we have gathered and published these publicly available resources on our website and will update them regularly. The resource page can be found [here](#).**



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WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS
DEFENDERS IN THE UKRAINE
AND IN NEIGHBOURING
COUNTRIES!

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

updates from WAVE Members and political developments



WAVE MEMBER: HUMAN RIGHTS IN
DEMOCRACY CENTER (HRDC)

Human Rights in Democracy Centre contributes to better implementation of GBV legislation at national and international UN level. In 2022, HRDC has prepared two **Alternative Reports** regarding the Albanian state review by UN Committees respectively **CEDAW** and Convention of Economic Social Rights (**CECSR**). On 8 March, HRDC was the only NGO from Albania participating in the 70th session of the group of Experts of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which monitors the implementation of the above mentioned Convention by its States parties.

The main issues raised by the HRDC in this session were related to the situation of social, economic and cultural respect focused especially on the problems of the Roma / Egyptian community. The HRDC identified the problems encountered by this community, especially in access to justice, as well as in services such as employment, care and education. Furthermore, problems encountered in the work of conduct against domestic violence were also highlighted, mainly those related to the functioning of referral mechanisms, access to justice for survivors of violence, efficiency of services provided to victims, issues of compensation to victims of violence, and more.



WAVE MEMBER: SENSIBLU FOUNDATION

In April, **Sensiblu Foundation**, a Romanian NGO which has been assisting survivors of SGBV for 20 years and became a WAVE member in 2021, launched the **first online platform in Romania addressing cyber violence**.

Until two years ago, cyber violence was not recognized as a form of violence by the Romanian legislation, which led to a lack of awareness campaigns and services for victims, and appropriate training for professionals. In this context, Sensiblu Foundation started the **"LOVE" Messages project**, funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Romania, that primarily targets survivors of cyber violence and teenagers who face online bullying, and provides them a safe space in which to express themselves, get informed, and learn to ask for help.



The **"LOVE" Messages project** aims to raise awareness about online SGBV, which profoundly affects survivors' rights, safety, well-being, and freedom of movement, to generate awareness through an online campaign, and develop a platform with resources on cyber violence. This is not the first project of the Foundation to tackle online violence. In 2020-2021, it implemented the **"TECH-WISE, RISK-FREE"** project, funded by the Vital Voices Global Partnership USA, in which 150 social service professionals received training in cyber violence intervention.



WAVE MEMBER: STANDING TOGETHER
AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE (STADV)

Domestic abuse and cancer - what survivors want from health services: **Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse** has partnered with Macmillan Cancer Support on a **two-phase project** with the aim of ensuring the cancer setting offers a safe time and space for victim-survivors of domestic abuse to get the support they need, from skilled and confident health care workers and cancer professionals. Phase one has just been completed, a consultation exercise, in conjunction with an academic partner and experts by experience, exploring what is currently happening in the cancer workforce and why.

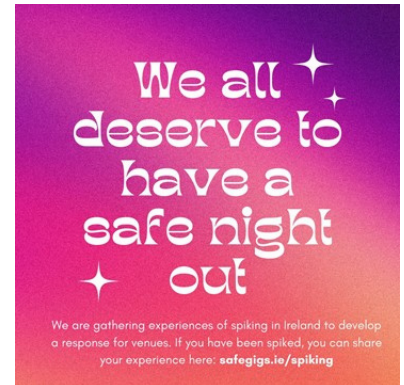
The consultation comprised surveys and interviews with England and Wales-based professionals who see patients diagnosed with cancer, or their partners or family members. The aim was to understand their views and experiences of, and perceived responsibility for, responding to domestic abuse. Victim-survivors diagnosed with cancer who experienced domestic abuse, or who experienced domestic abuse from a partner or family member diagnosed with cancer, were also surveyed and interviewed to understand their experiences of abuse and support-seeking behaviours. Phase two of the project starts in May, will be informed by the learnings from phase one and will include piloting with two NHS Trusts, as well as a national steering group, where the project seeks to understand what works in a cancer setting.



WAVE MEMBER: SEXUAL VIOLENCE CENTRE CORK

Safe Gigs is an initiative by the **Sexual Violence Centre Cork** to **make gigs and nightlife safer for everyone by creating a zero tolerance environment for discrimination and sexual violence.** **Safe Gigs** developed a Spiking Hub in response to an **increase in reports of drug spiking** across Ireland, the UK and Europe.

The hub is gathering victim experiences of spiking in Ireland and the response received from venues, health care professionals and family and friends. This information will be compiled and used as a guide for venues and professionals when dealing with spiking.



© **Safe Gigs**



WAVE MEMBER: WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION NORTHERN IRELAND

On the eve of the UK entering the 1st Coronavirus lockdown on 23 March 2020, mother of four Natasha was attacked and later died from her horrific injuries on 1 April 2020. Natasha was the 1st of 13 women to date who have been murdered in Northern Ireland since then, which per head of population gives Northern Ireland one of the highest femicide rates in Europe. **Northern Ireland is the only place in the UK without a VAWG Strategy in place but after much lobbying** of the local government, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the NI Executive **have now consulted on introducing such a Strategy.** For this consultation, **Women's Aid** extensively carried out harrowing sessions with the women, children & young people they support who have experienced domestic abuse to ensure their voices help shape an effective, trauma informed Strategy.

The NI Executive, the administrative branch of the NI Assembly, has not met since February 2022 due to disagreements regarding the NI Protocol and Northern Ireland is now in an election season. To ensure the VAWG will be eventually signed off by a functioning Executive, Women's Aid urges all their political leaders to work together post-election to help protect women & girls.



WAVE MEMBER: FEDERATION OF MOTHER AND CHILD HOMES AND SHELTERS

Update on preventing violence against women in Finland from Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters - Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2022–2025: The Committee for combating violence against women and domestic violence (NAPE) is tasked with preparing a plan for implementing the Istanbul Convention. The Action Plan includes long-term objectives and a total of 36 measures to be implemented in 2022–2025. The objectives are largely based on the recommendations issued by GREVIO.

The three main objectives aim at **strengthening the gender perspective and intersectionality in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, reinforcing intersectoral and multiprofessional cooperation and improving both the identification of violence against women and domestic violence and intervention in them.** (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) Also The Non-Discrimination Ombudswoman Kristina Stenman is now the official rapporteur of violence against women and girls. Her mission is to monitor violence against women and domestic violence, the functioning of national legislation and the implementation of international obligations. The rapporteur shall be independent and autonomous. This reform has been considered very significant and desirable.



WAVE MEMBER: SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS CENTER (SACC)

"In Armenia a survivor of sexual assault is not protected!"

In the Republic of Armenia the Sexual Assault Crisis Center has been raising the issue of the need for legislative regulation for years, while addressing the need to adopt a policy aimed at preventing sexual harassment. There are no comprehensive regulations on sexual harassment under the RA legislation. As such sexual harassment in a workplace is neither a base for termination of an employment contract nor for imposing disciplinary sanctions or measures on an abuser. This issue has been addressed both by the ILO experts' committee with a direct request forwarded to Armenia about the ILO 111 convention, and by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in its concluding observations back in 2016. Recognizing the need for effective protection mechanisms for victims of sexual harassment in the workplace the Sexual Assault Crisis Center together with the Women's Resource Center have developed a package of legislative changes and have presented it to the Standing Committee on Labor and Social Affairs of the National Assembly (RA NA SCLSA) and to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA) of the RA.

Several meetings have been held with the representatives of the mentioned state institutions. During the meetings the proposals received on the draft amendments to the RA Labor Code were discussed. The SACC awaits the RA Government to take its actions regarding the package of recommendations, meanwhile the NGO continues to apply more effort in that direction.



WAVE MEMBER: AUTONOMOUS WOMEN'S CENTER (AWC)

The **Autonomous Women's Centre** (AWC) recently published "**Systemic Education Indefinitely Postponed**" which aimed to answer the question of how much the Republic of Serbia respects international standards, domestic laws and policies related to the education of children and youth on sexual and reproductive health within the formal education system.

The results show that Serbia has accepted the most important international binding documents regarding education on sexual and reproductive rights and health at all levels, which is confirmed by domestic laws and strategic documents. However, the reviewed curricula indicate that there is no systematic and comprehensive approach to this type of education. Thus, for example, certain topics are present only in certain school subjects (often optional), one part of educational profiles and type of schools, while from the mentioned plans and programs it is not possible to determine which contents are covered through teaching and to what extent. At the same time, the AWC **study** from 2021, which dealt with the implementation of the National Program for Preservation and Improvement of Sexual and Reproductive Health of the Citizens of the Republic of Serbia, found that all indicators of the situation in this area were unfavourable, whereas the analysis of the media content revealed that essential data is missing on the right to independence and choice, availability of contraception, education, counselling or health services.

VIDEO TIP BY **BEFEM** (SERBIA)

What happens when grassroots gender justice activists & politicians build power? This year marks 20 years since the first change in the Criminal Code of Serbia that recognized domestic violence thanks to the decades-long fight of feminist activists. One of the women who led this, and many other fights for women to be recognized in the law, is the politician Leila Trifunović Ruždić with Tanja Ignjatović from **Autonomous Women's Centre**. **This story shows that collaboration and support between activists and politicians is possible, necessary and that it can change society.**