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# WAVE NEWSLETTER

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY THE WAVE NETWORK

A central graphic featuring a white envelope with an orange seal and a barcode, surrounded by several overlapping circles in teal, orange, and brown, some with hatching patterns. The entire graphic is framed by a white arch.

WAVE NEWS

WAVE EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2022

*happy holidays*



WE WISH YOU RELAXING HOLIDAYS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

WITH LOVE, THE  OFFICE

We want to say a big **THANK YOU** to our **WAVE** membership as well as to **women's human rights defenders and feminist activists** not just in Europe but around the world for their dedication, relentless efforts and work, continuous advocacy and mobilisation, action and activism to tackle, prevent and ultimately end violence against women and girls.

We look forward to further strengthening feminist movements in the new year.

**Stay safe and see you all in 2023!**

# WAVE EVENTS

## WAVE Training Institute 2022

This year's WAVE Training Institute “**A neglected interconnection: child custody and violence against women**” took place from 1-2 December and focused on issues related to **child custody proceedings and violence against women and the interconnection between intimate partner violence and children’s rights**. The training was open exclusively to WAVE members. For information on the protection of children from violence in the context of intimate partner violence/domestic violence and custody and visitation, click [HERE](#).

## WAVE/OSCE Conference

On 8 November 2022, the WAVE Network in partnership with the [OSCE Gender Issues Programme/WIN Project](#) organised the conference on **preventing and responding to gender-based violence during the war and in post-war settings** in Tbilisi, Georgia, to explore the topic of gender-based violence during and after conflicts and to **launch a new toolkit aimed at supporting women’s specialist services and civil society organisations** involved in supporting women survivors of violence in conflict and post-conflict settings.



To mark the launch over 50 participants representing civil society activists, representatives of governments, and international organisations from the South Caucasus, South Eastern and Eastern Europe gathered at the conference in Tbilisi.

[The Toolkit is available HERE](#)

## WAVE Youth Ambassadors Conference

The **WAVE Youth Ambassadors Conference on Civil Courage** took place from 9-10 December, and was aimed at increasing sensitivity to actions of civil courage among youth and to build a strong youth feminist network. Participants acquired skills in tackling the deprivation of women's rights in public spaces and participated in a workshop on the **brand new WAVE Campaigning & Advocacy Toolkit for Young Activists**. The conference was exclusively for WAVE Youth Ambassadors.



[Access the WAVE campaigning and advocacy toolkit for young activists here and get inspired!](#)



@wavenetwork.youth



@wavenetwork.youth



WAVE Youth Ambassadors

## 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

As a network of specialised services to survivors of gender-based violence, we rolled our sleeves during the **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence** and put our hands and expert knowledge together to **develop toolkits, advocate for better legislation, and find creative ways to raise awareness** of the importance of tackling gender-based violence and preventing femicides. For an overview of the WAVE activities held during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, click [HERE](#).

[If you want to hear more from WAVE members, WAVE Youth Ambassadors and the WAVE office, check out the #16days episodes of the WAVE podcast "No More Violence Against Women"!](#)



# WAVE NEWS

## TAVAM – Together Against Violence in Austria and Moldova

WAVE launched a new project in cooperation with the Moldovan umbrella organisation for violence protection "National Coalition Life Without Violence" titled **TAVAM (Together Against Violence in Austria and Moldova)**. This project aims to **strengthen the capacity of Moldovan women's specialist services and to advance the transfer of knowledge between Austrian and Moldovan organisations**. For this purpose, a series of training events in Moldova with participation of Austrian experts will take place in 2023, followed by a conference in Chisinau, where the results will be presented. More about the project [HERE](#).

## Job Vacancy at WAVE

WAVE is looking for an experienced and committed **Event Coordinator**, to support us with the successful planning and delivery of our many international online and offline events. Applicants must have a valid working and residence permit for Austria. Professional work-experience in Event Planning & Coordination is essential (in either the private sector or the voluntary sector, or both). **For more information on the job vacancy, click [HERE](#)**.

## FEMPOWER Magazine 2022

Just as this year's WAVE Conference, the **Fempower Magazine 2022** is dedicated to **highlighting the invaluable role of women's specialist services** and their overall contribution towards society by **navigating different contexts** and building resilience and capacity **in times of crisis and in times of peace** to ensure that **violence against women and girls is effectively tackled and prevented**. The online magazine is available [HERE](#).

## New WAVE member

We are happy to close off the (almost) end of the year with some good news: **Please welcome our newest WAVE member Women's Resource Center, Armenia**! Thank YOU for joining our network.

More information on the WAVE membership [HERE](#). If you are interested in getting involved, click [HERE](#) to see which steps you have to follow to become a member of the WAVE Network.



## Fourth Regional Forum: "Integrated Policies, Inclusive Partnerships"

The **Fourth Regional Forum on Ending Violence against Women in the Western Balkans and Türkiye, "Integrated Policies, Inclusive Partnerships"**, took place virtually on 29 and 30 November 2022. WAVE was organising two sessions on the second day relating to the [Civil Society Strengthening Platform](#); one session reflecting on five years of the project and the second one on cooperation between women's NGOs and healthcare providers. More [HERE](#).

## Information and support for women fleeing the war in Ukraine

On our [website](#), you can find an **overview of country-specific information** that relates to supporting women **fleeing the war in Ukraine** to various European countries, including a list of the **national women's helplines** available in the 46 European Countries. Furthermore, WAVE initiated a **new fundraiser to support women's human rights defenders in the Ukraine and in neighbouring countries** to survive the war during the bitterly cold months.



**CLICK THE DONATE BUTTON TO SUPPORT WOMEN AND WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN THE UKRAINE AND IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES!**

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

updates from WAVE Members and political developments



WAVE member: Women's Support and Information Centre

## AGE OF CONSENT RAISED IN ESTONIA

WAVE member Women's Support and Information Centre informed us that as of 1 November 2022, the age of consent in Estonia is now officially 16 years. Approved by the Parliament of Estonia, this legislative change comes after 10 years of advocacy work of many civil society organisations and governmental officials in Estonia. **"Raising the age of consent from 14 to 16 years is an important step in protecting children, their health and development"**, writes the Ministry of Justice. Along with raising the age of consent, child marriages are now prohibited and only persons of legal age [adults] can marry in Estonia. To further ensure the safety of children, the Ministry of Justice has provided useful contacts and materials on their website to support young people themselves, parents, as well as teachers and other professionals. More info in Estonian [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).



WAVE member: Human Rights in Democracy Center

## THE NEED FOR EFFECTIVE REFERRAL MECHANISMS

Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC) is an NGO with 20 years of experience, established in 2002 in Albania. Since then, HRDC is striving to work for the promotion and protection of human rights with a special focus to gender-based violence. From November-December 2022, these important activities took place:

1-Executive Director of HRDC Aferdita Prroni took part in the Regional Forum on Ending Violence against Women in the Western Balkans and Türkiye, "Integrated Policies, Inclusive Partnerships". HRDC held a speech on the situation of the healthcare sector in Albania regarding violence against women, their response and challenges. More on **collaboration between women's specialist services and the healthcare sector** [HERE](#).

2-Aferdita Prroni had a podcast interview about the topic of gender equality with a special focus on access to support of vulnerable groups such as victims of gender-based violence to the justice system. The activity was supported by the OSCE Albania, and focused on the situation of gender-based violence, **referral mechanisms** and difficulties that survivors face to access the justice system.

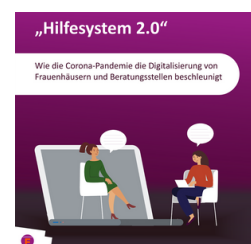
3-HRDC organised awareness-raising activities to help **strengthen Referral Mechanisms across Albania** during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. HRDC also offered training to service providers and specific services to survivors of gender-based violence including free court representation.



WAVE member: Association of Women's Shelters

### **PUBLICATION „HELP SYSTEM 2.0“**

The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a high burden on women's shelters and counselling centres in Germany. Especially in regard to technical and IT aspects it has posed great challenges to the facilities. In response to the changed working conditions, the Association of Women's Shelters in Germany (Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V. [FHK]) launched the project "Help System 2.0" in 2020. Funded by the BMFSFJ as part of the federal funding programme "Together against Violence against Women", FHK has since been able to support more than 700 facilities for women and girls affected by violence in expanding their digital services. With the **online publication "Hilfesystem 2.0 - Wie die Corona-Pandemie die Digitalisierung von Frauenhäusern und Beratungsstellen beschleunigt"** (Help System 2.0 - How the Corona Pandemic is Accelerating the Digitalisation of Women's Shelters and Counselling Centres), FHK takes a look at needs in the protection of women against violence and digital progress in times of crisis. The online publication is now available for download free of charge on the FHK website.





WAVE member: European Anti-Violence Network

## INTERSECTORAL RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: CAN IT BE ACHIEVED?

On 28 November 2022, European Anti-Violence Network and the Municipality of Agios Dimitrios co-organised an open event entitled “Intersectoral Response to Domestic Violence: Can it be achieved?” The **Municipality of Agios Dimitrios is the first Municipality in Greece to pilot the intersectoral response procedures to domestic violence** designed by the “intersectoral cooperation task force” established within the framework of the project #GR\_IS\_UnitedForDVSurvivors. More [HERE](#).



WAVE member: Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation

## MOR ÇATI SHADOW REPORT FOR OPUZ GROUP CASES AND COMMITTEE'S DECISIONS ARE OUT!

In 2009, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) convicted Türkiye of causing discrimination by not protecting Nahide Opuz and her mother against the systematic male violence they were subjected to. This decision was also the first at ECHR level to emphasise a State's obligation to combat violence against women. The Istanbul Convention was built on this decision and defined obligations to States to prevent violence as well as protect women from violence. After the Opuz decision, the case of four women brought before the ECHR was also ruled against Türkiye. All of these decisions are followed under the Opuz Group Cases. Türkiye regularly reports to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (AKBK) for Opuz Group Cases, and the Committee of Ministers presents decisions to Türkiye. The Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation contributed to the process of monitoring these cases with the following report.

In their decisions declared on 9 December 2022, the Deputies of the Committee of Ministers strongly **encouraged the authorities to consider reversing their decision of withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention as a sign of their commitment to eliminating domestic violence and violence against women.** The Deputies, once again, expressed serious concern that the number of domestic violence victims remains persistently high, despite the legislative amendments made in the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure; and called on the authorities to continue taking further legislative and other measures aimed at identifying, remedying and preventing gaps in the institutional response to violence, improving the collection of data by the judiciary and law enforcement bodies, and ensuring that the legislation in force is duly implemented by all authorities. Lastly, the Deputies invited, once again, the authorities to work in close cooperation with domestic NGOs. The report is available [HERE](#).



WAVE member: Association of Austrian  
Autonomous Women's Shelters

## **GROWING UP IN SAFETY: TOOLS FOR CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN WOMEN'S SHELTERS FROM SAFESHELTER PROJECT**

The SafeShelter project is an EU co-funded project within the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme. SafeShelter developed and implemented child safeguarding guidelines designed specifically for women's shelters. The project was implemented from January 2021 until December 2022 in 6 European countries: Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Spain. The project comes to an end, but its engagement with and commitment to the feminist child safeguarding work does not - the project will work further on **continuous improvement of Child Safeguarding and implementation of Child Safeguarding Policies throughout Europe.** More about the SafeShelter project [HERE](#), the SafeShelter Guide (EN) [HERE](#) and SafeShelters videos about child safeguarding [HERE](#).





WAVE member: Autonomous Women's House Zagreb

## WOMEN'S MESSAGE TO INSTITUTIONS - STOP STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE!

In 2022, 39% of calls to the Autonomous Women's House Zagreb (AWHZ) counselling centre were related to women's problems with social welfare centres, police, judiciary, expert witnesses and other institutions. **A woman's exit from a violent relationship too often means entering a violent system.** During the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, the AWHZ published one quote every day that illustrates **what women face after reporting violence** and trying to leave the abuser. All statements were made by women who turned to AWHZ for support in the last year.



"The police entered the apartment, my face was injured and I was bleeding, they took us both into custody because he said I provoked him." A.L. (27)



WAVE member: Sexual Assault Crisis Center

## CONFERENCE ON "WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS STEPPING UP AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN ARMENIA"

On 15 November 2022, the Sexual Assault Crisis Center held the conference "**Putting Sexual Violence on the Agenda**" as part of the "Women human rights defenders stepping up against gender-based violence in Armenia" project (2020-2022) implemented by the Coalition to Stop Violence against Women with the financial support of the European Union. The aim of the conference was to **focus everyone's attention on the issue of sexual violence**. Participants emphasised the need for large-scale work to prevent sexual violence, as well as providing support to sexual violence survivors and addressing concerns, while attaching particular importance to the cooperation of all partners in this field.



WAVE member: Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland

## HEAR HER VOICE THROUGHOUT NORTHERN IRELAND

**'Hear Her Voice'** is the creative expressions of 91 survivors of domestic abuse. Women from across Northern Ireland, supported by local Women's Aid groups, took part in creative writing, storytelling, embroidery, painting, and more; all with the intention of challenging the behaviours of their perpetrators and the institutions that allow those behaviours to continue. Previously launched in Belfast in 2021 as a complete exhibition, this year saw the artwork being divided up and 'brought home' in 9 individually curated displays, facilitated in libraries across Northern Ireland. Originally envisioned by women involved with the Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland **Survivor Engagement group**, their hope was to raise awareness and challenge harmful stereotypes across the 16 Days of Action against Gender-Based Violence. "A big thank you to the women involved with this successful project, as well as the libraries that so kindly supported", says the federation. For more info on "Hear Her Voice", click [HERE](#).

possibilities of participation

## CONFERENCE ON SUPPORTING CHILD VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF SEXUAL ABUSE

The ENCLAVE project, with fieldwork in Belgium, Estonia, Greece, Italy and Spain, tackles the current situation and treatment of children victims and witnesses of sexual violence in the criminal justice system, with a specific interest in procedures and protocols of forensic interviewing in these national settings. The **ENCLAVE Final Conference "Supporting child victims and witnesses of sexual abuse: Towards an integrated child protection system"** takes place on 12 January 2023 in Brussels and will also be livestreamed. The main findings and outputs of the ENCLAVE project will be presented among interesting speeches and critical discussions on the challenges of daily practice in criminal justice procedures with child victims and witnesses of sexual violence, and challenges regarding the interprofessional collaboration of relevant stakeholders of the child victims' journey. Register [HERE](#) for in-person as well as online participation.