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# WAVE NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY THE WAVE NETWORK



JANUARY 2025

# THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER INCLUDES

- **New Podcast Episode: GBV In Conflict & Post-Conflict Settings**
- **Join the European Webinar Series: Expert Insights on Addressing Domestic Violence in Healthcare**
- **New WAVE resource: Safety as the Best Interest of the Child - WAVE's toolkit is now available in Hungarian**
- WAVE voices from
  - Germany: **Adoption Of The Violence Assistance Act Imminent**
  - Croatia: **Advocacy Against GBV In Croatian Parliament**
  - Türkiye: **Safe Opuz V. Turkey & ECHR Judgment**
  - Slovenia: **Overturing Law On Assisted Reproduction**
  - Bosnia & Herzegovina: **Who If Not Us? Campaign**
  - Poland: **Safe You App Launch**
  - Greece: **Observatory For Violence Against Women**
  - Across Europe: **StoP Toolbox Launch For Communities Without Domestic Violence**
  - Lithuania: **Conversations On GBV Through Film**
  - Cyprus: **New E-Learning Opportunities to Tackle Abuse & FGM**
  - Romania: **Enhancing The Justice System**
  - Armenia: **Economic and Educational Empowerment of Women**
  - Spain: **Celebrating 30 Years Pushing for Women's Rights**
  - Sweden: **Celebrating 37 Years Of Support**

This newsletter covers updates from WAVE and our members including political developments from across Europe.

FIND HELP ! on WAVE's database of over 1,440 contacts of women's specialist services

 [Urgent times call for unwavering support!](#)

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# WAVE NEWS

## NEW PODCAST EPISODE: GBV IN CONFLICT & POST-CONFLICT SETTINGS

From 2022 to 2024, WAVE and the OSCE Gender Issues Programme/WIN Project partnered with **women's NGOs in Armenia, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ukraine** to develop sustainable resources for **preventing and responding to gender-based violence in war and post-war contexts**. **More about the project [here](#)**.

In our latest **WAVE podcast episode**, frontline experts from Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Armenia share insights on the **realities of GBV in conflict and the vital role of women's NGOs** in driving change.

 [Listen here to the new WAVE podcast episode "Gender-Based Violence in Conflict and Post-Conflict: Prevention and Response".](#)

## VIPROM EUROPEAN WEBINAR SERIES

The EU project **VIPROM - Victim Protection in Medicine** (2023-ongoing) is dedicated to providing sustainable, embedded, and institutionally recognised training to medical professionals on how to effectively respond to domestic violence. **Starting in March 2025, the European Webinar Series will feature experts and medical trainers sharing valuable knowledge, skills, and best practices.** Attend to learn how to identify and address domestic violence in healthcare settings; gain insights from leading experts, including members of the VIPROM consortium and partners; and participate in live Q&A sessions, clarify concepts, and exchange experiences with peers.

 [Register here for the European Webinar Series of the EU project VIPROM.](#)

## NEW WAVE RESOURCE

[Safety as the Best Interest of the Child - WAVE's toolkit is now available in Hungarian, alongside English, Croatian, and German!](#)

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## updates from WAVE Members and political developments

### SHAPING CHANGE: LEGAL, POLICY & ADVOCACY UPDATES

#### THE ADOPTION OF THE VIOLENCE ASSISTANCE ACT IN GERMANY IS IMMINENT

The parliamentary groups of the SPD, CDU/CSU, and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen have announced that the law will be passed this week, no later than today, 31 January 2025, in the Bundestag. **The goal is to establish a nationwide legal entitlement to shelter and counseling services for women affected by violence.** The federal government is thereby taking responsibility and financially supporting the states in providing assistance to ensure comprehensive support.

**WAVE member in Germany Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V. (FHK - Association of Women's Shelters) explicitly welcomes this long-overdue step.** On 27 January 2025, FHK was invited as an expert to a hearing in the Committee on Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth and emphasised the urgency of implementing the law within this legislative period. Support for the draft was significant: A majority of the invited experts clearly advocated for its adoption.

After passing the Bundestag, the Federal Council (Bundesrat) must approve it on 14 February 2025—just in time before the federal elections on 23 February 2025.

Shared by [Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V. \(FHK - Association of Women's Shelters\)](#),  
WAVE member in Germany

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#### DOMINE ADVOCATES AGAINST GENDER BASED DIGITAL VIOLENCE IN CROATIAN PARLIAMENT

On 22 November 2024, the Croatian Parliament's Committee for Gender Equality held a thematic session titled "Preventing Gender-Based Online Violence Against Girls and Women and Creating a Safer Online Environment". **Katarina Križan, representing WAVE member in Croatia Domine (domine - Organizacija za promicanje ženskih prava), presented insights from the organisation's pioneering research on digital violence against women—the first of its kind in Croatia. This research, funded by WAVE, led to the development of public policy guidelines and educational materials for high schools.** Domine emphasised the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to combat the rising issue of online violence against women, highlighting the importance of education and policy reforms. The session marked a significant step in addressing digital violence against women at the national level, with Domine's contributions laying the groundwork for future initiatives. More [here](#).

Shared by [Domine \(domine - Organizacija za promicanje ženskih prava\)](#), WAVE member in Croatia

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#### SHADOW REPORT SUBMITTED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OPUZ V. TURKEY GROUP OF CASES

WAVE member in Türkiye **Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation (Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı) submitted a shadow report to the Committee of Ministers to monitor the implementation of the Opuz v. Turkey Group of Cases (no. 33401/02).** The report highlighted recent cases of violence against women and femicide, demonstrating that the country's **state mechanisms still fail to adequately protect women and address male violence.** Mor Çatı emphasised that women are often killed or remain exposed to violence even after being granted protection orders.

The report detailed shortcomings in issuing and effectively enforcing protective and preventive measures, as well as systemic challenges within support mechanisms. It revealed that state-provided specialised social services remain insufficient in both quantity and quality. Finally, the report underscored persistent issues of ineffective investigations and widespread impunity, which continue to obstruct women's access to justice in cases of violence.

The report can be found [here](#).

### A SIGNIFICANT JUDGMENT BY THE ECHR ON EFFECTIVE INVESTIGATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN TÜRKIYE

**On 14 January 2025, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) delivered its judgment in the case of N.Ö. v. Turkey (Application no. 24733/15), finding a violation of Article 8.** The Court held that the country failed to fulfill its positive obligation to protect the woman's physical and psychological integrity. The judgment highlighted the domestic courts' inadequate response to her allegations of sexual assault by her supervisor at her workplace and their failure to conduct the required careful scrutiny of the case.

The Court criticised the domestic courts for failing to properly evaluate the evidence, including medical reports and witness statements, and for relying on the woman's delay in reporting the assault without conducting a thorough investigation. It emphasised that the investigation of sexual offences requires a context-sensitive approach tailored to the specific circumstances of each case, rather than relying on gender-based stereotypical assumptions or preconceived notions about how women who experience sexual violence should act. **The judgment is a result of the efforts of several feminist lawyers in the country at the domestic and international courts.**

Shared by [Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation \(Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı\)](#), WAVE member in Türkiye

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### SLOVENIAN COURT OVERTURNS DISCRIMINATORY LAW ON ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

**The Slovenian Constitutional Court has declared legislation denying single women and women in same-sex relationships access to assisted reproduction procedures unconstitutional.** The ruling, issued in November 2024, states that excluding these groups from in vitro fertilisation violates their constitutional right to non-discrimination.

The National Assembly has been given one year to amend the law, although the current provisions will remain in effect during this period. This decision follows years of advocacy, including a petition filed by MPs from the Left Party and legal challenges highlighting the discriminatory impact of the legislation. This landmark ruling marks a significant step towards equality. WAVE member in Slovenia Association SOS Helpline for Women and Children – Victims of Violence ([Drustvo SOS](#)) shared their reaction: "We are very pleased that decades of discrimination are finally being addressed and eliminated."

Shared by [Association SOS Helpline for Women and Children – Victims of Violence \(Drustvo SOS\)](#), WAVE member in Slovenia

## PUSHING ACTION: CAMPAIGN & PROJECT UPDATES



© Foundation United Women Banja Luka

### BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA: WHO IF NOT US?

With the support of partners Kvinna till kvinna and UK International Development, **WAVE member in Bosnia & Herzegovina Foundation "United Women" Banja Luka ("Udružene žene" Banja Luka)** launched the campaign **Who if not us**. The campaign raises awareness of the risks of passively witnessing changes that could undermine women's rights. Designed to be interactive, it allowed individuals to interpret the slogan personally and share what it meant to them.

More than 40 participants—including activists, politicians, civil society members, lawyers, and journalists—shared their motivations in the fight for freedom, equality, and change. The campaign was featured on the foundation's website, promoted on Instagram and Facebook, and displayed on billboards in Banja Luka, Prijedor, and Gradiška. More [here](#).

Shared by Foundation "United Women" Banja Luka ("Udružene žene" Banja Luka),  
WAVE member in Bosnia & Herzegovina

### SAFE YOU APP LAUNCHED IN POLAND

**Safe YOU** is a free mobile application designed to empower and protect women and girls from violence, as well as raise awareness on key GBV issues. It is recognised as a Digital Public Good by the UN Secretary General and available in Armenia, Romania, Georgia, Iraq and New Mexico. **Safe YOU was launched in Poland in December 2024 in collaboration with Polish WAVE member Feminoteka** and with the support of UNFPA EECARO.

Available in Polish, English, and Ukrainian, the app allows users to: send SOS alerts with geolocation to up to 7 contacts with just one tap; collect and securely store evidence of violence; locate and connect with local support services; access free, anonymous counseling from verified professionals; and explore educational content. [Download the app](#). Follow [@safeyouapp\\_poland](#) on FB & IG and contact [lilar@feminoteka.pl](mailto:lilar@feminoteka.pl) for more info.



© Feminoteka

Shared by [Feminoteka Foundation \(Fundacja Feminoteka\)](#), WAVE member in Poland

### OBSERVATORY FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN CRETE

The Observatory for Violence Against Women in Crete - WOMEN\_WATCH, operating under the BUILD Programme and implemented by WAVE member in Greece Union of Women Associations of Heraklion (UWAH - **Σύνδεσμος Μελών Γυναικείων Σωματείων Ηρακλείου**), is working to combat domestic violence by monitoring legislation, compiling data, and strengthening response mechanisms. By analysing legal implementation, publishing regular reports, and enhancing coordination among professionals—including law enforcement, legal experts, healthcare providers, and social services—the Observatory aims to improve protections for survivors.

In 2024, 1,508 incidents of violence against women were recorded in Crete, with Heraklion reporting the highest numbers. As cases continue to rise, there is an urgent need for more effective interventions. To address this, training sessions are being conducted to improve institutional responses. **A final event in March will present key findings, discuss legislative and policy measures, and outline next steps.**

More here: [kakopoiisi.org/build-active-1](https://kakopoiisi.org/build-active-1)

Contacts: [projects@kakopoiisi.gr](mailto:projects@kakopoiisi.gr) / [mstavraki@kakopoiisi.gr](mailto:mstavraki@kakopoiisi.gr)

**Shared by Union of Women Associations of Heraklion (UWAH - [Σύνδεσμος Μελών Γυναικείων Σωματείων Ηρακλείου](#)), WAVE member in Greece**

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### **STOP TOOLBOX LAUNCH FOR COMMUNITIES WITHOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**On 21 January 2025, the StoP Toolbox was launched, providing a comprehensive resource for community-based approaches to preventing domestic violence.** Originating in Germany, the StoP model—Stadtteile ohne Partnergewalt (Communities Without Intimate Partner Violence)—focuses on tackling patriarchy against women through community organising, awareness-raising, and network-building.

**The StoP Toolbox brings together 30 years of expertise, offering theoretical frameworks, practical methods, and real-world insights to support the implementation of StoP's eight-step action cycle.** It includes texts, videos, audio materials, and guidelines designed to help communities take action against domestic violence.

The StoP Toolbox has its own website which can be accessed via <https://stop-toolbox.eu/>

StoP Partners & Associates: WAVE members [ALEG](#), [ROSA Centrum Pro Zeny ZS](#), [Garance ASBL](#), [AÖE](#) as well as PSYTEL, HAW Hamburg, WWP EN and WAVE.

**Shared by the team of StoP –Stadtteile ohne Partnergewalt ([Communities Without Intimate Partner Violence](#))**

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### **BEYOND THE SCREEN: ENGAGING CONVERSATIONS ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGH FILM**

During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign 2024, **WAVE member in Lithuania Women's Information Center ([Motery informacijos centras](#))** hosted a special screening of the critically acclaimed Italian film *There's Still Tomorrow (C'è ancora domani)*.

**Supported by WAVE's micro-grant, the event used cinema to spark dialogue on domestic violence.**

Set in 1940s Italy, the film follows Delia, a mother enduring patriarchal oppression and domestic violence, while offering a powerful message of resilience and hope. Pre-screening speeches highlighted the urgency of addressing domestic violence, an often-overlooked issue.

**All proceeds from the event went toward self-help groups for women affected by domestic violence, an initiative run voluntarily by the Women's Information Center.**

More here: <https://lygus.lt/viltingas-rytojus-ikvepiantis-ir-nepaliekantis-abejingu/>

**Shared by Women's Information Center ([Motery informacijos centras](#)), WAVE member in Lithuania**

### NEW E-OPPORTUNITIES BY MIGS IN CYPRUS

**WAVE member in Cyprus Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) is offering 2 new free online courses for professionals addressing violence against women & girls.**

**Recognising abuse in healthcare services:** In collaboration with the University of Nicosia, MIGS has launched an online course (free of charge) on recognising abuse and providing support in healthcare settings. Tailored for physiotherapists and healthcare professionals, the course runs from 19 December 2024 to 15 February 2025, offering self-paced learning, certification (26 hours), and bilingual access (Register here: [Greek](#) & [English](#)). Developed within the framework of the [OPEP DV](#) project, funded by the Erasmus+ program.

**End FGM E-Campus:** MIGS and its partners also invite professionals, students, and practitioners to register for the End FGM E-Campus (free of charge), an interactive platform providing expert-led training on prevention, protection, survivor support and community engagement. Available in English (with Greek, Portuguese, French, and Italian translations coming soon), the platform includes quizzes, case studies, and practical scenarios for social workers, healthcare professionals, educators, and more. More here: <https://endfgm-ecampus.eu/>

Shared by [Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies \(MIGS\)](#), WAVE member in Cyprus

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### ENHANCING THE JUSTICE SYSTEM IN ROMANIA

**Between 20-23 January 2025, WAVE member in Romania Necuvinte organised a four-day training at the Palace of Parliament, part of the "E.L.E. Evolve by Learning to Empower" project.**



The program aimed to enhance the justice system's response to sexual and gender-based violence by providing specialised, multidisciplinary training to 140 professionals, including police officers, prosecutors, lawyers, and social workers. Led by experienced US-American trainers, the sessions featured debates, interactive activities, and practical guidance on victim-centered interventions for both minors and adults. The initiative sought to raise awareness, improve sensitivity to gender-based violence, and build a professional support network in Bucharest, Romania. Key institutional representatives such as Titus Corlăţean (President of the Foreign Policy Committee), Luminița Popescu (ANES), and Sarah Levit-Shore (U.S. Embassy) attended the opening. Funded by the U.S. Department of State and partners like Vital Voices, **the project underscores Necuvinte's dedication to combating domestic violence, supporting victims, and advocating for legislative change in Romania.**

Shared by [Necuvinte Association \(Asociația Necuvinte\)](#), WAVE member in Romania

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### WOMEN'S RIGHTS HOUSE: EMPOWERING WOMEN IN ARMENIA

**WAVE member in Armenia Women's Rights House (WRH - [Կանանց հրավորւնքնէրի տուն](#)) is driving change in the country through innovative initiatives promoting economic empowerment, education, and community development. See the full list [here](#).**

**"HerCare" - sustainable menstrual & pregnancy products:** In the near future, WRH is aiming to launch HerCare, a social enterprise providing eco-friendly menstrual and pregnancy products while creating employment opportunities for women, including survivors of violence and displaced individuals. Over 10% of profits will support women's empowerment initiatives.



**Community-led projects:** Since 2019, WRH has funded 19 sub-grant projects, including youth centres, resource hubs, and public spaces. In 2025, new projects will support displaced persons, eco-activism, and educational infrastructure.

**Vocational training for women:** In 2024, 15 women from Shirak Province began training in graphic design, UI/UX, and social media marketing. Since 2019, 292 women have gained skills in IT and non-IT fields, fostering financial independence.

Shared by **Women's Rights House (WRH - [Կանանց հրավուրնների տուն](#))**,  
**WAVE member in Armenia**

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## MEMBERS MILESTONES

### PUSHING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE CANARY ISLANDS AND BEYOND

**WAVE member in Spain Federation of Arena and Laurisilva Women's Associations (FAMAL - [Federacion de Asociaciones de Mujeres Arena y Laurisilva](#)) recently celebrated its 30th anniversary and has expanded its work from the Canary Islands to the wider national level.** FAMAL has achieved several important achievements, such as being Declared a Public Utility Entity by the Ministry of the Interior of the Government of Spain and obtaining the ISO 9001 Quality Seal for its transparent management.

Furthermore, since 2023, FAMAL has held one of the six seats of the State Observatory of Violence against Women, attached to the Ministry of Equality, after being appointed by the Government Delegate against Gender Violence. FAMAL continues to promote women's rights and gender equality, focusing on feminist political advocacy and women's empowerment.

Shared by **Federation of Arena and Laurisilva Women's Associations (FAMAL - [Federacion de Asociaciones de Mujeres Arena y Laurisilva](#))**, **WAVE member in Spain**

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### CELEBRATING 37 YEARS OF SUPPORT IN SWEDEN

**New WAVE member in Sweden Hultsfred Vimmerby Women's Shelter (HVK - [Hultsfred Vimmerby Kvinnojour](#)) has been a safe lifeline for women, girls, and children facing men's violence for 37 years.** As a year-round shelter operating 24/7, HVK provide emergency housing, telephone support, and support groups to those in need. Despite financial challenges, HVK achieved significant milestones in 2024, including delivering 13 lectures at schools, companies, universities, and other organisations to raise awareness about men's violence against women, girls, and children.

In December, HVK proudly represented Sweden at a demonstration in São Paulo, Brazil, gathering over 4,000 people to push for the end of violence against women and girls. **"Our mission remains steadfast: to provide safety, support, and hope to those affected by domestic violence", says the HVK team.**

Shared by **Hultsfred Vimmerby Women's Shelter (HVK - [Hultsfred Vimmerby Kvinnojour](#))**,  
**WAVE member in Sweden**

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