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WAVE NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY THE WAVE NETWORK




MARCH 2025

THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER INCLUDES

- **International Women's Day 2025: Reaffirming Our Commitment to the Beijing +30 Action Agenda**
- **WAVE Relaunches Europe's Largest Database of Women's Specialist Services**
- **Welcoming the International Women's Network in Estonia to WAVE**
- **Ensuring Safety in Child Custody, Contact, and Visitation Matters: Publication of WAVE's Training Guidelines for Victim-Centred Judicial Practice**
- **Listen & Read: Exploring Key Issues in Our Latest Podcast and Online Magazine**
- **VIPROM European Webinar Series: Strengthening Healthcare Responses to Domestic Violence**
- **Echoes of Harm Podcast Goes Live**
- **WAVE voices from**
 - Armenia: **Women's Rights ORGs at Risk Due to US Policy Shifts & Prevention and Empowerment Through Service Provision**
 - Georgia: **Gendered Repression**
 - Sweden: **Raising Awareness Through Ink**
 - Albania: **Honouring Women, Marching for Freedom, Changing Social Norms & Social Mentoring for Employment**
 - Bosnia and Herzegovina: **Demanding Equality**
 - England: **Launch of Red Flags Campaign to Highlight Hidden Abuse**
 - Croatia: **Feminism Knows No Boundaries**
 - Cyprus: **No Excuse Campaign**
 - Germany: **Tackling Tech-Facilitated Abuse**

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!](#)
[Contribute to our Solidarity Fund and be a lifeline for WAVE members in crisis.](#)
[Every donation counts.](#)

WAVE EVENTS

WAVE IWD 2025

30 years after the **Beijing Platform for Action** set a bold vision for gender equality, progress remains fragile. Violence against women persists, anti-rights movements threaten hard-won gains, and deep-rooted inequalities continue to shape women's lives. The **Beijing +30 Action Agenda** is a crucial opportunity to renew our **collective commitment to women's rights and gender equality**.

[Read our official 2025 International Women's Day statement here!](#)

WAVE NEWS

WAVE DATABASE RELAUNCH



We are proud to announce the **relaunch of our "Find Help" database—Europe's only resource connecting survivors to nearly 2,000 vetted women's specialist services across 46 countries**. What is new? The relaunch enhances usability, ensuring survivors, frontline workers, and allies can more easily navigate and access life-saving support.

[Access the database today and help spread the word!](#)

For more information, read our press release here: <https://wave-network.org/press-release-wave-relaunches-europes-largest-database-of-womens-specialist-services/>

VIPROM EUROPEAN WEBINAR SERIES

Running from March to June 2025, the bi-weekly **VIPROM** European Webinar Series brings together experts and medical trainers to **enhance healthcare professionals' capacity to recognise and respond to domestic violence**. The series kicked off on 4 March with a session on the forms and dynamics of domestic violence, followed by a webinar on 18 March exploring cultural responsiveness and blocking bias in healthcare.

On 1 April, the focus shifts to key indicators of domestic violence and the crucial role of medical professionals in identifying early signs. Participants gain valuable insights from leading specialists, including members of the VIPROM consortium and partners.

[More about the VIPROM European Webinar Series here!](#)

 [VIPROM on Facebook](#)  [VIPROM on LinkedIn](#)

FIRST RESPONDERS IN FOCUS: EMPOWERING HEALTHCARE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV)

SAVE the DATE and join us for the

EUROPEAN WEBINAR SERIES 2025

on topics such as forms and dynamics of DV, stereotypes, indicators, communication, medical assessment/documentation, risk assessment, interorganisational cooperation, theory meets practice, effects of DV and the Istanbul Convention.

Speakers are known experts and practitioners across Europe.

REGISTER NOW

www.viprom-cerv.eu/european-webinar-series/



- ✓ Start: 04 March, 2025
- ✓ 6 PM - 7.30 PM CEST
- ✓ 10 Sessions | Bi-weekly on Tuesdays
- ✓ Language: English
- ✓ Certificate
- ✓ Credit Points
- ✓ Recordings available

Further Information: www.viprom-cerv.eu

The content of the webinars is aligned with the European Training Platform on Domestic Violence: <https://training.improdoeva.eu>



NEW WAVE MEMBER



Photo credit: IWNE

We are happy to welcome our **first new WAVE member of 2025!** The **International Women's Network in Estonia (IWNE)** is now part of the WAVE Network, joining our shared commitment to ending violence against women and girls. With each new member, our network grows not just in numbers, but in strength, knowledge, and solidarity. "Becoming a WAVE member strengthens our mission at IWNE to support and empower migrant women in Estonia. Together, we stand for a safer, more inclusive society, ensuring all women and children live free from violence", says our new member.

[Are you interested in becoming a WAVE member? Read all about it here!](#)

NEW WAVE RESOURCE

In frame of the WAVE project "Safeguarding and Empowering Children" (2022-2024), we are delighted to announce the publication of **"Ensuring Safety in Child Custody, Contact, and Visitation Matters: Training Guidelines for Victim-Centred Judicial Practice"**.

Developed as a structured workshop plan based on our Safety as the Best Interest of the Child toolkit, the guidelines consist of five modules and are adaptable to different national contexts, allowing for adjustments based on legal frameworks, practices, and specific needs.

[More about WAVE's project and resources on "Safeguarding and Empowering Children" here!](#)




[View "Ensuring Safety in Child Custody, Contact, and Visitation Matters: Training Guidelines for Victim-Centred Judicial Practice"!](#)


NEW PODCAST EPISODE

Feminist victories of the past continue to shape today's activism—but how can younger generations build on this legacy while forging new paths forward?

In our latest WAVE podcast episode, **New Wave of Feminists: Building on the Legacy**, our **4th generation WAVE Youth Ambassadors** discuss **intergenerational feminist activism**, the evolving fight for **gender equality**, and the crucial role of **women's specialist services**.

[Listen here!](#)

 [@wavenetwork.youth](#)

 [@wavenetwork.youth](#)

NEW MAGAZINE ARTICLE

Accessing support services can be especially difficult for refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls who have experienced gender-based violence. **Sisterhood without Borders**, a project by WAVE member D.i.Re ([Donne in Rete contro la Violenza](#)), focuses on making Anti-Violence Centres and Women's Specialist Services in Italy more accessible through targeted training and multi-agency collaboration. The aim? **More inclusive, culturally sensitive support—so that no survivor is left behind.**

[Read all about the project in our online magazine!](#)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

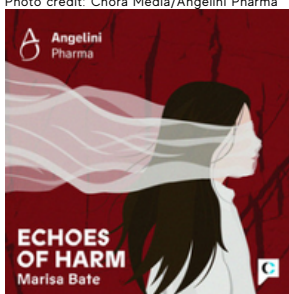
updates from WAVE Members and political developments

ECHOES OF HARM PODCAST

What does it take to survive – and heal from – male violence? **Echoes of Harm** is a new four-part podcast exploring the devastating psychological impact of violence against women and girls. Guided by feminist journalist Marisa Bate, it shares the voices of survivors, families of femicide victims, and those working to support healing and justice. Released on International Women's Day, this series sheds light on the often-invisible scars of violence – and **calls on us to listen, raise awareness, and work towards prevention, so that women and girls never have to experience such harm.**

[Listen to the episodes here!](#)

Photo credit: Chora Media/Angelini Pharma



Echoes of Harm is a podcast by Chora Media in collaboration with Angelini Pharma, including survivor stories and expert voices; Agnese Cattaneo, Chief Medical Officer at Angelini Pharma and Professor Dr. Anita Riecher-Rössler, expert in women's mental health and psychosis.

 Facebook

 Instagram

 LinkedIn

 YouTube

SHAPING CHANGE: LEGAL, POLICY & ADVOCACY UPDATES

ARMENIA: WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGS AT RISK DUE TO US POLICY SHIFTS

Recent U.S. policy shifts have had serious consequences for gender-based violence response efforts and women's rights advocacy in Armenia. **Following the Trump administration's reinstatement of the Global Gag Rule and suspension of foreign aid, a vital program run by WAVE member in Armenia Women's Resource Center (WRC),** funded by the U.S. Embassy, was abruptly halted. The project had been providing essential support to displaced women, and its sudden termination left around 40 women without assistance, increasing their vulnerability.

More broadly, the freeze has placed several Armenian women's rights organisations at risk—many of which depend on U.S. support for their very existence. These cuts have encouraged anti-gender rhetoric in the country and contributed to the shrinking space for work on sexual and reproductive rights, which are increasingly framed as "controversial". In the face of this global backlash, cross-border feminist solidarity and collective action are more critical than ever.

Shared by WRC

GEORGIA: GENDERED REPRESSION

Georgian legislation first recognised the term gender in 2017 after ratifying the Istanbul Convention. Now, the illegitimate government is attempting to remove the term from the legal framework—a deeply concerning move amid a series of harmful initiatives. This decision undermines women's and LGBTQ+ rights, erases the gendered nature of violence against women, and falsely frames gender as incompatible with Georgian society, disregarding its social and **legal significance**. Despite these threats, Georgian women's rights organisations remain at the forefront, resisting attempts to roll back democracy and human rights.



Photo credit: WMG

From the Women's March (8 March) in Tbilisi, Georgia. Meaning: "Women Against Regime"

Shared by a WAVE member in Georgia

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2025 ACROSS WAVE & EUROPE

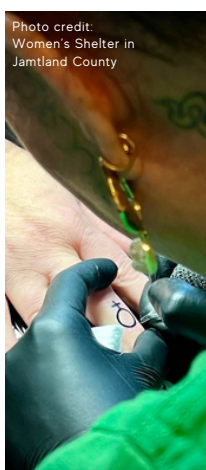


Photo credit:
Women's Shelter in
Jamtland County

SWEDEN: AWARENESS RAISING THROUGH INK

WAVE member in Sweden Women's Shelter in Jamtland County (Kvinnojouren Jämtlands län) launched a unique initiative: offering free tattoos of the female symbol (♀) to raise awareness about the fight against men's violence against women. A feminist tattoo artist collaborated with the shelter, eager to support the cause. The event was a great success—40 available tattoo slots were booked out quickly. Many participants shared that the tattoo held deep personal meaning for them, symbolising their commitment to women's rights and support for the shelter's work. For some, the tattoo became a powerful statement of resilience, having overcome violence themselves. Others attended simply to engage in conversation, making the event not just about the tattoos but also about connection and awareness.

Shared by Women's Shelter in Jamtland County

ALBANIA: HONOURING WOMEN, MARCHING FOR FREEDOM & CHANGING SOCIAL NORMS

WAVE member in Albania Women Centre “Light Steps” (Qendra-Sociale “Hapa te Lehte”), organised t’Pa thana in the courtyard of the ‘Oso Kuka’ House-Museum—an event amplifying the voices of women and girls. Four women shared their stories of strength and resilience, sparking reflection on the challenges of overcoming patriarchal barriers, fighting for equality, and making their voices heard. The event honoured the contributions of rural women and beyond, highlighting their perseverance in an unequal world. Mimosa flowers, symbolising appreciation for women’s contributions, were brought from the organisation’s yard. Around 50 people attended as part of the EU-funded project **Proud to Have Rights**, promoting equality and inclusion.

Shared by Women Centre “Light Steps”



Photo credit: Women Centre “Light Steps”

WAVE member AWEN (Rrjeti i Fuqizimit të Grave Shqiptare) joined The Feminist Collective and other human rights organisations in Albania to protest for equality, social justice, and dignity. This year’s **march** focused on poverty as a major barrier to women’s freedom, highlighting the urgent need for fair employment and stronger state support. Activists also raised concerns about the economic precarity many women face. Additionally, the march shed light on the multiple forms of violence and discrimination experienced by marginalised groups, particularly women with disabilities. The event served as a powerful reminder that true gender equality requires concrete action from both the state and society.

Shared by AWEN



Photo credit: AWEN

WAVE member Psycho-Social Centre “Vatra” (Quendra Psiko-Sociale “Vatra”), in collaboration with Vlora Public Library and students from “Ali Demi” public high school, organised a discussion forum on Changing Social Norms to Combat Violence Against Girls and Women. The discussion focused on the causes and consequences of violence, exploitation, abuse, and bullying in schools and in social networks. Participants highlighted the lasting impact of these issues on individuals and society, stressing the importance of education and awareness-raising in addressing them. Students shared their experiences and concerns regarding gender roles in families and society, as well as violations of women’s rights. They reflected on the challenges of living in a patriarchal society and the urgent need for change.

Shared by Psycho-Social Centre “Vatra”



Photo credit: Psycho-Social Centre “Vatra”



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: DEMANDING EQUALITY

WAVE member in Bosnia and Herzegovina Foundation “United Women” Banja Luka (“Udružene žene” Banja Luka) organised the March 8th Solidarity and Women’s Dignity March in collaboration with partners from the Human Rights House in Banja Luka. Despite the long struggle for fundamental rights—including the right to vote, access to education, bodily autonomy, freedom from violence, equal pay, and career advancement—women continue to face various forms of violence and ongoing attempts to undermine legally recognised rights.

The march started in front of the National Theatre and moving towards Krajina Square, accompanied by whistles and tam-tam drums. At the square, the Foundation's volunteer Ivana, a journalism student, read out key demands:

- More effective measures to prevent violence against women
- Protection of reproductive rights
- Dignified work and social security
- Political equality

Banners carried by participants, including young girls and boys, attracted particular attention, reinforcing the urgent call for gender equality.

Shared by Foundation "United Women" Banja Luka

ENGLAND: RED FLAGS CAMPAIGN

WAVE member in England (UK) Refuge launched a powerful new campaign for International Women's Day to raise awareness of the many forms of domestic abuse that often go unrecognised, unseen, unreported and untold – ranging from economic and psychological abuse to coercive control, and more. The charity's Red Flags campaign was sparked by data from a UK-wide survey it commissioned, which revealed that a staggering three-quarters of UK adults are unaware of the true scale of domestic abuse. To highlight this gap in understanding, Refuge unveiled an immersive installation at Outernet London's flagship digital exhibition space. It featured 100 physical red flags, each bearing a quote from a domestic abuse survivor. These were mirrored on digital screens and accompanied by a dynamic soundscape voiced by celebrities such as actors Olivia Colman, Bella Ramsay, and Adjoa Andoh. The campaign, which attracted widespread media attention and significant in-person and online engagement, was part of a month-long awareness drive.

More here:

- <https://refuge.org.uk/news/survey-reveals-gaps-in-nations-awareness-of-red-flags-of-domestic-abuse/>
- https://campaign.refuge.org.uk/page/166967/petition/1?ea.tracking.id=IWD25_EARN_PRE_QUIZ
- <https://refuge.org.uk/news/caitlin-oryan-performs-poem-for-refuges-no-red-flag-is-too-small-campaign-this-international-womens-day/>

Shared by Refuge

CROATIA: FEMINISM KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES

WAVE member in Croatia SOS Rijeka - Center for Nonviolence and Human Rights (SOS Rijeka - centar za nenasilje i ljudska prava) participated in this year's Night March, raising the questions "how much longer?" and "why still?". The march centred on remembrance and justice for women who have been victims of femicide, rape, and other forms of gender-based violence.



The following day, SOS Rijeka took part in filming the final scene of *For Your Own Good*, a film created in collaboration with the Filmaktiv association. The film features Vanda Velagić, Ana Marija Brđanović, and Anja Sabol from the Collective Igralke, and is directed by Ana Trobec, Mirela Džafić, Valentina Botica, and Mirna Unuk, who also wrote the screenplay.

IWD 2025 concluded with a literary-feminist gathering featuring writer Marina Vujčić, where her novel *The Safe House* was presented. An informal roundtable discussion followed, during which SOS Rijeka's psychologists Mia Mudri and Lorena Zec highlighted the issue of gender-based violence.

Shared by SOS Rijeka

CYPRUS: NO EXCUSE CAMPAIGN

WAVE member in Cyprus Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family (SPAVO) organised in cooperation with Public and Private Universities and Colleges in Cyprus, a Pancyprian Awareness Campaign on Violence against Women with the slogan: #NO_EXCUSE (#KAMIA_ΔΙΚΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΑ).



From 4 March to 10 March, SPAVO's mobile unit visited universities and colleges in Nicosia, Larnaca, Limassol and Pafos provinces: Frederick University Cyprus, CDA College Cyprus, UCLan Cyprus, The American University of Cyprus Larnaca Campus - AUCY, Alexander College, Cyprus University of Technology, University of Limassol, Neapolis University Pafos, American University of Beirut - Mediterraneo, University of Nicosia, European University Cyprus. During the visit, students as well as academic, administrative and other staff had the opportunity to get informed about the cause and consequences of violence against women, and the work and services of SPAVO, among other. Additionally, representatives of the universities and colleges signed SPAVO's Commitment condemning all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. SPAVO's mobile unit will continue its journey to communities all over Cyprus raising awareness on violence against women. For more information, please contact: info@domviolence.org.cy

Shared by SPAVO

PUSHING ACTION: CAMPAIGN & PROJECT UPDATES

GERMANY: TACKLING TECH-FACILITATED ABUSE

From 17-21 March, **WAVE member in Germany FHK - Association of Women's Shelters (Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V.)** ran a campaign on its social media channels [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Bluesky](#) to inform about the dimensions of Tech-facilitated Abuse and its impact on the counselling work in women's shelters.

Attention was drawn to statistics on Tech-facilitated Abuse and those affected, case studies from counselling and training courses for counsellors, which are offered by FHK. The aim was to show why the expertise of women's shelter counsellors on Tech-facilitated Abuse is needed. The campaign was created within the project "Tech-facilitated Abuse" of FHK. More information can be found on the [project website](#) and on social media (in German) [here](#).

Shared by FHK

ARMENIA: PREVENTION & EMPOWERMENT

WAVE member in Armenia Women's Rights House (WRH) continues its mission to protect and advocate for women's rights by conducting awareness-raising meetings and therapeutic sessions across various communities in Shirak. In addition, WRH specialists regularly organise meetings/discussions focused on domestic and sexual violence prevention. These sessions empower women and girls with essential knowledge about their rights and available support mechanisms. The psychologist of the Women's Rights House also provides group therapies, such as art therapy, clay therapy, among other, supporting survivors in rebuilding their confidence and emotional well-being. By fostering safe spaces for dialogue, WRH strengthens community resilience and aims to promote a culture of zero tolerance for violence.

Shared by WRH

ALBANIA: SOCIAL MENTORING FOR EMPLOYMENT

The Social Mentoring program, implemented by WAVE member in Albania Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC) with support from GIZ, has successfully mentored 45 individuals over one year, focusing on the employment and professional development of vulnerable groups in the country. Participants included women survivors of domestic violence, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and other individuals from marginalised backgrounds. Through tailored mentoring, participants gained skills in learning new languages, computer literacy, financial management, and artisanal production such as soap and candle making, fostering self-employment. Others benefited from technical training in nail care and other vocational courses, enhancing their employability in different sectors. As a result, 81.9% of mentees secured employment or launched income-generating activities. Beyond direct support, GADC is advocating for the formal recognition of social mentoring as a profession in Albania, ensuring its integration into national employment policies and expanding access to structured mentoring programs. More here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsunKNXM3GI>

Shared by GADC

