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# WAVE NEWSLETTER

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY THE WAVE NETWORK



JANUARY 2024

Dear fellow dedicated feminist activists,  
we are happy to share with you the first WAVE Newsletter of the new year. Let's find out what happened inside and outside WAVE in January 2024!

## THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER INCLUDES

- **WAVE Events in 2024,**
- **The WAVE Country Report 2023 is published,**
- **WAVE's Urgent Call to Strengthen the EU Directive on VAW and DV,**
- **The WAVE Team Met with Austrian WAVE Members,**
- **Latvia Ratifies the Istanbul Convention: Women's Specialist Services and Feminist NGOs at the Forefront of Pushing Change,** and
- **WAVE Member Women's Center "Light Steps" Celebrating its 20th Anniversary.**

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

# WAVE EVENTS



This year marks WAVE's 30th anniversary, so be on the lookout for inspirational content, empowering events, and engaging impressions. #WAVE30years

[KEEP INFORMED ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2024 BY VISITING THE EVENTS SECTION ON OUR WEBSITE!](#)

# WAVE NEWS

## WAVE COUNTRY REPORT 2023



The WAVE Country Report 2023 provides an overview of statistics related to women's specialist services in 46 European countries, namely **national women's helplines, women's shelters, women's centres, specialist services for survivors of sexualised violence, and primary prevention services**. The report seeks to highlight which European countries, within and outside the EU, meet the minimum standards of the Istanbul Convention in terms of service provision. It also includes a section on femicide. Moreover, the report provides **individual country profiles** for the 46 countries included in the research.

[THE WAVE COUNTRY REPORT 2023 CAN BE ACCESSED HERE!](#)



## WAVE'S ADVOCACY FOR A STRONG EU DIRECTIVE CONTINUES

On 26 January, WAVE published a joint statement with the EuroCentralAsian Lesbian\* Community (EL\*C) to urgently call upon the negotiators of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Member States, the European Parliament, and the European Commission to ensure that the adopted text of the **EU Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence robustly addresses the needs of women and girls who are survivors of gender-based violence against women.** "This Directive is not just a policy document; it is a beacon of hope and a tool for real change. It is a chance to set a precedent in the EU for effectively tackling violence against women and domestic violence."

[READ WAVE'S JOINT STATEMENT WITH EL\\*C HERE!](#)

On 31 January, the WAVE Network took a united stance and unreservedly condemned the Member States' failure to incorporate a consent-based definition of rape, as well as their adoption of a gender-neutral approach in addressing violence against women and domestic violence in the Directive. WAVE urged continued action to ensure the adoption of **gender-specific measures and the essential inclusion of women's specialist services.** "If the proposed Directive fails to adopt a gender-specific, intersectional approach and include Women's Specialist Services, we will have no other option than to openly withdraw support for the Directive for failing to serve its main purpose of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the European Union."

[READ WAVE'S CALL TO STRENGTHEN THE EU DIRECTIVE HERE!](#)

## MEETING AUSTRIAN WAVE MEMBERS

On 16 January, the WAVE team met with 4 of our Austrian WAVE member organisations **Ninlil - Empowerment and Counselling for Women with Disabilities** (Empowerment und Beratung für Frauen mit Behinderung), **AÖF - Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters** (Autonome Österreichische Frauenhäuser), **Gewaltschutzzentrum Wien** and **Network of Austrian Counseling Centres for Women and Girls** (Netzwerk österreichischer Frauen- und Mädchenberatungsstellen) to discuss the latest developments in preventing and tackling violence against women in Austria.



Ninlil hosting WAVE members meeting in Vienna, Austria

With our WAVE Office being located in the capital of Austria, we are thrilled to be able to have regular meet-ups with our Austrian members. While we cherish these connections, our goal for the new year is to expand and connect with more WAVE members in various regions. **More updates on WAVE regional meetings are coming soon.**

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### updates from WAVE Members and political developments

#### LATVIA RATIFIES THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

**On 10 January, Latvia ratified the Istanbul Convention.** What led to this historic milestone was the result of a strenuous process fuelled by the tragic murder of a woman taking place in Latvia last year. The femicide served as a catalyst for a wave of activism and advocacy that ultimately led to the convention's ratification. **At the forefront of pushing change: women's specialist services and feminist NGOs.**

The Convention will come into force in Latvia on the 1st of May 2024.



Congratulations to Latvia with particular acknowledgement of the dedication and hard work of our Latvian WAVE members **Crisis and Counselling Centre "Skalbes"** (Krīžu un Konsultāciju Centrs "Skalbes"), **Women's NGOs Cooperation Network of Latvia** (Latvijas Sieviešu nevalstisko organizāciju sadarbības tīkls) and **Association "MARTA Centre"** (Biedrība "Centrs MARTA") for this landmark achievement.

[READ ABOUT THE "THE STRENUOUS PATH TO RATIFICATION: A TRIUMPH FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATVIA" HERE!](#)

## 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WOMEN'S CENTER "LIGHT STEPS"

WAVE member **Women's Center "Light Steps"** (Qendra-Sociale "Hapa te Lehte") celebrated "20 years of Light Steps" with the installation "2783". This installation is an artistic work embroidered in meringue with a length of 12 m and a width of 1.6 m presented for the first time in the lobby of the Shkodër Municipality in Albania.



"For 20 years, women and girls have been at the centre of our work, their concerns about social injustices, violence and discrimination of any kind perpetrated against them, socio-economic development and public policies to promote women's empowerment."



The Women's Center celebrated with friends, partners, donors, and supporters, and at the same time presented the results achieved over the years and the current as well as future challenges on women's issues, as representatives of civil society, to create new synergies for the next steps. The event included presentations, photos, written narratives, artistic works, and installations, notably Installation "2783".

This work entitled "2783" refers to the number of women and girls who have received psycho-socio-legal services at the Women's Center during these 20 years. 8 women and girls, including survivors of violence, have worked on the realization of this first-of-its-kind installation, which took about 3 months and 460 working hours using the chainwork hand embroidery technique. **The purpose of this installation was to document all the work that the Center has done in the last 20 years and to appreciate and honor all the women and girls who trusted the Center's services as well as dared to denounce and speak out against violence.**

Written by WAVE member in Albania Women's Center "Light Steps"  
(Qendra-Sociale "Hapa te Lehte")



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