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# WAVE NEWSLETTER

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY THE WAVE NETWORK



JULY 2025

# THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER INCLUDES

- **27th WAVE Conference from 22-23 September 2025**
- **First WAVE Interregional Meeting**
- **WAVE Statement on the Escalating Repression in Serbia**
- **WAVE's External Representation: Global meeting on measuring femicide and other forms of violence against women and girls**
- **VIPROM Webinar Series: Supporting Medical Professionals in Addressing Domestic Violence**
- **New Article: The Politics of Feminism**
- **New WAVE Member from Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- **WAVE Voices from**
  - Sweden: **Spreading Local Awareness of the Istanbul Convention**
  - Bosnia and Herzegovina: **20th PitchWise Festival of Women's Art and Activism**
  - Romania: **Employees for Respect: Training for Harassment-free Teams**
  - Slovenia: **Proposed Amendments to the Housing Act to Protect Victims of Domestic Violence**
  - Armenia: **Gender Equality Strategy Implementation Dialogue**

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

📍 [FIND HELP on WAVE's database of around 2,000 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



 [More details on our website!](#)

## FIRST WAVE INTERREGIONAL MEETING

**The first WAVE Interregional Meeting successfully gathered more than 40 participants from all six WAVE regions in a dynamic online space.** This unique exchange, which took place on 1 July, fostered cross-regional dialogue on key issues including women's specialist services operating under militarisation and war threat, child custody proceedings in the context of domestic violence, and foreign agent laws. A presentation of the baseline survey on femicide in South Europe offered valuable insights into regional trends and data gaps. The meeting built on insights from previous regional gatherings and featured breakout discussions, member presentations and opportunities for collective learning.

 To dive deeper into how regional meetings are building stronger alliances, listen to our latest podcast episode [HERE](#).

# WAVE NEWS

## WAVE STATEMENT ON THE ESCALATING REPRESSION IN SERBIA

Women's rights, civil society, and democratic space in Serbia are under severe attack. Peaceful student-led protests sparked by a tragic disaster have been met with police brutality, illegal arrests, and the silencing of feminist voices. **WAVE stands in unwavering solidarity with our members and all those resisting repression and demanding justice in Serbia.** The courage of students, women's rights defenders, and activists must not be met with violence and silence.

[The time for international solidarity is now!](#)

## WAVE'S EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION

### GLOBAL MEETING ON MEASURING FEMICIDE AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

From 15-16 July, **WAVE Project & Network Coordinator Léa Dudouet** attended the **Global meeting on measuring femicide and other forms of violence against women and girls** organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UN Women. She spoke on a panel on the first day of the meeting examining different sources of data on femicide, including citizen-generated data, together with other civil society actors. She shared about WAVE's data collection on femicide through the WAVE Country Reports, trends in reporting over the years, and how these inform our advocacy efforts to enhance the data quality and comparability across countries. [More HERE](#).

💡 The [WAVE Country Report](#) represents an important tool for highlighting the situation of women's specialist services across Europe, published every two years. The WAVE Country Report 2025 will be published by the end of this year.

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## VIPROM WEBINAR SERIES

**Between March and July 2025, the EU-funded project VIPROM - Victim Protection in Medicine hosted a European Webinar Series to support medical professionals in recognising and responding to domestic violence.** The series offered practical tools and expert insights on topics such as identifying signs of abuse, cultural responsiveness in healthcare, and legal obligations under the Istanbul Convention. The final session on 8 July was held by Biljana Brankovic, Honorary WAVE Member and former GREVIO member (2015-2023), who explored the legal responsibilities of medical staff under the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, also known as "[the Istanbul Convention](#)", the role of forensic experts, and promising practices from across Europe. Participants connected with experts from the VIPROM consortium and beyond, enhancing their capacity to provide survivor-centred healthcare responses.

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## WAVE OF CHANGE: NEW ARTICLE

💡 In July, we published one new article in our online magazine "WAVE of Change":

### THE POLITICS OF FEMINISM: BETWEEN WEAPONISATION AND RESISTANCE

Julia Mazurkiewicz, 4th generation [WAVE Youth Ambassador](#) from Poland, explores how feminism is increasingly politicised, misrepresented, and weaponised in public discourse, particularly in the context of electoral shifts and far-right gains. With critical insight and urgency, her **article calls for reclaiming feminist language, resisting backlash, and reasserting feminism as a transformative force for justice and equality.** [Read HERE](#).

## WELCOMING A NEW WAVE MEMBER

We are delighted to welcome **one new member** from Bosnia and Herzegovina – **Association “Novi put”** (Udruženje “Novi put”) – to WAVE! Thank you for joining our network. Interested in becoming a member? [Click HERE](#).

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

updates from WAVE Members and political developments

### PUSHING ACTION: CAMPAIGN & PROJECT UPDATES

#### SWEDEN: SPREADING LOCAL AWARENESS OF THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

With funding by the Council of Europe, **WAVE member Women's Shelter Jamtland County** (Kvinnojouren Jämtlands län) is undertaking a project aimed at raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention at the local level in Jamtland, Sweden. As part of the initiative, efforts have been made to **ensure visibility and outreach across all areas of the region**. During the summer, a minibus displaying the shelter's name and contact details is used to travel throughout Jamtland. Numerous stops have already been made to **engage with residents, politicians, and decision-makers, and to distribute informational folders about the Istanbul Convention**.



“Our hope and one of the goals with the project is that we will see more political decisions being made with the Istanbul convention in mind, to improve the rights of women and girls subjected to violence,” says the Women's Shelter.

Shared by Women's Shelter Jamtland County

#### BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: XX PITCHWISE FESTIVAL OF WOMEN'S ART AND ACTIVISM

The **PitchWise Festival**, a signature initiative of **WAVE member CURE Foundation** (FONDACIJA CURE), is a unique feminist international event that unites activism with socially engaged art. CURE Foundation launched the festival in 2006 with the aim of occupying and transforming neglected public spaces into safe spaces for encounter and creation – spaces for a new generation of artists, theorists and activists. **The XX PitchWise will span four days, offering a rich programme featuring photography exhibitions, book promotions, concerts and musical performances, creative workshops and panel discussions on social issues.**



This year's PitchWise is taking place from 11-14 September 2025 at the History Museum of BiH in Sarajevo. "It highlights the continuity of our uncompromising feminist engagement: **'20 Years Together - Visible - Strong - United\* - Holding the Line for Women's Rights - No Turning Back!'**. Because going backwards would mean stripping away hard-won rights and freedoms for girls, women, and all marginalised groups", says the Foundation.

Shared by CURE Foundation

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### ROMANIA: EMPLOYEES FOR RESPECT - TRAINING FOR HARASSMENT-FREE TEAMS

Following up on the advocacy campaign "Employers for Respect" that successfully improved policies in Romania in the area of preventing harassment in the world of work, **WAVE member A.L.E.G. Association for Liberty and Equality of Gender** (Asociatia pentru libertate si egalitate de gen) has recently launched the **campaign "Employees for Respect" to raise awareness that well-being at work requires a fair and violence-free work environment, providing services like training and counselling for harassment-free teams.**



The campaign supports companies and organisations in this process, helping to promote gender equality and prevent harassment not just as legal obligations, but as pillars of a healthy and thriving environment. Integrating these principles contributes to employee retention, team well-being and performance, as well as alignment with international sustainability standards (ESG). The courses are practical, tailor-made, and delivered by specialists who have direct casework experience. They also help fundraise for the A.L.E.G. Counselling Centre for survivors of gender-based violence, a specialist service operating for 20 years despite receiving no public funding.

A.L.E.G. also launched the guideline "What To Do in Case of Harassment", offering employees insights for recognising early signs, bystander intervention and reporting. This resource (currently available only in Romanian) can be downloaded free of charge from A.L.E.G.'s website [HERE](#). Throughout the summer and autumn, A.L.E.G. is organising demo sessions to explore topics such as manifestations of workplace harassment, effective mechanisms for prevention, and healthy boundaries at work. More information about these services can be found [HERE](#).

Shared by A.L.E.G.

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## SHAPING CHANGE: LEGAL, POLICY & ADVOCACY UPDATES

### SLOVENIA: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE HOUSING ACT TO PROTECT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On 14 July, at a session of the Committee for Labour, Family, Social Affairs and the Disabled, Tanja Hrovat Svetičič, a representative of **WAVE member Association for Nonviolent Communication** (Društvo za nenasilno komunikacijo), **outlined urgent reasons for adopting the proposed amendments to the Housing Act in Slovenia.**

The Housing Act in Slovenia sets the conditions for obtaining and using housing, including non-profit rents and the allocation of public housing. **Issues arise when women victims of violence leave their homes for safety reasons, while the perpetrators often remain in the home, refuse to move out, and the victim is still held responsible for housing costs, for instance, if she is the official holder of the rental agreement.**

These concerns are based on the real-life challenges experienced by women supported by the NGO working with victims of domestic violence. Tanja Hrovat Svetičič highlighted specific proposals aimed at addressing this issue, particularly for women who, for safety reasons, cannot or do not wish to return to their non-profit housing. In some cases, the perpetrator continues to live in the apartment and refuses to leave. One proposed amendment would allow victims to request an extraordinary change of apartment. Another would expand the priority categories for the allocation of non-profit housing to explicitly include victims of domestic violence.

Her full intervention can be viewed [HERE](#).

Shared by Association for Nonviolent Communication

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#### ARMENIA: GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION DIALOGUE

In April 2025, Armenia adopted its Gender Equality Strategy for 2025–2028, marking a significant step toward institutionalising gender equality. Among other pillars, the strategy includes parts on health and labour rights, emphasising improved access to sexual and reproductive health services, elimination of discrimination in healthcare, and stronger protections for women in the labour market. **To support its implementation, WAVE member Women's Resource Center (Կանանց ռեսուրսային կենտրոն ՀԿ) organised a high-level discussion with participation from key state actors, civil society organisations, and international stakeholders.** The dialogue focused on the strategy's priorities, particularly in relation to expanding access to modern contraception and safe abortion, as well as preventing gender-based violence at work. A key highlight was Armenia's progress toward ratifying the ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, which was recently approved by the Constitutional Court, signalling political will to uphold labour protections aligned with international standards.

Shared by Women's Resource Center

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