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WAVE NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY THE WAVE NETWORK



JUNE 2025

THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER INCLUDES

- **27th WAVE Conference from 22–23 September 2025**
- **WAVE Events: Youth Ambassador Femicide Panel Discussion At CEU | Study Visit with North Macedonian Prosecutors and Women's CSO**
- **Standing Up for Civil Society: WAVE and Coalition Call for Open Dialogue with the European Commission**
- **WAVE's External Representation: European Institute for Gender Equality | Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**
- **New Articles: Italian Media and Discourse in Reporting Femicide | Resisting in Rural Sweden**
- **New WAVE Members from Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- [!\[\]\(467d80e979964f7f8c752fb22248b5b7_img.jpg\) **New WAVE Podcast Episode on Feminist Cross-Border Solidarity.**](#)
- [!\[\]\(b71552d33dbf62adf5e5199a70ee02bf_img.jpg\) **The WAVE Office is looking for a Finance Officer \(German-speaking position\).**](#)
- [!\[\]\(03134b765d1473836ff001925b1b0550_img.jpg\) **WAVE EU Regranting 2025: Meet the Six Selected WAVE Members Driving Local Action to End Violence Against Women and Girls**](#)
- **WAVE Voices from**
 - Netherlands: **Recognition of Marital Exploitation as Human Trafficking**
 - Georgia: **Worrying Developments and Attacks Against Civil Society**
 - Scotland: **National Quality Service Standards For High-quality Support to Survivors of Domestic Abuse**
 - England: **Women's Aid's Nowhere to Turn Report 2025 & Refuge Announces 2025 Tech Safety Summit Speakers**

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!](#)

[!\[\]\(0f848bbd71cef6b345273b16f905912a_img.jpg\) 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



27th WAVE Conference

Feminist Solidarity and Collective Action: Reclaiming our Power to End Violence Against Women

Bucharest, Romania

22 – 23 September 2025

in cooperation with



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[More details on our website!](#)

FEMICIDE PANEL DISCUSSION

WAVE Youth Ambassador Ilaria Nilges organised a powerful hybrid panel at Central European University titled **“She was killed because she was a woman – Femi(ni)cide in Europe and the Italian context”**. With over 80 participants, the event explored the legal and systemic roots of femicide. Speakers included Prof. Mathias Moschel, activist Elena Cecchettin, Marcella Pirrone (D.i.Re), and Eliana Jimeno (WAVE). [More HERE.](#)



HERA – WAVE STUDY VISIT

From 2–4 June 2025, the **HERA – WAVE Study Visit “WE CARE: United We Stand to Fight Against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence”** took place in Vienna, Austria. Eight **prosecutors and women’s CSO representatives from North Macedonia** joined three days of exchange and visits, including ministries, police, and local women’s specialist services, exploring multi-agency cooperation to tackle sexual violence. [More HERE.](#)



WAVE NEWS

STANDING UP FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

WAVE, together with a broad coalition of European civil society organisations, has called on the European Commission for an open dialogue on the future of EU support for democratic, inclusive, and pluralistic civil society. As attacks and funding threats increase, we urge EU leaders to **protect the vital role of civil society, including women's rights organisations**, in defending democracy, gender equality, and human rights.

[Read our open letter and join us in standing up
for a strong, independent civic space!](#)

WAVE'S EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION

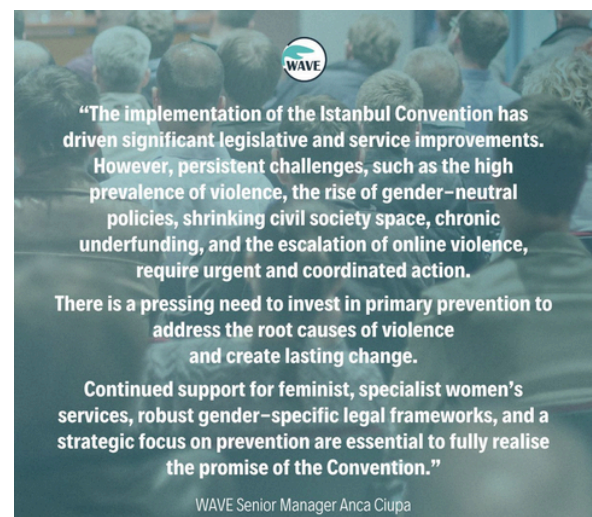
EIGE TASK FORCE MEETING

From 12–13 June 2025, **WAVE Project & Research Coordinator Elena Floriani** participated in EIGE's first Task Force meeting on implementing **Article 44 of the EU Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence on data collection and research**. She presented challenges and recommendations from our network experience, highlighting the role, importance, and specific characteristics of women's specialist services (WSS), and the differences from general support services. Her contribution ensured that the WSS perspective was reflected in discussions on data collection. [More HERE.](#)



PACE HEARING ON ISTANBUL CONVENTION IMPLEMENTATION

On 25 June 2025, **WAVE Senior Manager Anca Ciupa** spoke at the **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)** hearing "**Promoting the Istanbul Convention and improving its implementation: building on lessons learnt**". She outlined both progress and persistent concerns, including legislative improvements, strengthened services, and key EU milestones. She also stressed urgent issues such as rising gender-neutral policies, chronic underfunding of prevention, and mounting pressure on women's specialist services. [More HERE.](#)



WAVE OF CHANGE: NEW ARTICLES

💡 In June, we published two new articles in our online magazine "WAVE of Change":

ITALIAN MEDIA AND THE PROBLEMATIC DISCOURSE IN REPORTING FEMINICIDE

Ilaria Nilges, 4th generation **WAVE Youth Ambassador** from Italy, examines the harmful narratives present in media reporting on femi(ni)cide. Drawing on recent cases and critical feminist perspectives, the piece calls for a fundamental shift in how the media addresses gender-based violence, moving from sensationalism to structural analysis, and urges greater collective awareness of the role language plays in shaping culture, behaviour, and justice. [Read HERE.](#)

RESISTING IN RURAL SWEDEN: LOCALLY ROOTED YET GLOBALLY CONNECTED STRENGTH

This article by WAVE member Hultsfred Vimmerby Women's Shelter (**Hultsfred Vimmerby Kvinnojour**) sheds light on the unique obstacles faced by small shelters in remote areas, and the collective strength that sustains them. From licensing struggles to community outreach, this article illustrates how feminist solidarity, locally rooted yet globally connected, remains a lifeline for women and children seeking to live free from violence and isolation. [Read HERE.](#)

WELCOMING TWO NEW WAVE MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome two new members from Bosnia and Herzegovina – CURE Foundation (**Fondacija CURE**) and Association of citizen Vive Žene (**Udruženje građana Vive Žene**) – to WAVE! Thank you for joining our network. Interested in becoming a member? [Click HERE.](#)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

updates from WAVE Members and political developments

SHAPING CHANGE: LEGAL, POLICY & ADVOCACY UPDATES



NETHERLANDS: RECOGNITION OF MARITAL EXPLOITATION AS HUMAN TRAFFICKING

On 10 June 2025, the Dutch Parliament took a historic step in the fight against gender-based violence and human trafficking. For the first time globally, **marital exploitation**, where women are abused, isolated, and enslaved within marriage, is explicitly **recognised as a form of human trafficking under Dutch law**. The legislation also expands jurisdiction to include transnational cases, allowing prosecution of Dutch perpetrators even if the exploitation occurred abroad.

Another breakthrough includes the development of a “Daughter Regulation” to restore residence rights to women who were taken from the Netherlands as children and held abroad under coercive circumstances. These changes mark a legal and moral milestone for countless invisible victims. **WAVE member Femmes for Freedom** celebrates this as a major step toward justice, recognition, and protection for women. While this is a crucial victory, the work continues, to ensure all women are free, heard, and protected from exploitation.

Shared by Femmes for Freedom

GEORGIA: WORRYING DEVELOPMENTS AND ATTACKS AGAINST CIVIL SOCIETY

CONCERNS ABOUT FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

On 12 June 2025, five NGOs in Georgia - including a WAVE member organisation - received court orders following a request by the Anti-Corruption Bureau, demanding access to personal data of beneficiaries and partners dating back to 1 January 2024. This raised serious concerns about privacy and the legal basis for such demands.

Several human rights defenders and organisations have expressed alarm, warning that **these developments reflect broader efforts to restrict civic space and could undermine the work of independent organisations.** International attention and support are vital to safeguarding the principles of freedom of association and the important work carried out by civil society in Georgia.

CONCERNS ABOUT RESTRICTION OF POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Baia Pataraiia, Director of one of WAVE's Georgian member organisations, was fined 4,000 GEL (approx. €1,300) for Facebook posts criticising government officials. Legal arguments referencing constitutional rights and an ongoing appeal to the Constitutional Court were dismissed. The case is currently being followed by the UN Special Rapporteur.

Legal experts have raised concerns that the case could set a precedent for restricting political expression online under broadly defined legislation. Following this, the organisation has announced it will appeal the decision and continues to call for the protection of freedom of expression and civic space in Georgia.

Shared by a Georgian WAVE member

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE: NEW RESEARCH AND REPORTS



ENGLAND: NOWHERE TO TURN REPORT 2025

WAVE member Women's Aid's Nowhere to Turn report series details findings from the previous year of the No Woman Turned Away project (NWTa), which provides support and advocacy to women facing additional barriers to accessing refuge or other safe accommodation. The report builds on their **evidence base on the structural inequalities that many survivors face and makes recommendations for key stakeholders.**

The latest report in this series, **Nowhere to Turn 2025**, was published on 17th June and can be accessed [HERE](#). This year's report includes an **in-depth exploration of the experiences of and barriers faced by survivors with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).**

Shared by Women's Aid Federation of England

PUSHING ACTION: CAMPAIGN & PROJECT UPDATES

SCOTLAND: NATIONAL ACCREDITATION OF SERVICE

Monklands Women's Aid has become the first service in Scotland to receive accreditation under Scottish Women's Aid's new National Quality Service Standards (NQSS). This marks a major achievement in delivering consistent, high-quality support to survivors of domestic abuse.

The accreditation recognises Monklands Women's Aid's feminist and intersectional approach, combining trauma-informed principles with evidence-based practice. It highlights the organisation's specialist expertise in providing integrated services for women, children, and young people affected by domestic abuse.

The NQSS aims to guarantee that all Women's Aid services across Scotland offer safe, accessible, and compassionate care. Scottish Women's Aid is actively working with its members to achieve accreditation over the next few years, ensuring survivors receive reliable and expert support regardless of their location or circumstances. This initiative strengthens the overall quality and consistency of services for domestic abuse survivors in Scotland.

Shared by Scottish Women's Aid

ENGLAND: REFUGE'S TECH SAFETY SUMMIT

WAVE member Refuge is bringing together some of the most influential voices in tech, policy and criminal justice for its second annual Tech Safety Summit, taking place virtually on 23-24 September 2025. **The two-day event will highlight the escalating issue of tech-facilitated abuse and push for bold, innovative solutions to better protect survivors and hold perpetrators to account.** Confirmed speakers include Ofcom CEO Melanie Dawes, Adolescence writer Jack Thorne, author and activist Adele Walton, Baroness Jones, the Minister for Digital Economy and Online Safety, BBC Journalist Victoria Derbyshire, presenter Rachel Riley, and major tech sponsors such as Microsoft. **The summit comes in response to a sharp rise in tech-facilitated abuse, with Refuge's specialist team reporting a 205% increase in referrals since 2018, underlining the urgent need for coordinated, expert-led action.** Panel discussions will explore emerging threats such as generative AI, deepfakes, the dark web, and AI chatbots, alongside strategies for embedding safety into digital design and other innovative tools to combat abuse. Tickets for the summit are available [HERE](#), and more information [HERE](#).

Shared by Refuge

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