



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE

# WAVE REPORT 2015

ON THE ROLE OF SPECIALIST  
WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES IN EUROPE

## IMPRINT

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## WAVE REPORT 2015

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## ON THE ROLE OF SPECIALIST WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES IN EUROPE

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# FOREWORD

We are happy to present the WAVE Report 2015.

The Report focuses on specialist women's support services and the activities of women's organizations in the area of networking, prevention and training, as well as the experiences of women during their journey to seek help – a journey that is often a difficult one resembling a hurdle race. In order to find safe shelter in one's vicinity, one must live in a big town; in order to be entitled to legal protection, one must fulfill certain criteria, such as being married or living together with the abusive perpetrator – if one does not meet these criteria, they are out of the game. In order to be admitted to a women's shelters, in some countries one must 'prove' they are a victim by reporting to the police. Such regulations, even if not established with bad intentions, have negative effects and discourage women from seeking help rather than empowering them. Such regulations are barriers and they do not help to decrease the low reporting rate in violence against women, revealed by the 2014 FRA survey on violence against women (FRA, 2014 p. 63 ff). On the contrary, they contribute to the increase in women not reporting, because women have the feeling that the system is failing them.

The WAVE Report 2015 also addresses the requirement for comprehensive and coordinated policies, their implementation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as the important role women's NGOs play in this area. It is evident, that countries which have recourse to women's NGOs and who work in close partnership with them, have been more successful in addressing the problem of gender-based violence and in protecting and supporting victims, than countries with few women's NGOs.

Our biggest concern in WAVE is that many countries in Europe still do not fulfill the minimum standards for services provision:

- ▶ Only 10 out of 28 EU Members stated that their country provides a 24/7 helpline free of charge for women victims of gender-based violence.
- ▶ 19,480 shelter beds are missing in the EU and 47,556 in Europe to fulfill the minimum standards of providing one shelter space per 10,000 inhabitants.
- ▶ Only four countries in the EU provide women's shelters places according to the minimum standard.

This needs to be changed urgently and the WAVE network will be carrying out the WAVE Step-up! Campaign in 2016 and 2017 with the goal of increasing the number and improve the quality of women's support services in Europe.

**We need your support to reach this goal and we invite you to join the Campaign!  
Please check the WAVE website for more information ([www.wave-network.org](http://www.wave-network.org))**

Effective protection and support for victims of gender-based violence, and decrease in the prevalence of this widespread human rights violation, will not be reached without investing adequate financial resources. Given the high financial costs on society induced by gender-based violence, investment in tackling the issue pays off:

- ▶ The European Added Value Assessment estimates that the annual cost to the EU of gender-based violence against women in 2011 was about EUR 228 billion (1.8% of EU GDP); (European Parliament, 2014, Para R).
- ▶ This amounts to about EUR 450 per European citizen each year; an investment of only 10% of this cost (or EUR 45 per citizen, per year), would significantly contribute to reducing the financial impact of gender-based violence on national budgets, i.e. through investment in prevention of violence.

WAVE calls upon governments to "allocate appropriate financial and human resources for the adequate implementation of integrated policies, measures and programmes" (Council of Europe, 2012, p.8) to prevent violence against women and their children, as required by the Istanbul Convention.

Finally, we want to thank all WAVE Members who contributed to the data collection for this report for taking the time to provide information.

Rosa Logar (*WAVE president*) and Maria Rösslhumer (*WAVE Executive Director*)  
Vienna, January 2016



# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The WAVE Report 2015 provides up to date information on specialist support services for women victims of gender based violence in 46 European countries<sup>1</sup>, including the 28 EU countries. The report this year is broader in scope and, in addition to information on national women's helplines and women's shelters, this year includes information on non-residential support services for women who have experienced gender based violence. Furthermore, information on national women's networks is included for the first time as they play an essential role in developing specialist support services for women and data collection. Aside from core service provision, the Report this year includes, for the first time, examples of prevention and training work undertaken by women's non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and makes visible, the fact that women's NGOs are not only providing services to victims but also engage in manifold activities around awareness raising, prevention work and training. The report also attempts to set some base line data on policy, funding, emergency barring orders and collaborations with perpetrator programmes.

Basic standards for specialist women's support services have been published in the WAVE Report 2014 and they can be found in the annex.

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<sup>1</sup> The following countries were surveyed: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. This list differs from the Council of Europe membership in that up to now WAVE has not included Andorra, Monaco and San Marino in surveys but does include Belarus and Kosovo who are not currently members of the Council of Europe.

## National Women's Helplines in Europe

Over 60 million women in Europe are victims of gender based violence and their foremost need is to have someone supportive to talk to (FRA Report, 2014 p. 67). Therefore, an easily accessible and widely publicised helpline number is, for many, their first step towards the help and support they need.

**TABLE 1 – Overview of National Women's Helplines in Europe**

	Total Number of National Women's Helplines	National Women's Helplines Free of Charge	National Women's Helplines Operating 24/7	National Women's Helplines Free of Charge and Operating 24/7
Europe (46)	33 (100%)	26 (79%)	22 (67%)	17 (52%)
European Union (28)	19 (100%)	16 (84%)	12 (63%)	10 (53%)
Countries outside the EU (18)	14 (100%)	10 (71%)	10 (71%)	7 (50%)

As the above table demonstrates 33 of the 46 countries surveyed had a national woman's helpline which provides women seeking help with an easily identifiable point of contact. 13 countries had no national woman's helpline at all, which makes it more difficult for women to access the help and support they need when they have experienced violence. 26 countries did have a women's helpline that was free of charge, which is very important as it enables women to contact the helpline without a partner finding out (for example, from a telephone bill). 22 countries did have a helpline which women could contact at all times of the day and night.

### NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES – KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ 17 out of 46 European countries provide a helpline that is both free of charge and runs 24/7
- ▶ Hence only 37 % of European countries meet the standards set in the Istanbul Convention
- ▶ 10 out of the EU 28 Member States provide a helpline that is both free of charge and runs 24/7

## Recommendations

- ▶ National women's helplines operating 24/7 and free of charge, should be available in all European countries. EU countries need to urgently increase the number of 24/7 helplines free of charge, since currently not even 1/3 of the countries are providing this core service.
- ▶ Women's helplines need to be staffed with trained professionals to provide empowering support for women survivors of violence and should also work closely with other victim support agencies in order to ensure appropriate and effective referrals for both short and long-term support.



## Women's Shelters

For 45 years women's shelters have been the main support service for women and their children, if any, fleeing domestic violence. All but one European country has adopted this model of support which has proved most effective in empowering women to establish lives free from violence for themselves and their children, if any.

**TABLE 2 – Summary of Findings on Women's Shelters in Europe**

Countries	Total Population	Women's Shelters	Beds Needed	Beds Available*	Beds Missing	Minimum Standards Met
Europe (46)	831,096,151 (100%)	1,842	83,110	26,785 (32%)	47,556	5 (n=41)
European Union (28)	507,095,479 (61%)	1,481	50,710	20,831 (41%)	19,480	4 (n=25)
Countries outside the EU (18)	324,000,672 (39%)	354	32,400	5,954 (18%)	22,076	1 (n=16)
"Old" EU Countries** (15)	402,201,084 (80% of EU)	1,321	40,224	17,900 (45%)	11,509	2 (n=13)
"New" EU Countries** (13)	104,894,395 (20% of EU)	167	10,489	2,931 (28%)	7,971	2 (n=12)

\* "Beds available" and "beds missing" do not add up to 100% as a surplus in one country does not ameliorate a deficit in another.

\*\* Regarding the definition "Old" and "New" EU Countries see Glossary on p. 102.

The table above shows the total amount of women's shelter bed spaces available and how these are distributed throughout Europe. As can be seen, overall only a third of the accommodation in women's shelters which the Istanbul Convention considered to be the minimum required service provision is available. Out of the 41 countries for which WAVE was able to gather data in 2015, only 5 countries met this minimum standard of provision. These resources are, however, not evenly distributed throughout Europe and are mostly concentrated in the 28 EU Member States. Even within the EU there are more women's shelter resources available in the 15 EU Member States which joined before 2004. The EU Member States which joined after 2004 are still missing almost three quarters of the shelter beds they require.

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS – KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ About 1,842 women's shelters for victims of domestic violence are available in Europe
- ▶ These provide approximately 26,785 places for women survivors and their children, if any
- ▶ 57% of the minimum standard for shelter place provision is missing in Europe
- ▶ 38% of the minimum standard for shelter place provision is missing in 28 EU Member States
- ▶ 76% of the minimum standard for shelter place provision is missing in "new" EU Member States
- ▶ 29% of the minimum standard for shelter place provision is missing in the "old" EU Member States

### Recommendations

- ▶ The European countries outside the EU and EU Member States are urged to step up efforts to close the serious gap in service provision women face when fleeing violence with their children. The rights of victims to live in a safe space free from violence must be guaranteed. The minimum standard of 1 place per 10,000 inhabitants in specialist women's services should be met by all EU countries.
- ▶ There is an urgent need to expand quantity and accessibility of specialist services based on a gender sensitive analysis of domestic violence and a human rights approach to service delivery. In addition these services need to be expanded to more adequately meet the needs of differently abled women and migrant women, particularly undocumented migrant women.



## Women's Centres

All 46 European countries provide non-residential specialist support services such as women's crisis or counselling centres serving women survivors of violence, rape crisis centres, pro-active intervention centres, regional domestic violence centres and similar services, serving only or predominantly women. Information on these services is included for the first time in the WAVE Report.

**TABLE 3 – Summary of Findings on Distribution of Women's Centres in Europe**

	Total Population	Total Number of Women's Centres
Europe (46)	831,096,151 (100%)	2,937
European Union (28)	507,095,479 (61%)	2,692 (92 % of all centres)
Countries outside the EU (18)	324,000,672 (39%)	245 (8 % of all centres)
"Old" EU Countries (15)	402,201,084 (80 % of EU)	2,522 (86 % of all centres)
"New" EU Countries (13)	104,894,395 (20 % of EU)	170 (6 % of all centres)

This table shows that the WAVE research uncovered a total of 2,937 specialist women's services in Europe offering non-residential services for women who have experienced gender violence. These services are, however, very unevenly distributed throughout Europe and mostly concentrated in the 15 countries which were members of the EU before 2004.

### WOMEN'S CENTRES – KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ There are 2,937 women's centres in Europe
- ▶ The distribution of these services is very worrying – 86 % are located in "old" EU Member States and only 6 % in new EU Member States
- ▶ There is an urgent need to develop women's specialist non-residential support services in all European countries

## Recommendations

- ▶ Women victims of violence and their children should have access to specialist women's centres in their vicinity. Therefore, women's centres offering various types of support should be available in all regions. The gap in service provision between "old" and "new" EU Member States must be urgently addressed.
- ▶ Existing specialist services should have secure funding for their work, be well networked and advertised to provide a safety net for victims of gender based violence. Services for specific groups of women, for example, minority ethnic women and women in difficult circumstances such as female asylum seekers need to be expanded.

## National Women's Networks

For the first time the WAVE Report has also included data on national women's networks. The strength of national networks of women's NGOs are particularly profound in lobbying, prevention, strengthening cooperation including enhancing the capacity and development of existing services and improving communication between women's organisations within their respective countries.

National networks of women's NGOs are also experts with which governments should work together in developing, implementing and monitoring national policies and measures to prevent violence against women and domestic violence.

**TABLE 4 – Summary of Findings on National Women's Networks in Europe**

	National Women's Networks (n=45)	Legal Entity (n=31)	Existence of a National Office (n=32)	State Funding (n=30)
YES	39 (87%)	20 (64%)	25 (78%)	10 (33%)
NO	6 (13%)	11 (36%)	7 (22%)	20 (66%)

As can be seen in the above table, 39 countries in the EU have at least one national women's network. This makes data collection on combatting violence against women easier on a national level and also eases the facilitation of national campaigns. The table also shows that strengthening such networks in terms of their legal status, whether or not they have a national office and securing stable funding is an ongoing effort.

### NATIONAL WOMEN'S NETWORKS – KEY FINDINGS

- ▶ Europe has 102 national women's networks in the field of combating violence against women
- ▶ Receiving State funding, being a legal entity, having paid staff and a national office improves the effectiveness of national networks
- ▶ Sustainable funding is essential to the longevity and effectiveness of networks, particularly in terms of data collection

### Recommendation

- ▶ Whilst some countries are reporting a turn towards gender neutrality and increased competition for funding, national women's networks remain essential to the development and implementation of gender-sensitive policies, as required in Article 6 of the Istanbul Convention and to support the women-centred approach unique to specialist women's NGOs.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Women against Violence Europe (WAVE) is a network of European women's non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and experts working in the field of preventing violence against women and their children. WAVE focusses on advocacy, awareness raising, research, dissemination of information and the expansion and improvement of specialist, gender-sensitive and human rights based support services for women who have experienced gender-based violence.

As of December 2015, the network consists of 112 Members in 46 European countries. Through the network, WAVE fosters a transnational network of women's and other NGOs supporting and inspiring each other in their work to eliminate violence against women.

The WAVE Network was founded in 1994 and in 2014 became a legal entity with an elected Board and President. The WAVE office and information centre, which also coordinates the work of the network, is based in Vienna, Austria.

The WAVE Report (which was previously known as the WAVE Country Report) has been published every year since 2008 and is one of the network's main tools, providing information about new developments in the area of violence against women, as well as data and statistics on specialist women's support services. Monitoring the situation in the area of specialised support services in Europe is crucial, as the first EU wide survey on violence against women demonstrated that one in three women in the EU has experienced some form of physical and/or sexual assault since the age of 15 (FRA Report, 2014, p. 21). This represents over 60,000,000 women in Europe and these survivors of gender-based violence need safe spaces, protection, empowering support and access to justice. In particular, since the Istanbul Convention came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014, the WAVE Report is a main instrument for monitoring progress from the women's NGOs perspective and for this reason the WAVE Report this year is much more comprehensive than in previous years.

The Istanbul Convention is one of three legal instruments in Europe which provide an important base for strengthening efforts to eliminate gender based violence in Europe and for the protection and support of women who have experienced such abuse and their children, if any. The Istanbul Convention contains details on how to prevent violence, including a chapter on the protection and support of victims of gender based violence. Another instrument is the European Victims' Directive, adopted in October 2012 and had to be implemented into national laws by November 16, 2015, which, although concerned with victims in general, defines violence against women as a specific form of gender-based violence requiring States to provide specialist support for survivors. The third instrument is the European Protection Orders which came into effect in January 2015 and ensures that all victims of violence have the opportunity to get their protection orders recognized in any EU Member State.

These three instruments can be used to end a widespread violation of human rights rooted in the "historically unequal power relations between women and men, which have led to domination over, and discrimination against, women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women" (Istanbul Convention 2011 Preamble).

### Status of the Istanbul Convention as of 1st February 2016

- ▶ **The Convention has been ratified by 20 States:** Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey
- ▶ **The Convention has been signed by 19 States:** Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Switzerland, Macedonia, Ukraine and United Kingdom
- ▶ **8 States are still to sign the Convention:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Moldova and Russia.

Council of Europe Chart of signatures and ratifications: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210/signatures>, 01 February 2016

The information contained in this report has been compiled from data gathered with the assistance of experienced professional practitioners in women's specialist services in 46 European countries. These are experts on women's specialist services against gender-based violence in their respective country and we are very grateful for the considerable time and energy respondents gave to make this report possible. The report (and the questionnaire) is much longer this year and provides a broader overview of specialist women's services for women who have experienced violence, and their children. Up to now the WAVE Report on specialist women's support services has focussed on women's helplines and women's shelters. This report includes for the first time more detailed information on women's centres, such as counselling centres, rape crisis centres, sexual assault and other types of centres providing non-residential support to women survivors of gender-based violence and their children. Most specialist services are run by women's NGOs committed to combating violence against women and run a comprehensive service. This often includes prevention work as well as running support services and providing training to professionals in more general services, like police and health workers and consultancy to other professionals in contact with survivors and their children. This report additionally provides information on general services in European countries, which are also used by women seeking help, as these are often an invaluable part of the service landscape providing front line emergency assistance. Ideally, these services should be able to refer women to specialist services offering a gender specific analysis and a human rights approach to the problem of gender based violence.<sup>2</sup> The report makes visible the range of work done by women's organisations which not only provide empowering services to survivors, but also engage in awareness raising, prevention activities and training. Women's NGOs are important actors for change and the report also aims to examine if governments "recognise, encourage and support" the work of women's NGOs and establish "effective co-operation with them", as foreseen by the Istanbul Convention in Article 9 (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 8).

The WAVE Report presents the findings and provides detailed recommendations relating to the first three core services outlined above namely national women's helplines (Chapter 4), women's shelters (Chapter 5) and women's centres (Chapter 6). As mentioned above, we have expanded our data this year to include not only information on specialist services for women but also to indicate the broader general service provision. These general services are often a first contact point for women who have experienced gender based violence and have an important role in assisting victims. In countries where specialist women's support services do not yet exist or not in adequate numbers, these general services have an even more important role in supporting women survivors of violence. However, it is not enough to have general services; women victims of gender-based violence need to be referred to appropriate specialist women's services (Istanbul Convention Article 20).

Following these three chapters which outline core service provision we have included a more narrative account of women's journeys to support services, to provide a picture not only of the individual measures which exist in a country, but also how measures are connected and coordinated and whether they serve the needs of survivors (Chapter 7). In this chapter WAVE wanted to demonstrate the similarities and differences between countries and highlight some issues on which training and campaigning strat-

<sup>2</sup> See Istanbul Convention Articles 20 and 22 (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 13).

egies could focus. In Chapter 8, issues pertinent to the development of national women's networks are discussed in more detail. This is seen as a major element in strengthening national policies to combat gender violence and in improving fiscal support for specialist support services for women and their children.

Chapters 9 and 10 address the very important but nevertheless often "additional" tasks of prevention and training work for which many women's specialist services also manage to find time, despite the fact that they seldom receive funding for these activities. It is a measure of how important training and prevention work is to women's NGOs that they invest time and energy in these activities supplementary to the time consuming and demanding task of running support services for women victims. It is hoped that providing examples of prevention and training events will encourage and inspire more activities. Most importantly, by making this work more visible, the importance of adequately funding prevention and training will be made clear to national and local governments.

The last three chapters focus on Government policy, funding and recognition of the work of women's NGOs (Chapter 11), emergency barring orders (Chapter 12) and collaboration on work with perpetrator programmes (Chapter 13). These three chapters demonstrate the need for improved data collection on a national level and also lobbying work to encourage governments to not only improve funding for women's NGOs but to also make information on funding transparent. At this point WAVE is pleased to report that in the last year funding has been granted to elaborate and implement common criteria for data collection. The first phase, a report which maps which data is collected by whom (MAPPING: Women's Service user statistics in Europe, WAVE, 2016), has been completed and work has begun on the second phase of establishing uniform data collection standards. A final phase of implementing such standards will be undertaken in 2017.

Each chapter in this WAVE Report has been presented with graphics where useful. A complete set of tables which give full information for all 46 countries are included towards the end of the report. Following the tables the methodology for the study is set out. The questionnaire used for data gathering is available on the WAVE website <http://www.wave-network.org>.

The appendices include information on WAVE membership and national helplines and WAVE standards for specialist women's support services. In addition a reference list and a brief glossary of main terms is also provided. The report concludes with WAVE contact details and an invitation to use the WAVE Database and WAVE information centre.

In going into new areas we have, in some cases, only been able to provide partial base line data and illuminate some areas which require further exploration. Readers are invited to visit the WAVE website to keep up to date with developments through the WAVE Database as well as publications such as Fact-sheets and Thematic Papers, among others, which are freely available at <http://www.wave-network.org>. This year country profiles, which provide specific information on all 46 individual countries and their specialist service landscape for women who have experienced gender-based violence, are not included in this report for reasons of space. Readers are invited to visit the WAVE website where this information is also available.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### Research Aim

The WAVE Report 2015 was more ambitious in scope than in previous years and the aim was to address some measures in the Istanbul convention central to the provision of protection and support for women survivors of violence and their children.

Data was collected as in earlier years on national women's helplines and women's shelters in all 46 countries<sup>3</sup>. In addition this year the questionnaire addressed some aspects of National Networking of women's NGO's; National Policy and Funding; Journeys to women's support services; Women's centres; Prevention, awareness raising, campaigning; Training; Legal protection for women and cooperation on work with perpetrators. Furthermore, in order to contextualise the data on women's shelters and women's national helplines we also asked for data on other domestic violence shelters and other national helplines.

By broadening the knowledge base on specialist women's support services in Europe, WAVE aims to respond to the call for improved data collection by the European Parliament and Commission among others.

The fact that in many areas data was not available to inform questions, indicates which areas need improvement and what the problem is. For example, it was difficult for respondents to provide information on funding of specialist services for women who have experienced gender based violence, because in many countries the government does not make this information available. Also there is very little data on how many protection orders are issued in countries, which points to serious problems in implementation. The common lack of data in many areas, resulted in the author's deciding, that the report would not only focus on existing data, but also on making gaps in data collection visible.

#### Research Design

It was the aim of the research, to not only focus on quantitative data, such as number of services available, but also on the quality of services and to try to find out if standards from the Istanbul Convention, such as immediate protection and safety for all victims are realised. Multiple methods for data collection were used, such as literature research, information gathering from international bodies such as CEDAW and a questionnaire in combination with telephone interviews with respondents to the questionnaire to clarify information.

An obvious consequence of covering new fields as well as quantitative and qualitative aspects was that the questionnaire became very long covering 30 pages. The questionnaire was first drafted and introduced to WAVE members in June 2015. It was redrafted and following feedback from members and piloted in Austria and England and as a consequence some questions were taken out. The research started from the assumption, that not all countries will be able to provide data, either because there is no data or because they will not be able to gather the data in the time. Despite these anticipated difficulties, the research aimed to make the many challenges in data collection visible. The goal, to gather baseline information in as many countries as possible, rather than to aim for a complete overview in all countries, which is not realistic at this point of time, has resulted, in some questionnaires being returned with only partial information, as can be seen in many of the tables presented in the report.

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<sup>3</sup> Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom. This list differs from the Council of Europe membership in that up to now WAVE has not included Andorra, Monaco and San Marino in surveys but does include Belarus and Kosovo who are not currently members of the Council of Europe.

To avoid asking for information we already had the WAVE office team filled in some parts of the questionnaire for each country, using existing information from sources such as CEDAW Shadow Report, EIGE and Council of Europe Monitoring Report and previous WAVE reports. Experienced practitioners in WAVE member organisations were invited as experts on women's specialist services in their country to review the information sent and make a note of any changes. For ease of understanding the WAVE members who completed the questionnaire are referred to as respondents in the rest of this report.

The final electronic questionnaire was sent to 50 WAVE respondents in 46 countries, that is, in the UK the questionnaire was filled in by WAVE respondents in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and the responses were aggregated for one analytical category, UK. Similarly in Belgium two WAVE respondents in Belgium Flanders and Belgium Walloon (including Brussels capital city) completed questionnaires and the results were aggregated for analysis into a single entity, Belgium.

WAVE respondents were expected to contact other agencies in order to gather the breadth and depth of information required to complete the questionnaire. Given the fact that WAVE respondents are mostly working in women's networks and NGOs with very few resources and a large workload, the WAVE researchers were delighted to get 46 questionnaires from 42 countries back. Only four countries were unable to return a completed questionnaire (Azerbaijan, Ireland, Poland and Sweden). For these four countries the data from earlier WAVE reports are used.

In addition to answering the questionnaire, respondents were also asked to make themselves available for up to two hours for a skype interview with a member of the WAVE office team to clarify any anomalies or fill any gaps in information. This obviously demanded a considerable investment of time from WAVE respondents and it is another measure of their commitment that 26 respondents were able to comply with all these requests. Three skype interviews could not be completed because of technical difficulties and seven respondents preferred to answer queries through email correspondence rather than a skype interview. In ten cases respondents were not able to find time for a skype interview.

This WAVE Report has been compiled from the wealth of data provided and, in addition, a summary of each country has been made available on the WAVE website <http://www.wave-network.org>. Population statistics have been taken from the Eurostat database, last updated on 13.04.2015 or, if available, WAVE respondents provided population data from their most recent country census.

## Data Analysis

In some areas of data collection it was to be expected, that many countries would not have "hard" data. This is especially the case with questions on quality standards, for instance the question of whether women's shelters provide services free of charge. It is very rare that countries collect such data on the national level or have a research addressing this question. Thus respondents were first asked for data and if none was available, they would be asked for an estimation, based on their expert opinion. In the absence of national data collection this is often the only way to get an impression of the level of support for women experiencing gender based violence.

A further caveat in interpreting the information provided is that some have only included services in their questionnaire which have been specifically developed to meet the needs of women and children affected by gender based violence. Other countries have included a larger number of services and include those which were not specifically developed to assist women victims of gender-based violence, but which nevertheless provide a support structure.



Definitions of terms are difficult when conducting research in 46 different countries, with different economic, social and political histories which have influenced the development of social welfare structures. Organisations wishing to improve support for women who have experienced gender based violence have adapted to these differing conditions often in pragmatic ways, filling gaps in provision and influencing or supplementing existing structures. This can make comparison difficult and in particular for the range of women's centres, the information provided in the report can be taken as base line data to inform further research. Categories of non-residential support services need to be better defined in future research to avoid counting services twice, for example, in this report we have attempted to distinguish between non-residential services of women's shelters and not count these as women's centres. Similarly, there is a continuing difficulty in assessing the number of resources available for women who have experienced sexual violence. Women's centres also serve survivors of all forms of sexual violence, which is especially important in areas where no specialist services such as rape crisis centres exist. Rape crisis or sexual assault centres can be quite diverse and be located within other institutions and structures. Differentiation of specialist services has taken place in the past decade which can be seen as a positive sign, but it also makes it difficult to collect information and to get an impression of the extent to which countries meet the recommendation that one such centre should be available per every 200,000 inhabitants (Council of Europe, 2012 p. 83).

Another factor which has to be taken into account in comparing service provision is, obviously, size of population. Where population size was a factor, we have grouped countries into the following categories for population size for comparison purposes.

**Countries with populations of under 1 million:**

Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta and Montenegro

**Countries with populations of under 5 million:**

Albania, Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Ireland, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova and Slovenia

**Countries with populations of under 10 million:**

Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Norway, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland

**Countries with populations of under 20 million:**

Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania

**Countries with populations of over 20 million:**

France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine, UK

Another difficulty is in comparing the amount of shelter resources available to women in each country. Some shelters count beds and others count rooms. If shelters are under very heavy pressure for space, women may double up in rooms or extra beds will be placed into rooms to accommodate children. For this reason, calculation of the number of spaces available for women in shelters can be fluid. In WAVE data, spaces have been equated with beds, since this seems to be the most common way to count resources available.

## 4. NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES

### Introduction

For detailed information on this section, please see tables 9–12 on pages 90–91.

National women's helplines are among the core services that women turn to for immediate support and advice. As such, they are most vital support services for women experiencing violence, and they provide survivors of all forms of violence with specialist support tailored to meet their various needs. National women's helplines provide two important elements for women survivors of violence: information and emotional support. Standards for the provision of a national women's helpline set by the Istanbul Convention establishes that states must provide at least one national helpline to address all forms of violence against women, operating 24/7, free of charge, and in all relevant languages. Furthermore, Article 22 states that the parties to the convention "shall provide or arrange for specialist women's support services to all women victims of violence and their children" which implies that specialist women's helplines are needed to provide adequate support.

Free of charge women's helplines are important for various reasons, but most importantly so that the phone call is not recorded on a phone bill and hence the woman has the security in knowing that the perpetrator has no way of discovering that she has contacted a women's helpline. Furthermore, a helpline counselling session, especially in complex situations, may last longer than one hour. Women who are survivors of violence may not have the finances to cover expensive telephone bills, as they may also be experiencing economic violence by their partners and hence have limited financial means. Helplines must be available around the clock as violence can happen at any time of the day, especially in later hours of the day or at night. Women who experience violence, who have an urgent need to escape, are in need of information on safe accommodation for themselves and their children, if any, or in cases of sexual violence, are in need of immediate support and information; women's helplines operating 24/7 are crucial in providing such support.

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) study demonstrates that one of the primary needs of women victims of violence is to have someone to talk to and to support them (FRA, 2014, p. 67). Providing information, advice, and practical help for women is key, particularly when there is a lack of awareness about support available. Informing victims of their rights and their options (such as making a police report, referring to a women's shelter, or providing information on the forensic process) helps to ensure not only that their needs are met, but also that the journey to healing is manageable and achievable. National women's helplines as a specialist support service for survivors of violence need to be "based on a gendered understanding of violence against women and domestic violence and shall focus on the human rights and safety of the victim" according to Article 18 of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 12).

Since women may seek support at any time of the day, it is crucial that the helplines be available around the clock, and also maintain confidentiality, and where necessary, anonymity. National women's helplines are also of help to friends, colleagues, neighbours and family of women victims of violence, who can be useful allies to victimised women and may call on behalf of women or are seeking information themselves. Information and advice particularly in crisis is crucial for women victims of violence, as many women report feeling shock, embarrassment, and fear after experiencing violence, and are often in need of non-judgemental guidance in terms of their options in order to make decisions quickly and decisively.

Specialist and independent women's NGOs are well equipped to run women's helplines and to bring women out of violent situations, provide customized care to help them overcome obstacles, and provide them with support in the future to ensure a path free from violence. The work of women's organizations and their expertise in combating violence against women is invaluable, and they should receive governmental financial support to women's helplines.

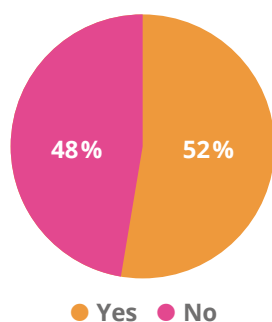
## Aims and Content of Data Collection

One aim of the data collection was to compare women's service provision, between countries and within countries over time. Previous WAVE Reports have collected data on the existence of women's helplines in Europe over the years, and therefore a level of comparability can be achieved; however, as with any attempt at comparability, caution must be applied, due to the diversity in service provision between countries. In the cases of larger countries as well where there is a lack of women's organisations and/or lack of resources for data collection, there is also a higher level of difficulty in providing reasonable estimates. The task of estimating or providing the exact number of women's helplines is somewhat easier as these services are more recognisable, although reliable data on them is often missing, especially when it comes to national data on the user statistics. A focus is therefore to inform relevant stakeholders of the availability of women's helplines in their countries with the hope of influencing and encouraging stakeholders to implement improvements, where necessary, whether in data collection or in provision. Each country's level of service provision is compared to relevant standards, mainly the Istanbul Convention standards for national women's helplines to be free of charge and 24/7. Therefore, the data collection process also took these questions into account and in comparison with the findings of last year's report to highlight any changes in service provision.

Additionally, the WAVE Report 2015 questionnaire asked questions about the funding of national women's helplines, whether funding was provided by the State or other sources, such as private and foreign donations. Financial support from the State is an issue in the provision of a quality service and sustainability of that service. Article 8 of the Istanbul Convention requires States to allocate financial and human resources for the adequate implementation of measures, which also applies to the funding of women's helplines. The countries whose governments' continue to fund services for women survivors of violence should be commended for their efforts and serve as positive examples encouraging other governments to join their ranks.

Since not all countries have a national women's helpline meeting the Istanbul Convention standards, the WAVE Report 2015 questionnaire also enquired about the availability of other national helplines which may also be contacted by women survivors, even if they are not able to provide specialist support.

## Findings on the Situation of National Women's Helplines in Europe



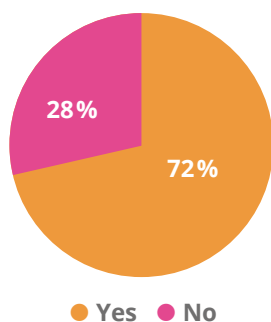
**FIGURE 1 – National Helplines Operating 24/7 and Free of Charge**

This figure demonstrates that just over half of the national women's helplines operate both 24/7 and free of charge. In other words, 52% of national women's helplines do meet the Istanbul Convention standards for a women's helpline to be free of charge and operate 24/7.

72% of European countries have at least one national women's helpline. In the countries where there are no national women's helplines, there is alternative support for survivors of violence, which is available nationwide. In some cases, such as in Norway, Slovakia, and Romania, there are regional helplines or helplines in the women's shelters which support women victims of violence directly.

17 of the 33 of countries in Europe operate women's helplines, which are both 24/7 and free of charge (Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, UK), a slight increase from last year. A majority of these countries have signed the Istanbul Convention and most (except Montenegro and Romania) provide multilingual support.

There is therefore a strong correlation between being a signatory to the Istanbul Convention and having a national women's helpline operating both 24/7 and free of charge, which is run by a women's NGO and providing multilingual support.



**FIGURE 2 – Number of European Countries with at Least One National Women's Helpline**

This figure demonstrates that most countries within Europe (72%) have at least one national women's helpline providing support for at least one form of violence against women. The remaining 28% of countries do not have a national women's helpline which provide specialist support, but do have other national helplines which can provide support to victims of violence.

Two European countries have changed their status in terms of being 24/7 since last year. Bosnia & Herzegovina is no longer 24/7, while the national women's helpline in Bulgaria now operates 24/7. Four countries have gone from being free of charge last year to not free of charge in 2015 (Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkey).

Most of the 33 European countries have national women's helplines, which provide multilingual support. This has remained relatively stable compared to last year's data. Eight of the helplines do not provide multilingual support. The primary reason for not providing multilingual support is that some helplines, Albania and Macedonia, do not see the need to provide support in any other language than their own national language. Some helplines which provide multilingual support provide support in one additional language, English, such as in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Turkey. The languages in which national helplines provide support often depend on the geographical location and demographic make-up of a country. For instance, Estonia also can provide support in Russian, while a small country like Slovakia provides support in Hungarian, French, German, and Russian.

It is important to note that many national women's helplines offer additional modes of communication in order to increase accessibility and match technological demands for alternative communication methods. The UK in particular provides many alternative communication methods. For instance, Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline provides services for deaf or hard of hearing individuals and, in addition, has interpreters available. The National Domestic Violence Helpline has a voicemail service, and the 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline provides support via email and texts.

In comparison to last year's report, three countries have gained a national women's helpline (Romania, Slovakia and Montenegro). Previously, WAVE included the regional women's helpline run by the Alliance of Women in Slovakia; however, largely as a result of State and European grant funding, and in collaboration with women's NGOs, the State of Slovakia has taken over the mandate for a national women's helpline as of February 2015. As part of the Istanbul Convention implementation process, Montenegro has a national women's helpline, since September 2015 and Romania opened their national women's helpline on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Data collected also indicates that Iceland has gained a national women's helpline last year, however, this service is not new, but as it is run by the women's shelter which provides mobile/floating support and is available nation-wide due to the small population it can be counted as a national women's helpline.

However, there remain a number of countries (13 of the 46 countries), which do not have a national women's helpline. Four of these countries are not part of the EU (Belarus, Norway, Serbia and Switzerland).

There are many reasons for there not being a national women's helpline in some countries. For example, there are regional helplines, such as in Norway and Belgium, where each women's shelter operates a regional helpline assisting women survivors of violence. In some cases where there are national helplines,

they are not specialist or gender-specific, such as in Serbia, where there are SOS hotlines, which support women survivors of violence among others. One helpline is operated by police officers and does not provide specific information or advice to survivors of gender violence, and also provides a service to men. Some countries report difficulties in terms of government relations with women's NGOs. For example, they complain of a move towards gender-neutral legislation and funding services which are also gender-neutral, lack of cooperation and involvement of women's NGOs in policy development and most funding being project-based rather than sustained (cf. Chapter 11). In Lithuania, the national helpline Women's Line is not gender-specific or specialist. In Croatia, legislation tends to be gender-neutral and funding tends to be project-oriented, making the sustainability of a national women's helpline almost impossible. Similarly, in Czech Republic, state funding is directed at gender-neutral services, such as hotlines for seniors, children, or general victims of crime. In Romania, the women's shelters operate their own helplines as in Norway.

## Organizations Running the National Helplines

Most of the national women's helplines, which do exist in Europe are run by women's NGOs (72%). European countries outside the EU are more likely to have national women's helplines run by women's NGOs (86%), than their EU counterparts (61%).

States are also involved in running a national women's helpline, with four countries within Europe having at least one national women's helpline run by the State (Germany, Greece, Slovakia and Spain). These are all EU countries. In these cases, the governmental bodies which run the national women's helpline focus on gender equality, such as in Greece, Slovakia and Spain, while in Germany, the national women's helpline is run by the Federal Office for Family and Social Affairs.

All of those helplines which operate both 24/7 and free of charge are run by women's NGOs, except for three (Germany, Slovakia and Spain), which are run by the State.

## User Statistics of National Women's Helplines

Of the 33 national women's helplines which do exist throughout Europe, a majority of helplines (20) collect user statistics on the total number of calls received, including the total number of women callers. In Georgia, some statistics are simply not available and user statistics are unknown. Reasons for the lack of user statistics in Hungary and Kosovo are unknown.

The comparability of data is made difficult by the fact that some national women's helplines produce data over different periods. For instance, since Slovakia is new, the user statistics provided are for the period from February to December 2015; in the UK, some user statistics are provided for the UK fiscal year i.e. from April 2014 – March 2015.

26 countries provided user statistics on the number of calls the national women's helplines received in 2014 and the total is 383,473. 66% of these calls were from females, the rest were organizations and individuals calling on behalf of someone experiencing violence.

## Funding

Just over half (14) of respondents answered the question on State funding. From the data collected, overall 9 European countries have at least one national women's helpline which received State funding in 2014 (Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Slovakia, Slovenia, UK). The majority of countries with helplines, which receive State funding are EU countries. Five countries (Armenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Moldova, Russia, Turkey) specifically stated that the national women's helpline

did not receive any State funding in 2014. Lack of State funding for national women's helplines can be related to two factors: first, the reported lack of government cooperation and involvement with women's NGOs, as is the case with Armenia, Russia and Turkey; secondly, lack of legal mandate on government funding for specialist women's support, as is the case with Armenia and Russia. There is a large gap in knowledge about State funding, with the number of respondents able to report on State funding being low.

Some countries received funding from both the State and other sources. For instance, in Austria, the majority of funding for the national women's helpline is provided by the State and the remaining budget is corporate funding. Ireland, Kosovo, Liechtenstein and the UK also report receiving a large portion of State funding, however Ireland specifically mentions that the State saves money as work is done by volunteers. The remaining financial resources come from private and foreign donations. For instance, Liechtenstein's budget relies 60–70% on private donations, while Slovakia and Estonia rely heavily on foreign donations, such as European structural funds. On the other hand, the Bulgarian national women's helpline operated in 2014 solely with funding from the State. Slovakia is the only country in which State funding was not the primary source of funding: in 2014, the national women's helpline was primarily funded by grant donations along with 15% co-financing by the State.

There are also alternative national programmes and specific donors in some countries which specifically provide funding for national women's helplines. For instance, Women's Line in Finland is 95% funded every year by the Slot Machine Association.

## OTHER NATIONAL HELPLINES

### Aims and Content of the Data Collection

In cases where there are no national women's helplines which serve predominantly women, it is important to acknowledge other national helplines which also provide support to women survivors of violence. These additional helplines may not be specialist or gender-specific. However, in the countries where there are no national women's helplines (Belarus, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Switzerland), other helplines can provide a crucial service to women who may otherwise not have access to support. However, as stated at the beginning, women victims of gender-based violence need to be supported by appropriate and specialist women's support services and only having general victims' helplines is not adequate.

Of the fourteen countries which do not have a national women's helpline, all have alternative helplines to provide support for women survivors of violence.

### Findings on the Situation of other National Helplines in Europe

44 countries (97%) in Europe have other national helplines, which also support women survivors of violence. Two countries do not (Azerbaijan and Kosovo).

Apart from the specialist services to women who have experienced violence, on which we have focussed in this report, the most common form of national helplines throughout Europe are children's helplines. 35 countries indicate that there is at least one children's helpline. However, two countries specifically state there is no helpline for children (Georgia and Montenegro) and eight countries did not respond to the question.

11 countries report having a domestic violence helpline (Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland and Portugal). However, these helplines are often not specialist or gender-specific, such as the helpline in Lithuania called Women's Line. Additionally,

in Portugal, the domestic violence helpline is gender-neutral as required by local legislation. In some cases helplines are more family-centred, such as the domestic violence helplines in Hungary, Netherlands and Poland.

22 countries in Europe (Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Switzerland and Turkey) report having a general helpline victims can call. These helplines tend to accommodate both women and men and serve a variety of forms of violence and crime.

In addition to the three different types of helplines mentioned above, there is a plethora of other national helplines which are available to the public and which can support women victims of violence. Many countries, such as Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Montenegro, and Slovakia have national helplines for trafficking victims. In Montenegro, the helpline for trafficking victims is run by the Montenegrin Women's Lobby in cooperation with the Office of the National Coordinator for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings. In Italy the national hotline against trafficking is free of charge and 24/7 as well as multilingual, including support in Albanian, Chinese, Nigerian and Arabic.

In Finland, Netherlands, Norway and Slovakia there are specific national helplines to support those suffering from elderly abuse. For instance, Suvanto in Finland, provides advice and support on situations where elderly are abused or in violent situations, as well as on domestic violence and violence from caregivers. In Norway the helpline Protective Services for the Elderly is available for people over 62 to help those at risk of or experiencing abuse.

Denmark, Finland and the UK have helpline services for ethnic minorities and immigrants. In Finland, the Monika Helpline is specifically for women who identify as being part of an ethnic, cultural, or linguistic minority and do not speak Finnish. Based in the women's shelter Mona Koti, this helpline assists immigrant women and children who have been victims of violence and those living under the threat of violence. While in Belarus, there is a helpline run by Gender Perspectives, called Hotline for Safe Migration which operates both 24/7 and free of charge.

The UK has broad range of national helplines for individuals with various needs and experiences of violence, including: a helpline called Broken Rainbow for members of the LGBT community who are experiencing domestic violence; the National Stalking Helpline for survivors of harassment or stalking; Honour Network Helpline for survivors of so-called honour crimes and forced marriage; Lifeline for people who are experiencing distress or despair, with additional services for people/women who are deaf or hard of hearing; Forced Marriage Unit, run by the UK government, providing support and advice to victims of forced marriage or those in danger of forced marriage as well as professionals dealing with such problems; Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) helpline, providing advice for those worried that a child is at risk of, or has experienced FGM; and Bawso BME domestic abuse helpline, for women of black and ethnic minority backgrounds who are affected by domestic and other forms of abuse.



## Recommendations for National Women's Helplines

- ▶ There remain 11 countries, which do not yet have a 24/7 women's helpline, and 13 countries, which do not have a national women's helpline at all. Therefore, it is recommended that States ratify and effectively implement the Istanbul Convention, adhering to their responsibilities for meeting Istanbul Convention standards for establishing a national women's helpline which is free of charge, available 24/7 and multilingual.
- ▶ National women's helplines and especially other national helplines, should be staffed with trained professionals to provide empowering support for women survivors of violence, and should also work closely with other victim support agencies in order to ensure appropriate and effective referrals for both short and long-term support.
- ▶ Helpline services for women survivors of violence need to be provided by independent, specialist women's support services, which apply a human rights-based, gender-specific and empowering approach.
- ▶ Lack of awareness of available services is an important issue that needs to be addressed (FRA, 2014, p. 162-3), since many women do not know about them. One of the reasons for this is that service providers often have little or no financial resources to carry out awareness raising campaigns. Therefore, national women's helplines should be publically visible and broadly advertised and the State should provide appropriate funding to ensure increased awareness and accessibility of the helplines.
- ▶ The staff working at women's services comprise highly qualified professionals who work tirelessly to empower and protect women survivors of violence and their children. Their focus and time should be spent ensuring the wellbeing of survivors and providing necessary and customized support. Therefore, States should provide financial support for women's helplines so that helplines do not need to focus on fundraising and in some cases, be forced to discontinue their operations.

## 5. WOMEN'S SHELTERS

### Introduction

For detailed information on this section, please see tables 13–18 on pages 92–94.

Women's shelters provide safety, accommodation, counselling and support to women survivors of domestic violence and their children. In the last 40 years, shelters have been established in all but one European country, most run by women's NGOs which have not only a gendered analysis of domestic violence but also a human rights approach to tackling the problem. As is demonstrated in the following analysis, there is a lack of adequate shelter provision in Europe and more shelters are urgently required. In addition, existing provision is under constant threat by cuts in funding as well as the increasing popularity of gender-neutral analyses which, in some countries, has resulted in State funding being linked to demands for women's shelters to be open to men.

Since the inception of women's shelters and as a result of their tireless campaigning on women's rights, there have been several improvements in the law relating to domestic violence and services for victims and their children, if any. For example, in the past 20 years 22 European countries have introduced emergency barring orders which make it possible to exclude violent men from the family home and many women are able to make use of this legislation to protect themselves and their children, if any, from harm. Nevertheless, women's shelters are still an essential service for women affected by domestic violence. Barring orders are only of use if abusive men are willing and able to observe the law. Some women who are in fear for their lives or the lives of their children cannot feel safe enough in an address known to their abusive partner, even if there is a barring order. Men who are intent on controlling their partners at any cost are not deterred by barring orders. Similarly, if abusive partners are unpredictable and unaccountable perhaps due to addiction or other problems, barring orders cannot guarantee safety for women and children in their own homes. In addition, if the home also accommodates wider family members, barring orders may not be appropriate and some women may prefer to leave the family home.

Thus almost 45 years after their inception, women's shelters remain an essential service for women and children affected by domestic violence. Shelters provide not only a safe refuge for women fleeing violence in their home and their children, if any. They also provide specialist counselling services for women who have experienced physical, sexual and emotional violence over many years from their partner. Shelter staff have become experts on the very difficult task of empowering women, whose ability to assert themselves has been systematically destroyed over a prolonged period of time, to make radical changes to their lives. In addition research has shown, that women's shelters have also become the experts in helping children who have suffered from living with domestic violence (Hester et. al., 2000). Shelter staff also offer practical advice on the law relating to domestic violence and on financial support for women and children fleeing violence. Research has shown that shelters are very good at developing strong local networks and good working relationships not only to other specialist services for women but also a wide range of local agencies dealing with housing, child welfare and education (Bell, 2016, p. 125).

They are, therefore, able to offer guidance to women in building a violent free life for themselves and their children, if any. Emergency barring orders and other initiatives, such as perpetrator programmes, can supplement but never supplant the shelter movement. A woman must have access to a range of services and be able to make her own decision about the best option. To guarantee this right, countries need to provide adequate numbers of specialist services for women and children. Article 23 of the Istanbul Convention requires all parties to establish: "appropriate, easily accessible shelters in sufficient numbers to provide safe accommodation for and to reach out proactively to victims, especially women and their children." (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 13)

Furthermore, in the explanatory report of the Istanbul Convention, it is recommended that such accommodation should be in specialist women's shelters, available in every region, providing secure accom-

modation and the minimum standard of provision should be one family place per 10,000 head of population (ibid, p. 81). In addition, the EU Victim's Directive recognises that: "Violence in close relationships is a serious and often hidden social problem which could cause systematic psychological and physical trauma with severe consequences because the offender is a person whom the victim should be able to trust. Victims of violence in close relationships may therefore be in need of special protection measures. Women are affected disproportionately by this type of violence and the situation can be worse if the woman is dependent on the offender economically, socially or as regards her right to residence." (Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012, Para.18)

Therefore, in addition to a minimum quantitative standard, Article 18 stipulates that the quality of service provided in shelters should be "based on a gendered understanding of violence against women and domestic violence and shall focus on human rights and safety of the victim" (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 12). Quality standards for setting up and running women's shelters have been developed by WAVE "Away from Violence" 2004, a report which is available online in 16 languages <http://www.wave-network.org/content/away-violence>.

## Aims of this Section

The data collected at the end of 2015 provides a picture of the current situation of women's shelters in Europe, as core services and also highlights new developments. For example, information was included on other domestic violence shelters which do not fulfil the quality standards required by the Istanbul Convention but nevertheless form part of the service landscape on which victims of domestic violence call for assistance.

Basic information on women's shelters was gathered, such as; number of women's shelters in a country; their geographical distribution; the number of beds available in shelters and the number of women and children accommodated. Also asked were: questions which explored the quality of women's shelters; accommodation of specific groups; about organisations running shelters; the existence of national standards; how women's shelters are accessed; length of stay; costs incurred; safety precautions; kind of support provided and the funding of women's shelters.

The WAVE respondents were aware that not all information would be available, but as in other parts of this report, it was also an objective of the research to start an exploration of that which we do not know to establish which data is missing and the reasons for this. On the basis of the picture thus gleaned, WAVE intends to create standards for data collection in order to ensure a more complete picture about the situation of protection and support for women victims of violence and their children, if any.

## Definition of Women's Shelters

As has been described in the introduction to this chapter, the European Victims' Directive and the Istanbul Convention have both acknowledged that domestic violence is a problem disproportionately affecting women and is linked to the position of women in society. Therefore, in order to offer effective support to women in this position and their children, if any, specialist women-only services should be developed. These should be based on a gender-specific analysis of the problem and have a human rights approach to empowering women to a better life. These shelters should assist all women facing domestic violence, be available 24/7 and be free of charge to women and their children. This is a basic standard for women's shelters that WAVE has upheld and expanded on in publications which are freely available on the WAVE website.

However, in previous reports which only gathered data on shelters which fit these criteria, other provision used by women escaping domestic violence have not been reported. This year the WAVE Report has gathered data on other domestic violence shelters and has received data which fits into three

broad categories. The first are women's shelters which are mostly run by women's NGOs and have a gender-specific analysis and a human rights approach. The second are shelters, many of which are run by women's NGOs which are under pressure from funders (often European States) to also be open to men. Some of our respondents have requested that their shelters still be classified as women's shelters although they are officially open to men on the basis that men have never applied, and are unlikely to apply, for admittance. Others wish to be considered as women's shelters because the proportion of men using their services is negligible. The third category are shelters often run by government agencies which are not gender-specific and deal with all forms of family violence; for the purposes of our questionnaire we called these domestic violence shelters.

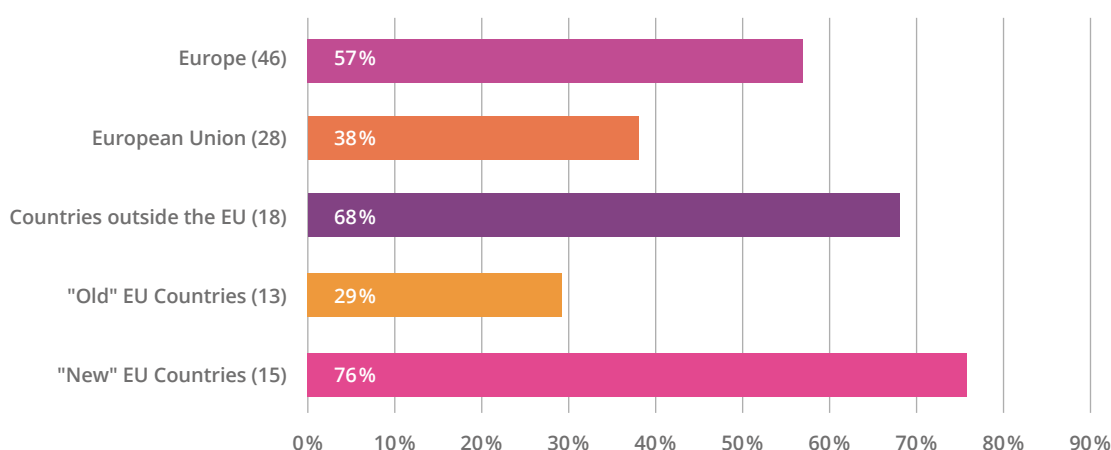
The move towards de-gendering women's services is often justified on the basis that women-only services discriminate against men. However, as the Istanbul Convention and the European Victims' Directive make clear, domestic violence is a form of violence which particularly impacts on women and requires a gender-specific solution, as is the case with sexual violence.

## **Domestic Violence shelters**

Some respondents to the questionnaire were particularly concerned about shelters for domestic violence which were not run by independent NGOs. They highlighted for example, that many of these shelters provide services not only to women and children but also to male victims of family violence. Some run perpetrator programmes on the same premises. The staff are not trained in a gender-specific approach to the problem of domestic violence and have little sensitivity to women's safety issues, for example, one domestic violence shelter allows abusive men visitation rights to their children in the shelter. In addition, the shelters do not work with a self-help or empowering approach. In many cases, women were not able to refer themselves, rather their case would be adjudicated by social services or helpline workers who would decide if they were really in need of shelter. Access is therefore controlled by organisations which are not available 24/7 and which are staffed by individuals (including men) who have no training on gender or human rights issues. As a consequence, some women are poorly supported and may be subject to victim-blaming from staff.

## **Shelter Provision in Europe**

The explanatory report of the Istanbul Convention Article 23 recommends a minimum standard of women's shelter provision of one place per 10,000 inhabitants and furthermore "the number of shelter places should depend on the actual need (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 81). According to this minimum standard, eight of the 46 European countries fulfil or exceed this provision and three almost fulfil the Istanbul convention criteria. This is an improvement from last year when only three completely fulfilled and one nearly fulfilled the criteria. It can be concluded, therefore, that progress is being made, albeit slowly.

**FIGURE 3 – Percentage of Shelter Places Missing in Europe**

This table describes how far short the provision of beds in women's shelters falls from the minimum standard of one bed per 10,000 population established within the context of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, 2012 p. 81). As can be seen, although overall two out of every three of the minimum number of beds is missing overall in Europe, and those services which are available are concentrated in the EU member states and, in particular, in those 13 states which joined the EU prior to the millennium.

Overall in the 46 European countries, 57% of the Istanbul Convention minimum standards of shelter provision is missing; this is a slight improvement on last year when the figure was 66%.

### EU Countries

In the 28 EU countries, overall 38% of the minimum number of women's shelter places are not provided. Four countries exceed the minimum number of shelter places (Denmark, Latvia, Luxemburg and Slovenia) and two countries come within 5% of the minimum (Malta and Netherlands).

### "Old" EU Member States

Of the 15 countries which were members of the EU before 2014, two exceed (Denmark, Luxembourg) and one (Netherlands) almost meets the minimum standard of shelter provision. On the whole, among the "old" EU Member States there is a shortfall of one third of shelter places (29%).

The greatest increase in service provision is in Finland which last year had the lowest level of provision of shelter places among the old EU Member States, with a 97% shortfall in places. Nevertheless despite increasing the number of shelters from two to 19 and a sevenfold increase in places available, they are still reporting a 79% shortfall in shelter provision. Finland has not established 17 shelters in the last year, rather this year they have included shelters which are not exclusively for women in their total. These shelters overwhelmingly provide a service for women with 2.5% of residents accommodated in 2014 being male. Italy as well has opened new shelters in the past year and provided more shelter places, yet continues to report a 90% shortfall in provision measured against the Istanbul Convention minimum standard provision. It is difficult to draw conclusions about data from Belgium due to difficulties in collecting national information. Ireland and Greece continue to lack half the minimum service provision and in common with the remaining old EU Member States have not expanded provision to any significant degree<sup>4</sup>. This is despite a shortfall in the minimum standard of provision of between one quarter and one third in Portugal, Spain, Sweden and UK and 16% in Germany and 11% in Austria.

<sup>4</sup> It has to be pointed out, however, that Ireland does employ the measure of "family spaces" which is a more generous service provision than "beds" and, therefore, the situation in Ireland is better than appears in a bed count comparison.

## "New" EU Member States

The newer Member States in general have a much lower provision of women's shelters and overall an 76% shortfall in the minimum standard.

Two countries (Latvia and Slovenia) exceed the minimum standard and Malta is making steady progress in expanding services and is within 5% of achieving the minimum standard. Of the two countries which exceed the recommended minimum service provision, Latvia has dramatically increased service provision from no shelters last year to 23 this year providing over 1,000 places. This increase is, however, due to the fact that this year all family crisis centres in the country have been included in the analysis as these do, in practice, provide shelter mainly to women and children feeling from violence in the home. These shelters are, however, not run by women's organisations but rather by municipalities and therefore are unlikely to have a gendered approach to supporting women survivors of violence. They are required to accommodate men in an emergency if requested to do so by social services but, in practice, are seldom, if ever, asked to accommodate men. Hungary too has, by the inclusion of regional shelters for families, also increased its provision from none to 14% of the minimum standard.

Romania has made dramatic progress in expanding provision and has reduced the number of places missing from almost three quarters to just over half. However, here too the type of service varies. Nine shelters are run by women's NGOs with a gender-specific/feminist approach. Five shelters are run by faith-based organizations. 49 shelters are run by the State. 10 shelters are run by other NGOs.

Overall, rapid increase in service provision in the last year is due to some countries requesting that shelters which are predominantly, but not exclusively, used by women be included in the count of women's shelters. It is necessary, however, to be very clear about the drawbacks of services which are not based on a gender-specific analysis of domestic violence and do not take a human rights approach to the problem. To highlight these shortcomings, a paraphrased comment by one of the respondents from an east European country named above is included to indicate the scale of the problem.

*These shelters are gender-blind and, therefore, not just for women. However, as the victims of relationship violence are 99.9% women, they are not used by men at all or very rarely. Nevertheless, the government stresses all the time that these shelters are for everybody. The staff working there are not specially trained and do not have a gender-awareness or a human rights-based approach to the issue of domestic violence and victim blaming attitudes can be present. There have even been cases of women being abused by their husbands in the shelter. Women are only admitted if they are in immediate danger and can only stay for one or two months.*

Cyprus and Bulgaria are making more modest progress. Bulgaria has reduced the number of places missing from 93% last year to 86% this year and Cyprus has over the same time period reduced from 89% to 80% the proportion of places missing. These services are run by women's NGOs, although for example, because the law in Bulgaria on domestic violence is gender-neutral the shelters are required to be open to men but they are unlikely to be approached by men seeking shelter.

Croatia and Estonia, which are both missing about one third of the minimum places required, have not been able to expand provision in the past year. Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland have also not expanded provision although all fail to meet even a tenth of the minimum standard and Poland has only one shelter in the capital city. It should be pointed out, however, that in Poland there are 34 State run domestic violence shelters. These do not provide a service exclusively to women, some accommodate men and run programmes for perpetrators on the women's shelter premises. Therefore, there are some concerns about the extent to which they focus on the safety of the victim as required by Article 18 of the Istanbul Convention. Nevertheless, it appears that there is a growing awareness on the part of the government in Poland of the importance of a gender-based analysis of the problem of domestic violence and it would be hoped that this would result in an ever increasing move towards the standards as set out in the Istanbul Convention.

Lithuania is alone in having no shelter at all for women and children fleeing violence in the home.

## European Countries Outside of the EU

In the 18 European countries outside the EU, 68% of women's shelter places are still missing, although it has to be recognized that progress has been made in the last twelve months as last year 87% of places were missing. Only Norway and Liechtenstein meet or almost meet the Istanbul Convention recommendations.

Although there has been an increase in the number of places available in shelter for women in Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Russia and Switzerland and a significant increase in Turkey (55% increase in places available in shelter) and Serbia (59% increase) all these countries are still only providing a fraction of the minimum standard. Turkey is currently providing just over half of the minimum standards and Serbia is still one third short of the minimum level. Montenegro does, in addition, have one domestic violence shelter which provides some service to women fleeing violence and their children, if any and Albania has three.

In Belarus and Russia, despite small expansion of services, provision of space for women in shelters is still only 3% of the Istanbul Convention standards for minimum provision. In addition, Armenia which fell 95% short of the minimum standard last year, reported this year a slight decrease of places available. Armenia did, however, report the existence of three domestic violence shelters which provided some service to women fleeing domestic violence and their children, if any.

Azerbaijan, Iceland, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova and Ukraine reported no increase in service provision in the last year and it should be noted that Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Moldova and Ukraine are still only providing one tenth or less of the minimum standard. Both Moldova and Ukraine reported the existence of domestic violence shelters, in Moldova there were five, Ukraine gave no number. These provided a service that was neither gender-specific nor based on a human rights approach, but are used by women fleeing violence. Iceland has such a small population that with one shelter and a mobile support service for women outside the capital, they report never having to turn women away from their shelter.

## Right to Stay

35 countries provided data on the length of time women and their children were able to stay in shelters. On the whole, the period of stay varied not only between countries but within countries. 16 countries reported that women could stay for more than six months and four countries measured the length of stay in days or weeks with a maximum of between four and six weeks. Spain and Romania reported a two-tier system with women staying a maximum of two months in emergency centres but able to stay for six months (Romania) or twelve months (Spain) in second stage accommodation.

No country mentioned that women survivors of violence and their children, if any, had the right to stay as long as needed, which would be the standard of a human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach as outlined in the WAVE Away From Violence Manual (WAVE, 2004, p. 22). This report is available in 16 languages to download from the WAVE website <http://www.wave-network.org/content/wave-publications>. Failure to implement this service recommendation is due to restrictions set by State funding of shelters. Restrictions on the right to stay are especially problematic if there are no housing programmes guaranteeing permanent or even temporary housing for women leaving shelter. The right of women victims of violence and their children, if any, to seek safe accommodation in a woman's shelter is part of her fundamental human right to live a life free from violence, as defined in Article 4 of the Istanbul Convention and other human rights conventions. If a woman is exposed to the same situation of violence after her stay in shelter, the State and society have failed to guarantee her right to live free from violence.



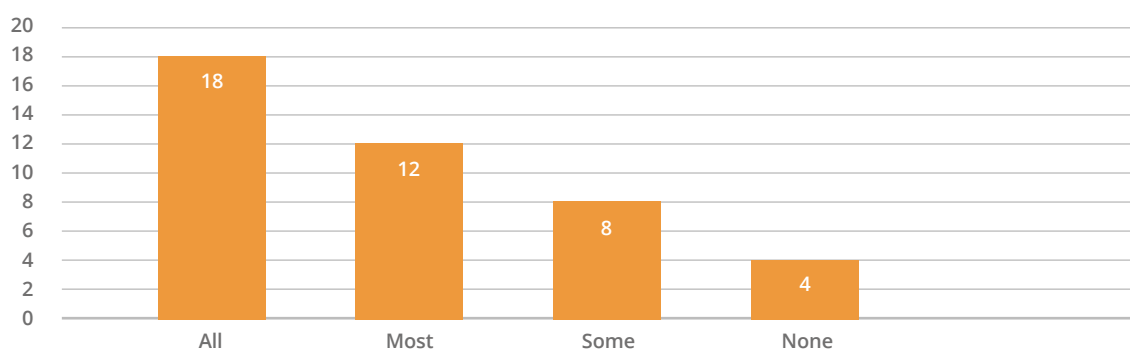
## Non-residential Support, Counselling and Advice

Women's shelters in many countries, not only provide safe accommodation but also provide a wide range of services to women in shelter, women who have already left the shelter as well as to women coming for advice. Many have drop-in advice centres and provide telephone counselling to women who may not be in need of accommodation in a shelter. For example, women who are in paid employment may be able to afford accommodation for themselves and their children without recourse to shelter accommodation. Similarly, some women may have family and friends who are able to accommodate them and their children and also not need to live in a shelter. It should be remembered, however, that some women may require shelter irrespective of their ability to pay for alternative accommodation because their abusive husband or partner has threatened to kill them or may have already attempted to kill them and/or their children, if any. In addition, women who have not made the decision to leave a violent partner often require information and support.

Very often, women call on women's shelter providers for legal and practical advice because there are no other specialist services for women survivors of violence available in their vicinity to support them. Women seek support from non-residential support, counselling and advice centres provided by women's shelters on a range of problems, such as; leaving a violent partner; divorce proceedings; securing one's livelihood; seeking employment and housing and difficulties relating to child custody and visitation rights of abusive fathers among others.

In addition, some shelters have staff dedicated to visiting and supporting women after their stay in a shelter, which is also an important part of comprehensive and holistic quality services women's shelters need to offer (WAVE, 2004, p. 35).

**FIGURE 4 – Shelters able to Provide Counselling and Support Services for Non-Residents**



As the graphic above demonstrates, in total 42 countries provided a response to the question of non-residential support and 30 countries reported that all or most women's shelters were able to provide this kind of support to non-residents. Eight countries (Czech Republic, Latvia, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia) reported that only some shelters were able to provide this support and only four countries (Greece, Hungary, Serbia and Turkey) reported that non-residents could not be provided with any service.

## "New" Shelters Opened 2014–2015

21 countries opened new shelters in 2014–2015 and in countries, such as Italy, Latvia, Romania, Russia and Georgia this represents a very significant increase in provision. It has to be noted, however, that not all these facilities are based on a gendered understanding of domestic violence and focus on the human rights and safety of the victim as required by Article 18 of the Istanbul Convention. Especially in the area of women's shelters, women-specific services are very important for the empowerment of survivors. Thus, the increasing demands for women's shelters to accommodate male victims is problematic. Some-

times funders believe that it would be discriminatory not to serve men. However, Article 4 of the Istanbul Convention clearly states that “special measures that are necessary to prevent and protect women from gender-based violence shall not be considered discrimination” (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 7).

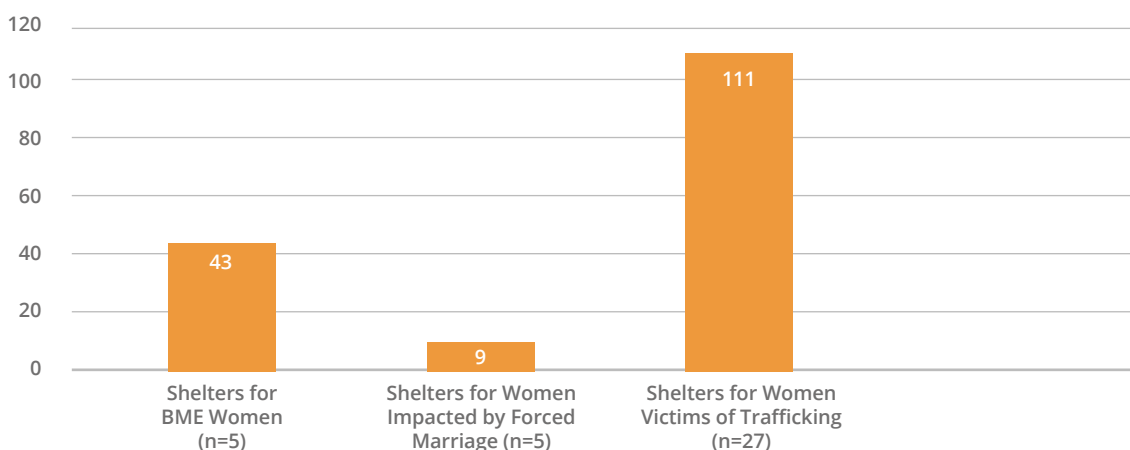
## Specialist Services for Black and Minority Ethnic Women

Only five countries reported having shelters specifically for black and ethnic minority women. UK has the largest provision with 29 shelters for this group, Bulgaria provided nine, Italy three and Finland and Austria one each, although the shelter in Austria is specifically for black and ethnic minority women seeking asylum.

Five countries provide shelters specifically for women who were impacted by forced marriage. Georgia provides five shelters for this group, and Austria, Italy, Switzerland and UK each one shelter.

27 countries have at least one shelter for women who had been trafficked, although in Bulgaria, Croatia and Montenegro this provision was not only available to women. In addition, Norway accommodated women who had been trafficked in their ample women's shelter places. Lithuania, which has no shelter for women experiencing domestic violence, has five shelters for women who have been trafficked. Spain reported having 35 shelters for trafficked women, Italy 12 and Bulgaria 14 which are also open to women. The remaining 20 countries have between one and seven shelters for women who are trafficked.

**FIGURE 5 – Shelters for Specific Groups of Survivors**



This graphic demonstrates that five countries reported having a total of 43 shelters for black and minority ethnic women. The same number of countries reported having a total of nine shelters specifically for women who are affected by forced marriage. As described in more detail above, 27 countries reported having a total of 111 shelters for women victims of trafficking.

## Diversity and Non-discrimination

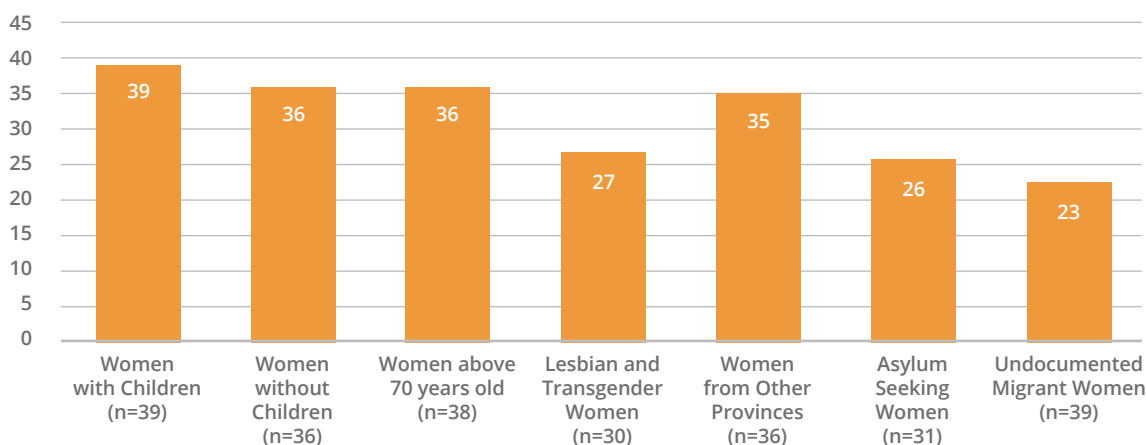
All countries responding said that they provide shelter to women without and with children, although some shelters do have an age limit for children, particularly boys. 27 countries provided detailed information on the age limit for boys and this was between 12 and 18 years of age. Only some shelters in Ukraine have a maximum age limit of seven years, over which boys will not be accommodated. Only nine countries gave a response to the question about age limit for girls, of these six have an age limit between 16 and 18 years. Ukraine and Montenegro have age limits of 13 and 12 years respectively, and one of the three shelters in Armenia only accept pregnant women or women with children under three years of age. An age limit for children and, in particular, the commonplace age limit on boys is a cause for concern. Whilst it is understandable that living together in often limited space may make such regulations necessary, it is nonetheless problematic to separate boys from their family. Women's shelters should therefore receive enough State funding to make it possible for women and their juvenile children to stay together by, for example, having separate living units. Boys being violent should be dealt with by being barred from the women's shelter as is the case for anyone being violent.

Spain and Ukraine were alone in saying they did not accommodate women over 70 years of age.

Lesbian and transgender women would not be accommodated in shelters in the Czech Republic, Georgia and Russia and, in addition, Austria and Denmark are unsure if all shelters would accept transgender women.

Ukraine was alone in reporting that no shelters would accept women from other provinces, however it is known in practice that this restriction exists in other countries. It is often related to funding as local government support for shelters is often restricted to funding local residents. Latvia was alone among the EU Member States in reporting that no women's shelters would accept women from other EU countries. Russia was alone in reporting that no shelters would take women from ethnic minorities and was joined only by Serbia in reporting that no shelters would accept migrant women, but again in practice this problem is not restricted to these countries. Undocumented migrant women cannot be accommodated in any women's shelters in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Liechtenstein and Ukraine. Cyprus, Hungary, Russia and Serbia reported that women seeking asylum would not be accommodated in any shelters. Liechtenstein would only take women who were documented as asylum seekers and Slovenia reported that only 11 of the shelters run by NGOs (out of a total of 16 shelters) would be able to take women who were undocumented asylum seekers.

The main problem of accommodating undocumented migrant women is that in many countries the State does not provide funding which makes it difficult for women's shelters to accommodate them because they need to have other funding sources. It should be noted that this applies to documented migrant women who have not independently earned the right to state support in the country of residence. This applies even to women moving within EU member states. It appears that only shelters in Iceland, Finland and Belgium can cover the costs of accommodating such women. Czech Republic and UK reported that accommodating such women is problematic, although it is maybe not impossible in all cases. It can be that some shelters have access to a funding source which would cover these costs, such as a special foundation which support their work. It is clear that access to public funds for undocumented migrant women is difficult. It should be pointed out here, that it is the right of every woman and her children, if any, to live free from violence regardless of their migrant or refugee status. This implies that they should receive shelter and support in a situation of domestic violence, as stated in Article 4 of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 7). The discriminatory practice of not funding places for undocumented migrant women and their children, if any, which results in them not being admitted to women's shelters needs to be challenged. The same is true for documented migrant women who have not independently earned the right to state support in their country of residence. In particular, within EU member states, this should be addressed as a limitation on the free movement of labour.

**FIGURE 6 – Number of Countries where Shelters Provide Access to Specific Groups**

The graphic above indicates that out of the total number of countries who provided answers to this question (n) the number which provided access to specific groups. For example, all of the 39 countries which responded to the question of women with children, all said that this group were able to access shelters. The lowest level of access to shelters was demonstrated in the case of undocumented migrant women, here 33 countries responded but only 23 reported that such women could access shelters in their country.

### Access for Women with Disabilities

For some shelters, there are challenges involved in accommodating women with particular needs, although indications are that shelters have made progress on the issue of accommodating women with disabilities. Naturally, disability is a complex issue which encompasses many issues and cannot be reduced to wheelchair accessibility. Nevertheless, out of 35 countries which provided data, only five said that they were not able to accommodate women with disabilities. Two of the countries unable to accommodate women with disabilities had only one shelter each (Cyprus and Liechtenstein) and Ukraine which has two. In addition, two countries with more resources, Georgia which has eight shelters and Switzerland, which has 18 also reported no ability to accommodate women with disabilities.

The overall picture from the data available demonstrates that individual shelters are thinking about services for women with disabilities and considering how these can be improved. In Germany, about half of shelters are accessible for women with disabilities. In engaging with the subject and developing an awareness of issues around disability services can be improved in the long term for women who may not just be experiencing reduced mobility as a physical disability. Denmark reported having specific services for residents with disability, for example, interpreters for hearing impaired residents.

### Housing Situation and Second Stage/Transitional Housing

A major factor in the length of stay women can and do have in shelters is the availability of accommodation for women and their children leaving shelters. In assessing the general housing situation for women and children seeking permanent accommodation, 16 countries reported that it was possible for women and children to find affordable housing after leaving a shelter and 12 reported that this is not possible.

Nine countries reported having a public housing programme, but 22 reported not having such programmes in their countries. A fairly new development are municipalities committing to giving women living in shelters priority points for social housing, as is the case in the Netherlands and Austria. This is also the case in Belgium although waiting times for social housing can still be several years. There needs to be

an expansion of such initiatives as affordable permanent housing solutions for women and their children, if any, leaving shelters is essential to ensure that women are not forced into living with abusive men.

## **Women's Shelters Providing Access to Specific Groups**

Second stage/transitional housing for women leaving shelters is obviously not as good as a permanent housing solution, it does, however, at least provide women with time to adjust after leaving shelter. 15 countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and UK) did report that at least some shelters were able to offer second stage/transitional housing to some residents. In addition, Denmark reported that a pilot project is running which addressed this issue. Italy reported that although the service is limited, some shelters are able to refer some women to transitional accommodation, which provided social support and was available at a very low rent for up to one year. In Spain, women and their children can move to mentored accommodation for up to 18 months after leaving shelters. In Lithuania, social housing is provided to women leaving shelters as temporary accommodation and this is the case to a limited extent also in Portugal. 23 countries are not able to provide second stage/transitional accommodation to women and their children following a stay in shelter.

## **Costs of Living in Shelters**

It was clear from the analysis of the data provided that shelters were using different definitions of whether or not their service was free of charge, for example, one country defined the shelters as not free of charge because women had to provide their own food, other shelters assumed that women would be self-sufficient. It was also clear that some countries responded to the question of whether charges were levied for women in shelters in terms of particular groups of women, for example, their own nationals.

22 countries reported that all shelters were free of charge but provided no additional information. Three countries provided no data for this question. The remaining 22 countries presented more detailed information which gave a varied picture.

Three countries were able to say that all shelters were free of charge with no exceptions (Cyprus, Finland and Greece). It has to be noted however that Cyprus does not provide women seeking asylum access to shelters and does not admit undocumented migrant women. Switzerland reported that the State covers the costs of accommodation for all women for the first three weeks. 13 countries reported that their shelters are free of charge but that women with an income (either in work or in receipt of State support) are required to make a contribution to their accommodation costs (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Serbia, Slovenia, UK). In Romania, it is a general practice for clients who can afford it to be requested to pay a contribution to the costs of food and utilities.

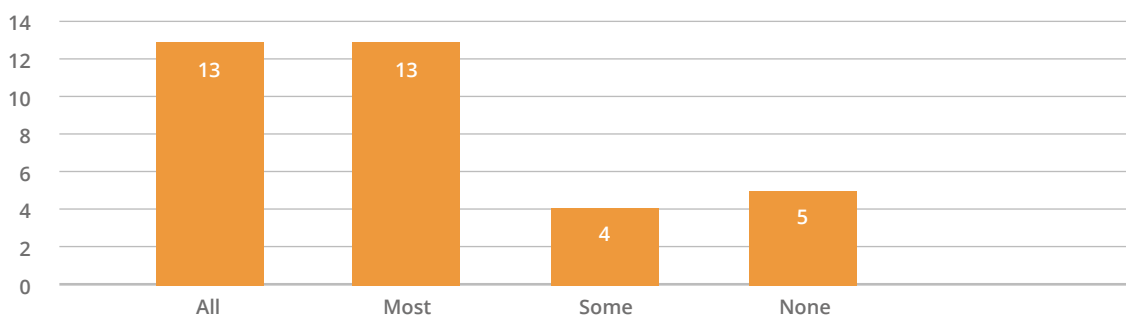
Denmark reported that shelters are free but women have to be self-sufficient, in that they have to run their own households and, for example, pay for their own groceries.

The question of what happened to women who are not able to pay, for example, who had no income and no recourse to State support, is varied. Belgium reported that such women (for example, undocumented women) are not required to pay towards their costs. Similarly, in Iceland women who cannot pay do not have to and children are accommodated free of charge. Liechtenstein also provides accommodation rent-free to women who have little or no income, although they do not accept women from other EU countries or undocumented women into their shelter. Czech Republic and UK reported that accommodating women who have no income is problematic. As was pointed out earlier, in the section on right to stay in shelter, not accommodating women in need contravenes Article 4 of the Istanbul Convention.

## Shelters with 24/7 Access

Of 37 countries which provided data on this question, 36 reported that only some of their shelters are able to provide 24/7 access. Slovenia reported that no shelters are able to provide this service. Of more significance were the number of shelters which had direct access.

**FIGURE 7 – Proportion of Shelters with Direct Access**



As the diagram above demonstrates, five countries reported that none of their shelters have direct access (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cyprus, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey). The following list of obstacles to immediate access relate not only to those shelters which did not provide direct access, but also to those which did.

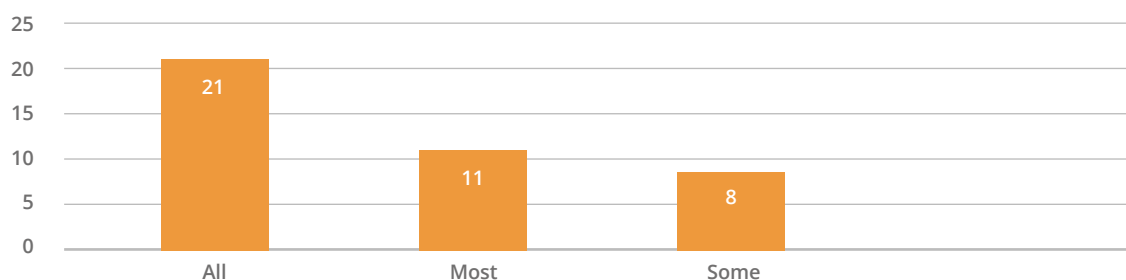
The main obstacle to immediate access to shelters by women fleeing domestic violence is, as 13 countries reported, the requirement that State authorities approve a placement in shelter and/or payment of the shelter space before women could be admitted. Two countries (Hungary and Montenegro) reported that access to shelters is through a helpline one of which is not open 24/7 and another which is staffed partly by men who assess if women are in immediate danger before approving access.

Five countries reported a lack of resources in shelters, either places or staff, as being an obstacle. UK and Iceland mentioned that not having a shelter nearby was an obstacle for some women accessing shelters immediately and that the health or complex needs of women fleeing domestic violence makes immediate access problematic. Finally, UK highlighted the fact that a failure in response at point of contact is often an obstacle to women accessing immediate shelter which indicates a training need, for example, with front-line staff coming into contact with abused women, such as in health services.

## Security Precautions

The following diagram shows the number of shelters providing safety precautions.

**FIGURE 8 – Proportion of Shelters with Safety Precautions (n=40)**



As can be seen in the graphic above, of the 40 countries which responded to this question, all said that at least some of their shelters had safety precautions. More than half the countries responding said that all their shelters had safety precautions.

## **Data on Women not Accommodated (Demand for Places)**

Only two countries (Albania and Iceland) report never having to turn away women even although they fall short of the Istanbul Convention standards on places available. It attempting to account for this it should be borne in mind that Iceland has a population of less than one third of a million people and may be able to use other social service provision, particularly outside the capital where the shelter is located. They may also be able to fall back on alternative less formal solutions than is common practice in larger countries. Albania meets almost 70% of the Istanbul Convention minimum standard on accommodation and it is not clear why the level of demand appears to be lower.

Only seven countries were able to put a figure on the number of women they turned away, two (Czech Republic and Denmark) reported having to turn away more women than they accommodated, Switzerland and UK reported having to turn away almost as many women as they accommodated and Italy and Bulgaria reported turning away half as many women as they accommodated and Austria one quarter. It should be borne in mind that number of places available is only one factor impacting on the number of women who are not able to be accommodated. A lower level of demand on shelter places can also be due to difficulties with accessing shelters, the quality of service provision and resources for women following a stay in shelters. Access to shelters through a helpline which is also staffed by men or a social work office which is only open during the day may reduce demand. Similarly, restricting access only to women in acute danger of violence, which is for example the case in Hungary, will reduce 'demand'. Shelter staff who do not have a gender-specific analysis of the problem of domestic violence and who have been known to blame victims may also deter women seeking accommodation as will restrictions such as only accommodating women with small children. Furthermore, if women can only stay in the shelter for a very limited period and the shortage of affordable housing is so acute that many have no alternative but to return home such factors will depress the demand for shelter space. Therefore, the number of women who have to be turned away from shelters is only one measure of the potential demand for shelter space.

## **Reasons Women Cannot be Accommodated**

The most common reason given that women cannot be accommodated is the lack of available space at the time required.

Of concern is the fact that service provision for women with mental health issues appears to be an intransigent problem for women's shelters. Furthermore, women with drug and alcohol dependencies can often not be accommodated in shelters. Ten countries provided comments on reasons for not being able to accommodate women and of these eight referred to mental health and addiction problems. This indicates a need for specialist services to be developed for these women which has a gender-specific analysis of both their experience of violence and their mental health and addiction problems. At the moment, they are often not able to accommodate in shelters which mostly require women to have a degree of self-sufficiency and be able, with the support of shelter staff, to help themselves. Their needs in terms of the gender-based violence they have experienced are not adequately met by services for mental health and drug and alcohol dependencies which often lack a gender-specific analysis of gender based violence. Obviously this problem requires that specialist services be developed and be adequately resourced.

An additional problem is the provision of services for women who have been convicted of violent crimes, women who have already been evicted from a shelter and those who pose a threat to other residents. It is understandable that shelters are unable to offer such women accommodation, it is however unclear to what extent shelter providers are able to provide such women with non-residential forms of ongoing help and support.



## Recommendations for Women's Shelters

- ▶ As can be seen by the first figure in this chapter, there is an urgent need to address the fact that in European countries outside of the EU and in the countries which joined the EU since 2000, only one fifth of the minimum standard of shelter provision is available.
- ▶ Growth of good standard shelters important, some countries attempt to meet the Istanbul Convention minimum standard on places available to women by redefining existing services as women's shelters without considering the requirement for a gender sensitive and human rights approach which ensures a better quality of service.
- ▶ Undocumented women are particularly vulnerable and, at present, are on the whole not catered for at all. There is a need to expand financing for women's shelters to allow them to accommodate women and their children who are experiencing domestic violence and who are unable to pay for their accommodation and have no recourse to State support. Governments at national, regional and local level are urged to remove barriers for undocumented women to access women's shelters. It should be borne in mind that this also impacts on documented migrant women who have not independently earned the right to state support in their country of residence, even if they are moving from one EU member state to another.
- ▶ Many shelters are considering the needs of women and children with disability and making progress on expanding services for this group, which is important as a representative study of women with disabilities in Germany showed they were twice as likely to experience physical and three times as likely to experience sexual violence and women without a disability and deaf women are particularly vulnerable (BMFSFJ; 2014). It is important in doing so, not only to consider the needs of women with mobility problems, but also sight and hearing impaired residents. As women with disabilities experience more violence than women without disabilities, it is important that shelters receive adequate government funding to expand their shelter service provision accordingly.
- ▶ Women's shelters need to offer a 24/7 service and have easy access for women i.e. women should be able to refer themselves. This is essential to ensure the safety of women and their children, if any, fleeing violence.
- ▶ Women's shelters need adequate resources to be able to accommodate and support women with mental health problems or women with drug or alcohol dependencies, which can often be a consequence of the traumatic experience of violence. Shelters need more and specifically trained staff to adequately help women who suffer from these problems.
- ▶ There is a need for shelter providers to address the needs of women who cannot be accommodated because they have a history of violence or have been excluded from the same or another shelter. It is unclear to what extent such women are able to be offered non-residential counselling support.
- ▶ Some women who wish to get away from violent partners may require legal advice, support and counselling to achieve without moving into a shelter. This service is very often also provided by women's shelters, many of whom run a separate drop in, advice centre or at least a telephone counselling service. These services need to be supported and expanded, especially in places where there are no women's centres offering support. They provide a cost effective way of assisting women experiencing violence in their home and also support those women who cannot be accommodated in shelters. Financing such services which exist and building capacity in countries which cannot provide such a service is important.

## 6. WOMEN'S CENTRES

### Introduction

For detailed information on this section, please see tables 20 and 21 on pages 95 and 96.

This section on women's centres is included in this year's WAVE Report for the first time. The term 'women's centre' includes all women's services providing non-residential specialist support such as information, advice, advocacy counselling, practical support, court accompaniment, pro-active support, outreach services, and so on. It includes women's crisis or counselling centres serving women survivors of violence, rape crisis centres, pro-active intervention centres, regional domestic violence centres and similar services serving only or predominantly women. This means that some centres, in addition to supporting women, may also support children, both girls and boys, who are victims of domestic and sexual violence. Some centres - for example, those supporting victims of sexual violence - may also support male victims. They belong to the range of specialist women's support services as defined in the Istanbul Convention Article 22 (Council of Europe, 2012 p. 13) and conceptualise violence against women as gender-based violence which is rooted in inequality between women and men.

As was the case with women's shelters, women's centres have their historical roots in the women's movement which developed in Western Europe and the USA at the end of the 1960s. Women's consciousness raising groups developed as part of a political movement creating women only spaces for political and cultural activism and solidarity. Not only did these groups support victims, it also created a space in which women were able to speak openly about their experiences of violence and this resulted in radical changes in the perception and popular definitions of violence in women's lives. In contrast to men's definitions of violence, which had been dominant up to that point, women were identifying the home and the private space of intimate relationships as being the main location of their experience of violence. The women's movement brought this previously private issue into the public and political sphere and still today the main contrast in men's and women's experiences of violence is that women experience most violence at home and men experience most violence in public spaces. Both men and women experience violence overwhelmingly from men (Müller, Schröttle et al., 2005; Jungnitz et al., 2004).

Women's shelters developed to deal with the fact that for most women, physical, psychological and sexual violence perpetrated by their husbands or partners was the most pressing problem. At the same time, rape crisis centres developed to provide services for the increasing number of women who were beginning to be able to speak out about sexual violence in general. In time, these rape crisis centres found themselves dealing with more and more women who were reporting having experienced sexual violence as children within and outside the family. As a result of this sexual violence against children has been firmly brought into the public domain. The women's movement was crucial to these developments, their slogan "the personal is political" enabled women to overcome their individual shame which had kept them silenced. Challenging male violence became a political focus, which has resulted in that which was previously seen as private relationship issues to be recognised as a major human rights violation, which has played a significant role in the oppression of women worldwide.

In former communist countries, women's centres started to be opened in the beginning of the 1990s. The Autonomous Women's Centre Belgrade was one of the first initiatives against gender-based violence of the emerging women's movement in Eastern Europe. In contrast to the women's movement in the West, which was able to organize and gain support from the 1960s onwards, feminists in the east were facing extremely difficult situations in societies in transition from totalitarian regimes to emerging democratic, capitalist societies with no tradition of civil society organizations and little support for the new women's movement (WAVE, 2015, p. 40 & 43). A continuing and concerning consequence of these difficulties can be seen in the small numbers of women's shelters in "new" EU countries (see chapter 2). Nevertheless, spirited women everywhere in Eastern Europe were organizing and setting up women's support services often in extremely difficult environments with little more than a telephone and not

even a working space. These women's organizations were often planning to open women's shelters, but many failed to succeed due to lack of government support. Some women's shelters, which did open, for example, in Russia and in the Ukraine had to be closed again. During the WAVE 2008 annual conference in Košice, Slovakia a local long standing WAVE Member organization, Fenestra, identified the establishment of a women's shelter as one of its main goals. Eight years later, despite all their efforts, they have not managed to achieve this goal.

Establishing women's centres in Eastern Europe has sometimes proven to be easier than establishing women's shelters, and women in the east of Europe are currently continuing their important work of fighting for women's rights and combating gender-based violence.

The courage of individual women to speak out about experiences of violence and the efforts of the women's movement to create safe spaces for women to do this has developed into an ever-expanding provision of specialist services for women, girls and boys. The efforts have also highlighted the problem of violence against the LGBT community which also challenges patriarchal stereotypes. This section hopes to make visible the branch of these support services which relate to women and girls.

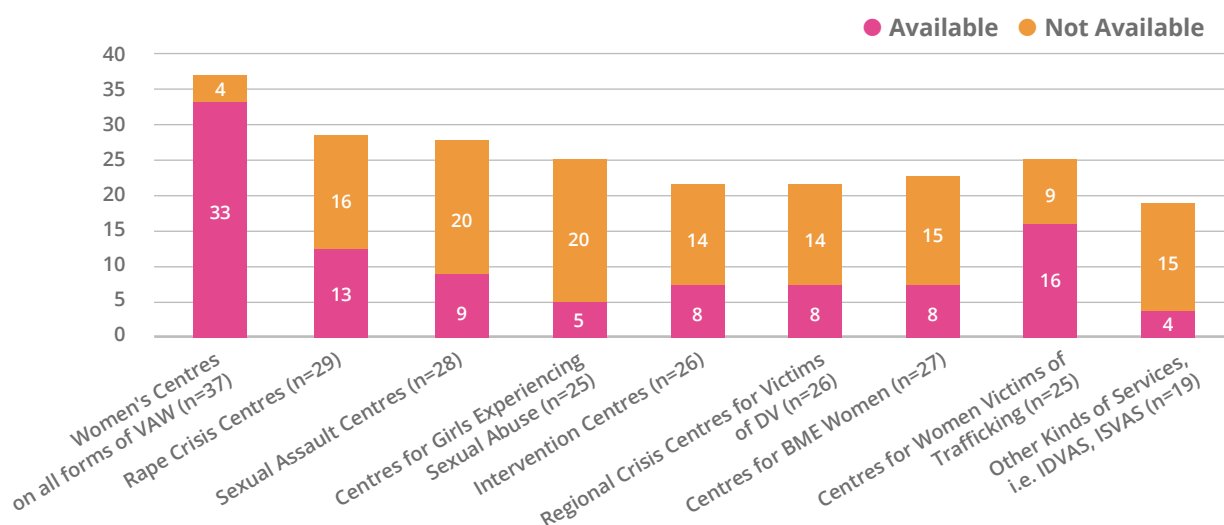
## Aims of this Section

The intention of the questions in this section was to get an impression of the range and scope of non-residential services offered to women and girls affected by gender-based violence in all 46 countries.

In categorising different women's support services, the authors could draw on more than twenty years of experience of WAVE networking in Europe, following developments and pushing for change. Nevertheless, the attempt to find a common categorisation of specialist services is a challenge as different traditions of social support, particularly for women as mothers, and their children, has resulted in different structures of provision. How specialist services may or may not have developed in response to the growing demands of the women's movement for a gender specific analysis of the problem and a human rights approach to gender-based violence depends on a variety of social, economic and political factors specific to each country, which are beyond the scope of this report. In this section, however, this report does attempt to offer an account of how women's non-governmental organisations have grown up within, outside and between such structures to develop a gender-specific and empowering human rights based support for women.

For ease of understanding, the centres have been categorised and figures are provided on each of the categorised services, but it should be remembered that this can only give a partial impression of the service provision landscape in each country.

**FIGURE 9 – Different Types of Women's Centres Available in Europe**



This table gives information on the existence of different non-residential support services for women who have experienced violence in Europe. As can be seen, the most common form of support is women's centres on all forms of violence against women, 33 countries said that they had such centres, four said that such centres did not exist in their country and nine countries gave no information on this question. The second most common kind of support were centres for women who had been trafficked, 16 out of the 25 countries who responded said they had such centres. Rape crisis centres were the third most widely spread service.

## Range Provided by Women's Centres

The first remark that needs to be made in this section, is that in providing the numbers of centres in each country the great differences in size of countries, geographically and in population terms, are not reflected and must be borne in mind when interpreting the data. As can be seen in Table 13 at the end of this report, in order to take account of these discrepancies we have divided the total number of centres by population for each country. This gives only a rough guide as it does not take into consideration the different needs of women who have experienced gender violence and their access to the services they require, but it does acknowledge, for example that although both Croatia and Russia have a total of 20 non-residential specialist support services for women, Russia is 35 times larger than Croatia and so the service provision for women is very different in the two countries.

Only one country provided no information under this section. Of the remaining 45 countries surveyed, Lithuania alone does not have a women's shelter; they do, however, have 15 intervention centres supporting women who have experienced domestic violence. Azerbaijan, Belarus and Estonia have shelters but reported having no further women's centres. Four countries reported having only one women's centre in addition to the women's shelters – these were Cyprus, Hungary, Malta and Poland. Out of the countries reporting more than one type of service for women affected by gender-based violence, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria Georgia, Italy, Kosovo, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia and Ukraine provided one other service in addition to shelters. In Bulgaria, for example, these were regional centres for women who had experienced domestic violence. Bulgaria did not report any services for women who have experienced sexual violence, although from the Council of Europe Report 2014 it is clear that they do have staff specifically trained to deal with sexual violence presumably within their regional centres for women who had experienced domestic violence. Women who have experi-

enced sexual violence outwith a relationship are helped by regional domestic violence centres. Russia, with a population of over 142 million people, has 19 regional centres for women who have experienced violence and one sexual assault centre.

All other countries had a broader range of services, as will be seen later.

## Minimum Standards of Service Provision

As can be seen in the appendix on WAVE Standards, WAVE has adopted the recommendation of the Final Activity Report of the Task Force to Combat Violence against Women, that, as a minimum level of service provision, one women's counselling centre for every 50,000 women should be available to intervene in a crisis and provide long-term support to women victims of all forms of violence (Council of Europe, 2008 p. 51). The following table employs this 1:50,000 indicator and aims to provide some information on the geographical spread of services in each country and on the gap between the size of population relying on services and this minimum standard. Caution must, however, be exercised in using these tables and they provide only an indication of base line data, on which WAVE aims to improve in future.

**TABLE 5 – Level of Provision of Women's Centres and Geographical Distribution**

	No. of Women's Centres	Total Population	Indicator (Population/ Women's Centres)
<b>Women's Centres in all provinces</b>			
Luxembourg	13	549,680	42,283
Spain	869	46,439,864	53,441
United Kingdom	862	64,308,261	74,517
Moldova	26	3,559,497	136,904
Kosovo	10	1,794,180	179,418
Lithuania	16	2,943,472	183,967
Norway	23	5,107,970	222,086
Armenia	13	3,010,598	231,584
Serbia	28	7,146,759	255,241
Switzerland	27	8,139,631	301,468
Netherlands	44	16,829,289	382,484
Belgium	25	11,203,992	448,160
Czech Republic	23	10,538,300	458,187
Bosnia & Herzegovina	8	3,791,662	473,958
Portugal	7	10,347,822	1,478,260
Hungary	1	9,877,365	9,877,365
<b>Women's Centres in most provinces</b>			
Germany	420	80,767,463	192,303
Italy	140	60,782,668	434,162
<b>Women's Centres in major cities</b>			
Latvia	21	2,001,468	95,308
Greece	57	10,816,286	189,759
Austria	32	8,506,889	265,840
Slovenia	7	2,061,085	294,441
Albania	6	2,895,947	482,658
Bulgaria	14	7,245,677	517,548
Georgia	6	4,497,617	749,602
Cyprus	1	858,000	858,000
Turkey	59	76,667,864	1,299,455
<b>Women's Centres in capital city only</b>			
Liechtenstein	5	37,129	7,426
Iceland	6	329,100	54,850
Montenegro	3	621,521	207,174
Malta	1	425,284	425,284
Macedonia	3	2,022,547	674,182
Poland <sup>5</sup>	35	38,017,856	1,086,224
Ukraine	3	42,701,791	14,233,930
<b>No information on distribution of centres</b>			
Ireland <sup>6</sup>	23	4,605,501	200,239
Croatia	20	4,246,809	212,340
Finland	20	5,451,270	272,563
Denmark	10	5,627,235	562,723
Romania	26	19,947,311	767,204
Slovakia	5	5,415,949	1,083,190
Russia	20	142,856,536	7,142,827
Azerbaijan	0	9,356,483	0
Belarus	0	9,463,840	0
Estonia	0	1,315,819	0

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.P.70.<sup>6</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, P.63, published in 2015.

This table demonstrates that only the very small countries of Liechtenstein and Luxembourg meet the minimum standard of 1 women's centre per 50,000 population and Iceland, another country with a small population, comes close. The table is provided here in order to give an impression of how much room for improvement there is in the provision of even a minimum level of service for women who have experienced gender based violence<sup>7</sup>.

Spain should be singled out here for a special mention. The existence of the 'Organic Law 1/2004 of 28 December on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence', including the right to integrated social assistance (Article 19), has resulted in the very broad provision of women's centres throughout the country. Thus Spain comes closest of all the larger European countries to meeting the minimum standard of service provision.

A second minimum standard on provision of services for women who have experienced sexual violence, which WAVE has adopted (see appendix on WAVE Standards at the end of this report) is again from the Final Activity Report referred to above (Council of Europe, 2008 p. 51). This states that one rape crisis centre should be provided per 200,000 population. As referred to above, definition of terms is work in progress and in the following table data collected on rape crisis centres, sexual assault centres and centres for girls experiencing sexual abuse has been amalgamated. It should be noted that centres for girls experiencing sexual abuse also includes centres which counsel women who were sexually abused as girls. One problem which we note in the table is that some countries have included hospital based (and health service run) sexual assault referral teams and others (notably Malta) have not. This is a flaw in the data which we acknowledge and are committed to address in the future. Therefore, once again extreme caution is advised in interpreting the information in this table, which is presented in order to provide base line data indicating the level of service and scope for improvement in each country.

<sup>7</sup> No data was available on this question from France and Sweden.



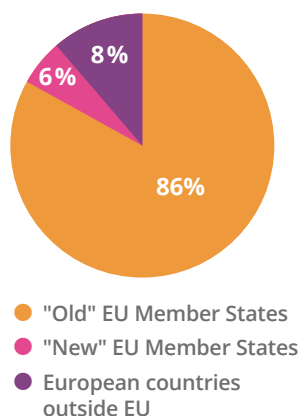
**TABLE 6 – Level of Provision of Sexual Assault Support Services**

Countries <sup>8</sup>	Total Population	Total number of specialist services for sexual assault	Indicator (population/sexual assault centre)
Iceland	329,100	5	65,820
Ireland <sup>9</sup>	4,605,501	23	200,239
Norway	5,107,970	22	232,180
Germany	80,767,463	250	323,070
United Kingdom	64,308,261	144	446,585
Denmark	5,627,235	7	803,891
Austria	8,506,889	9	945,210
Switzerland	8,139,631	6	1,356,605
Moldova	3,559,497	2	1,779,749
Spain	46,439,864	26	1,786,149
Netherlands	16,829,289	8	2,103,661
Croatia	4,246,809	2	2,123,405
Armenia	3,010,598	1	3,010,598
Romania	19,947,311	5	3,989,462
Finland	5,451,270	1	5,451,270
Serbia	7,146,759	1	7,146,759
Hungary	9,877,365	1	9,877,365
Belgium	11,203,992	1	11,203,992
Russia	142,856,536	1	142,856,536
Belarus	9,463,840	0	0
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3,791,662	0	0
Cyprus	858,000	0	0
Czech Republic	10,538,300	0	0
Greece	10,816,286	0	0
Italy	60,782,668	0	0
Kosovo	1,794,180	0	0
Latvia	2,001,468	0	0
Liechtenstein	37,129	0	0
Lithuania	2,943,472	0	0
Macedonia	2,022,547	0	0
Malta	425,284	0	0
Montenegro	621,521	0	0
Turkey	76,667,864	0	0
Ukraine	42,701,791	0	0
<b>Total Europe</b>	<b>849,014,706</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>1,648,572</b>

As can be seen from this table, only Iceland meets the minimum standard of service provision for women who have experienced sexual violence and Ireland and Norway, both countries with relatively small populations come close. Extreme caution should be exercised in interpreting the data in this table, due to unreliability of the data as a result of difficulties in the definition of terminology.

<sup>8</sup> No data was available on this question from Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Georgia, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden.

<sup>9</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, P.63, published in 2015.



**FIGURE 10 – Women's Centres Providing Non-Residential Services**

The graphic on the left indicates the distribution of all women's centres within Europe. As can be seen, most of the services are concentrated in the 15 countries which were members of the EU before 2000 (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and UK). Only 8% of services are in the 18 European countries outside the EU (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Kosovo, Lichtenstein, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Russia, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine) and of greatest concern is the fact that only 6% of services are available in the 13 European countries which joined the EU after 2000 (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia)

The centres reported in this section included a wide variety of services, for example, Finland has a network of 17 mother and child centres which provide support to women with children facing a variety of difficulties, including gender-based violence. Iceland reported two centres the Women's Counselling Centre, which provides legal and social work counselling for women and "Stigamot", which is more than just a service for sexual violence and includes support services for women affected by sexual harassment, molestation and pornography exploitation.

Spain has 717 centres throughout the country offering support and advice to women, all of these are funded by the State, some are run by the State and some by women's NGOs. Similarly, Italy has 140 centres, 113 of which are run by NGOs, 19 by the State and eight by the Church.

Greece and Turkey also have a large number of women's centres, 56 and 55 respectively, run by women's and other NGOs as well as the State, providing support to women throughout the country. It should be pointed out, however, that Turkey has a population seven times the size of Greece's population and, therefore, despite having the same number of centres, the service provided to women differs hugely. The Netherlands also has a network of 35 organisations providing support and advice to women affected by violence throughout the country. Belgium has a network of 15 counselling centres, which offer general support. They offer specialist support for survivors of domestic violence and can be accessed by women survivors, however, they do not provide gender specific services. France also has women's centres run by the State or women's and other NGOs but it was not possible to quantify the number.

Other countries which have women's centres run by women's NGOs are Albania (5 centres), Armenia (2), Austria (6), Bosnia & Herzegovina (8), Georgia (6), Kosovo (10), Liechtenstein (2), Macedonia (1), Moldova (16), Montenegro (1), Romania (5), Serbia (22), Slovakia (5), Switzerland (19) and UK (22).

Cyprus (1), Latvia (20), Luxembourg (13), Slovenia (6) and Ukraine (3) have women's centres run by the State or NGOs.

The following countries had women's centres but gave no information on who provided these services; Croatia (15 centres), Czech Republic (2), Denmark (3), Poland (1), Portugal (7) and Romania (21).

## Rape Crisis Centres

The countries without rape crisis centres were Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cyprus, Czech, Estonia, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. In addition, Greece, Italy and Malta reported that although there are no centres dealing specifically with rape, support to victims of rape is provided by the Domestic Violence Unit in Malta and other women's centres in Greece and Italy.

Five countries (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Hungary and Norway) reported having one rape crisis centre, three of these were run by women's NGOs. In Norway, this service is part of the network of the Norwegian Foundation against Sexual Abuse.

Germany reported having 183 rape crisis centres, UK 61, Spain 26, Ireland 16 Switzerland and Austria 6 each and Iceland had two which are based in hospitals. In Austria, Germany, and UK rape crisis centres were run by women's NGOs. In Switzerland, two of the centres are run by women's NGOs and two by hospitals. In Iceland and Spain the service is run by the State.

Only six countries provided information on sources of funding for rape crisis centres. In Spain the centres are funded by the State and in Norway the State contributed too as did the municipality. In Hungary the service is a helpline funded by foreign donors. Germany, UK and Switzerland rely on a mixture of funding from State, private donations and provincial support.

Only three countries were able to provide information on how many women were supported by rape crisis in their country. Scotland with 14 rape crisis centres offered support to 2,402 women in 2015. The only other countries which provided statistics on the number of women assisted were Norway and Hungary. Norway reported supporting 300 women in 2015 and Hungary approximately 150 callers which were not all female.

## **Sexual Assault Centres**

Armenia and Russia reported having one sexual assault centre each, both are run by women's NGOs and in Armenia this is funded by foreign donors. The Netherlands has eight sexual assault centres which covered most provinces, Croatia has two centres, Denmark and Ireland six each, while no further information was provided on these services.

Iceland has two sexual assault centres which are all run by women's NGOs. The UK reported 173 different sexual assault centres which were run by various organisations, some by women's NGOs. This number of 173 included, for example, 30 SARCs (sexual assault referral centres) in England and an undisclosed number of independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs). In addition, the Survivors Trust operates as an umbrella agency with 135 specialist services for survivors of sexual violence in the UK and Ireland, but these services are not exclusively for women. The Athena Service, for example, provides support to women and girls over 13 and men over 16 who have experienced gender-based violence and has a particular focus on the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. In Scotland there are four sexual violence services and Archway, a sexual assault referral centre which provides 24/7 forensic examinations, testing for infections, support and counselling to anyone over 12 years of age. In Northern Ireland, Nexus has a network of services providing counselling and support for survivors of sexual abuse across the country and the Rowan sexual assault referral centre is a State-run service working closely with the police, open 24/7 with a helpline providing information, counselling and advice, medical and forensic aid and follow up support to women, men and young people. The five sexual assault services in Romania are all run by NGOs, part of the network Breaking the Silence on Sexual Violence, providing information, psychological counseling and legal assistance.

## **Centres for Women Victims of Trafficking**

Of the 18 countries with services for women victims of trafficking, Spain reported having 126 centres for trafficked women run by the State in large cities, Moldova has seven run by the State and Germany reported having 40 run by women's NGOs. The following countries have centres for trafficked women run by women's NGOs; Austria (1), Macedonia (1), Montenegro (1), Serbia (2) and Turkey (3). Seven countries reported having centres run by other NGOs; Armenia (2), Belgium (2), Czech Republic (3), Greece (1), Latvia (1), Liechtenstein (1), Slovenia (1). Croatia has (3) centres and Italy has about 70 centres run by

NGOs, however, not all are gender sensitive or women only and, therefore, not included in our statistics. Neither provided information on who ran these centres. The UK provided information on the Gaia Centre operating in England, which provides services for all victims of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, stalking, prostitution, trafficking, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and so called honour-based violence and additionally supports clients who are transgender. The UK provided no further information on services for trafficked women.

## **Centres Specifically for Girls who have Experienced Sexual Violence**

Of the five countries which reported having centres specifically for girls, Germany reported having a large network of 67 centres, which also support women who were sexually abused as girls and are run by women's NGOs. Their funding comes from the State and private donations. In Norway, a network of 21 centres also provide support to girls who have experienced incest and sexual abuse within a service geared to children which does not promote a gendered analysis of sexual violence. Austria has three centres providing support specifically for girls, run by women's NGOs and financed by the State and private donations. Moldova and Serbia each have one centre providing services to girls, in Serbia this is run by a women's NGO. Italy and Malta both indicated that this need was served by their other services.

## **Women's Centres for Black, Migrant or Ethnic Minority Women**

Austria has seven such centres run by NGOs, Serbia three and the UK two, Turkey, Switzerland and Liechtenstein each had one centre and Italy had an unknown number run by women's NGOs. In Armenia, the one centre was run by the State, and in Finland there was no information provided on who ran the one centre available.

## **Intervention Centres with a Pro-active Approach**

Intervention centres serve as a model of proactive assistance to women who have called the police due to domestic violence and are well established in Austria (9 centres), Czech Republic (18 centres), Germany (130 centres) and Lithuania (16 centres). These are all run by women's NGOs. Intervention centres in Lithuania supported over 8,000 women in 2015. Finland, Liechtenstein, Macedonia and Moldova each have one centre, in Macedonia and Moldova these are run by a women's NGO and in Moldova 180 women were supported in 2014. In Austria, Lithuania and Macedonia these centres are supported by the State. In Germany State support is supplemented by private donations.

## **Regional Crisis Centres for Victims of Domestic Violence serving predominantly Women with a Gender-specific Approach**

This model was common in Poland (34 centres), Russia (19), Bulgaria (14), Armenia and Belgium (each with seven centres), Slovakia with five centres and Albania and Montenegro with one centre each. With the exception of Albania, these centres were run by women's NGOs, although in Belgium some centres were run by the State. In most countries these centres were based in major cities, in Belgium however, the centres served a rural population. In Bulgaria this work was partly financed by the State, in Armenia and Slovakia they relied on foreign donors.

## Types of Services

Of the 37 countries which responded to this section, all the non-residential services reported provided information and advice, counselling, advocacy and legal advice and empowering support. All provided practical support with the exception of Bosnia & Herzegovina. Only Greece and Iceland did not provide risk assessment and safety planning for women contacting them for support.

All but four countries (Denmark, Greece, Macedonia and Portugal) provide specialist support for children at their non-residential centres. Similarly, all but four countries (Albania, Macedonia, Portugal and Russia) provide multi-lingual support. 29 countries provide specialist support for black, minority ethnic, asylum-seeking women (exceptions were Albania, Macedonia, Portugal, Russia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic and Lithuania).

If women pressed charges against their abuser, almost all countries provide the service of accompanying women to court (except Croatia, Denmark, Greece and Spain). In Iceland the State provides legal representation if victims reported the crime. Where this was not available, support services provided this with the exception of Turkey, Spain, Slovenia, Portugal, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Germany, Finland and Croatia.

Denmark, Greece, Latvia and Liechtenstein do not conduct outreach. Floating/mobile support is reportedly not provided by Albania, Austria, Croatia, Greece, Latvia, Montenegro and Switzerland.

Social support, such as support in the areas of income, work, housing, childcare, healthcare or residency permits, is provided by all countries except Iceland where this was provided by State run social services. Most countries did provide this kind of support with the following specific exceptions: Russia and the Ukraine did not provide income support; Ukraine also did not provide work support; Macedonia and Serbia did not provide housing support; Greece, Macedonia and Ukraine did not provide childcare support; Turkey and Macedonia did not provide healthcare support; Greece, Macedonia and Serbia did not provide help with residency permits.

All but two countries (Latvia and Slovakia) co-ordinate multi-agency support for survivors. Survivors were supported to organise themselves in most countries with the exception of Albania, Croatia, Greece, Russia, and Ukraine. These countries also do not support participation of survivors in policy development and evaluation and are joined by Latvia, Macedonia, Romania, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey.

Iceland provided the additional information, describing that in the organization Stigamot, there are about 10– 15 self-help groups for women working in prostitution to deal with consequences, develop feminist work, conduct outreach, pressure authorities for legal improvement and policy development and make priority lists.

## Recommendations for Women's Centres

- ▶ Women's centres are, together with women's helplines and women's shelters, core agencies for the support of women victims of violence and their children, if any. They include services such as rape crises and sexual assault centres and they should exist in every region/province of a country to provide gender-sensitive, human rights based and empowering services to survivors (see WAVE standards for specialised women's support services annexed to this report).
- ▶ There is a need for continuing development of specialist women's support services addressing the issue of violence against particular groups of women, e.g. women with disabilities or women in particular circumstances e.g. female asylum seekers. Additionally, women in rural areas should also be assured access to such services.
- ▶ Existing services should have secure funding for their work, be well networked and advertised to provide a safety net for victims of gender based violence.
- ▶ Having established a better idea of which services exist in which countries more detailed research is required to establish reliable information on the scale and range of services available. In addition further research needs to be carried out on definitions of different types of women's centres in order to provide more reliable data.

## 7. WOMEN'S JOURNEYS TO SPECIALIST SUPPORT SERVICES

Single measures are not enough to prevent violence against women and domestic violence; they need to be comprehensive and coordinated and must provide a holistic response to the problem, as required by the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 7). This principle also applies to the provision of support, therefore a comprehensive system of adequate and specialist services is needed to empower survivors. The aim of this chapter is to go beyond the description of single services and measures and offer a description of the kind of situations that women victims of violence and their children encounter when seeking help in circumstances of acute violence and danger. WAVE respondents were asked to provide information based on their experience in supporting women, as required by five short fictional case histories, addressing different forms and situations of violence. Experienced practitioners from 33 countries working in specialist women's support services responded to these questions, giving an insight into the systems of support which exist in their countries.<sup>10</sup>

### Requirements for Specialist Support in the Istanbul Convention

Articles 22-25 of the Istanbul Convention requires parties to provide access to specialist women's support services that have adequate funds and resources to meet minimum standards (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 13-14). Specialist women's support services are therefore essential and must be established in every country in order to support women and children survivors of violence in a meaningful manner. This is also required by the EU Victims' Directive which states that "Member States shall take measures to establish free of charge and confidential specialist support services in addition to, or as an integrated part of, general victim support services" (EU Victims' Directive 2012/29/EU, Art. 8).

It is essential that the approach adopted by these specialist services has a human rights and a gendered understanding of violence against women, seeking to empower survivors. These services however need to be included in a comprehensive support system, as one individual policy or intervention will not be able to ensure adequate support. The needs of such survivors are interconnected, relating to safety, health, financial situation and the well-being of their children. The policies which enable women to access these multiple services, and overcome their traumatic experiences must be coordinated efficiently. Hence, multi-agency cooperation between relevant entities is indispensable when it comes to meeting this requirement.

### Findings on Women's Journeys to Support Services

#### *1. Mary and her children run away from home because of the violence of Mary's husband. Where do they go? What happens?*

When a woman and her children are forced to run away from home because of a violent husband, their journey to support services will be influenced by a number of different factors. Analysis of the qualitative data collected from 33 countries shows that the number of specialist women's support services existing in a given country and widespread availability of information and referral mechanisms are most crucial in ensuring support for women who have been victimised. Hence, many respondents have indi-

<sup>10</sup> The countries are: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium (Flanders & Brussels and Wallonia), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the UK (Northern Ireland and Scotland). 13 countries could not provide specific answers to this section.



cated that such a woman will call a women's helpline, or go to the nearest shelter. If the aforementioned services are not available, or she does not know how to access them, she will turn to social services.

The existence and public awareness about national women's helplines represents a key element which determines access to specialist support services and relevant information; there are some countries, such as Germany, that in addition to the national women's helpline, have several other local women's helplines. These represent useful referral mechanisms to women's specialist support services, be it shelters, counselling centres or crisis centres.

A large number of respondents (12) have listed the police as the first port of call (Albania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Kosovo, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine) or one potential destination (5 – Belgium, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, and Slovenia) of women who have experienced domestic abuse. In many of the surveyed countries women have to turn to the police in the absence of nearby support services or lack of information on how to access them. The survey on violence against women conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA, 2014, p. 60) indicates that women are most likely to contact healthcare services, i.e. hospitals, doctors or other health care providers. It is important to note however that the FRA survey interviewed women directly, whereas the survey on which the current report is based reflects the opinions and experiences of practitioners from women's support services. Further studies could explore what sort of factors account for the different findings of the two aforementioned surveys. It could, for example, indicate that health service professionals are not referring women to specialist support services as consistently as police are, which could highlight a need for targeted training.

The responses provided to this survey emphasise that the police represent an important resource when it comes to providing safety as this is the core agency responsible for the protection of women and their children from violence. Police officers are also responsible for referring women to specialist victim support services, providing them with adequate information and informing them of their rights. This is why it is crucial to have police officers who have received adequate training in the area of violence against women and domestic violence, so that they can tackle an emergency situation by taking a gender-specific approach, ensuring that the rights of women are being upheld at every stage of the proceedings. To be more precise, police officers can refer or escort women to nearby shelters (Romania), or initial reception centres (Turkey).

Police officers are key actors when it comes to applying protection mechanisms for women and their children, such as emergency barring orders (Austria, Germany, Czech Republic), which they can issue themselves on the spot, depending on the gravity of the situation, or they can make a request for these to be issued. It can take some time however for protection orders to be issued (72 hours in Spain), and both emergency barring orders and protection orders are valid for a limited period of time (48 hours in Slovenia, 10 days in Liechtenstein), which can then be extended, depending on the situation and the victim's wishes.

Other important factors that can influence a woman's pathway to support services are having access to internet and a social circle. Women can sometimes find it hard to report domestic abuse for a number of reasons, be it lack of information, fear of long-term negative repercussions, or lack of trust in State authorities. Hence, they will frequently turn to friends and family for support and advice. Furthermore, in the absence of a women's shelter, which is often the case in rural areas in particular (Iceland, Romania and Russia, see chapter 5 on the number of women's shelter places missing) women are left to rely on family and friends for shelter. However, if these cannot or do not want to take them in, they are often compelled to stay with the violent partner. It may also be the case that women choose not to reach out to family and friends, out of feelings of shame and fear to disclose information about their private family life and the history of domestic abuse. Fear of retribution on their families and friends is also another reason why women chose not to reveal information about the abuse they suffer.

Having access to Internet is also a positive factor, because in some countries important information such as the telephone numbers for helplines, shelters or other support services are available online, including a map of specialist services available in a given region (Romania, Germany, Slovakia).

Women's shelters for survivors of domestic violence are the most important services for women and their children seeking support and accommodation. Counselling, medical and legal assistance is often provided at the shelter (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Belgium, Moldova and Georgia), with the latter being particularly important if the woman decides to press charges against the perpetrator.

Core support is also provided by women's centres (women's counselling or crisis centres, see also chapter 6). These specialist services support women who do not need immediate accommodation and they are also very important in regions where there are no women's shelters available.

When there are no direct referral mechanisms, a woman also has to go to social services first, in order to be referred to a shelter that has available places (Latvia). In some countries a commission has to establish in the initial stage whether she is indeed a victim of domestic abuse (Belarus), and she may be requested to present evidence of physical injuries sustained (Romania, in shelters run by child protection authorities). Such bureaucratic procedures are problematic and may sometimes hinder women's access to a shelter, or have negative consequences on her well-being while staying there. Direct access of survivors to women's shelters is therefore of crucial importance.

Obstacles in accessing services can also arise due to strict financial regulations, for instance in Germany where women's shelters are not free of charge. In Croatia, when women seek help in a State-run shelter, i.e. State homes, they may be forced to come into contact with the perpetrator, as fathers' visitation rights are upheld including contact to his children in the shelter itself.

In Belarus, existing laws and regulations stipulate that children can be taken away from their mother if a commission of experts from social services decides that the situation is socially dangerous for them. Hence, women are often reluctant to report incidents of domestic abuse to the police.

## Conclusions

These examples point out how important it is for all women victims of violence and their children to have direct access to good quality and specialist women's support services in their vicinity, which must be unhindered by complicated bureaucratic procedures (see also recommendations in chapters 5 and 6). Additionally, the examples also indicate that it is important for generic services, such as the police, social or health services, to collaborate closely with specialist women's support services and make appropriate referrals.

## 2. What happens if Mary is an undocumented migrant woman?

Should the woman in the aforementioned situation be an undocumented migrant, a different set of factors will determine her pathway to women's support services. Six of the 33 respondents indicated that they are rarely or never approached by undocumented women in their daily work.<sup>11</sup>

Many countries have discriminatory laws, rules and regulations or discriminatory practices regarding access of undocumented migrant women to women's support services. The results of this study indicate that Iceland, Moldova, Finland, Portugal and Slovenia are notable exceptions to this. There are countries in which some women's shelters can accommodate undocumented migrant women (Austria,

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<sup>11</sup> Apart from the countries that gave no answers for part 3, the following said that they are unable to answer the question related to undocumented migrant women, as they have encountered no such precedent: Albania, Georgia, Latvia, Macedonia, Slovakia, and Malta.

Croatia), but sometimes the costs for her accommodation would not be covered by the State, because undocumented women have no recourse to public funds. In such cases women are either not admitted or women's shelters are able to find funds from other sources to accommodate undocumented migrant women (Belgium-Flanders, Germany). In Norway shelters can accommodate undocumented migrant women in the acute phase only and for a limited period of time, due to funding regulations.

In some countries undocumented migrant women receive legal assistance regarding their residence status and can also apply for asylum. In other countries, Mary, the woman from the aforementioned case history, would only be allowed to stay at the shelter for a few days (Russia, Kosovo, Luxembourg). Spain is a good practice example as it has a law which places migrants experiencing violence under special protection, as they are considered to be a vulnerable group. However in practice many migrants are unaware of this and avoid turning to State authorities. Italy also has a special procedure which allows migrants above the age of 18 to obtain a 'permit for humanitarian reasons', thus allowing them to stay in a shelter and even get a work permit for a limited period of time.

In Liechtenstein, even though shelters would not be allowed to take her in, she could get help from an organization that supports refugees or be offered accommodation in a monastery. In spite of obstacles which would prevent Mary from accessing shelters, she could seek support in women's counselling centres (Germany), call women's helplines (Montenegro), depending on available multi-lingual support, or go to women's centres run by NGOs (Romania).

In several countries, due to existing laws and regulations, Mary would be prohibited from staying in a shelter (Czech Republic), or would be arrested and deported if discovered by State authorities (Greece, Hungary, Turkey). Hence, under such circumstances Mary is likely to remain with her abusive husband, or look for help in the migrant community. Refugee centres (Ukraine) or agencies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Turkey) may also offer her some support.

In the UK, undocumented refugee women usually do not have recourse to public funds, however there are women's organizations which could offer support and reach out to charities for financial help.

## Conclusions

Under such difficult circumstances, undocumented migrant women like Mary and her children are very likely to remain with the abuser. This situation is very problematic because it makes women especially vulnerable to abuse. The right to live free from violence applies to all women and their children and discrimination on any grounds is prohibited. It is of utmost importance that barriers in accessing help are removed and that all women are able to exercise their rights to live free from violence and to protection and support by having access to safe accommodation in specialist shelters.

### ***3. Elise cannot stand the sexual violence of her husband anymore and decides that she will try to get help. What happens?***

When a woman experiencing sexual violence perpetrated by her husband decides to seek help, the first and most important destinations are specialist women's support services for victims of sexual assault or rape crisis centres. From the countries surveyed, only eight have such specialist services.<sup>12</sup> It is crucial to establish such facilities and ensure they are easily accessible, because sexual assault is one of the most extreme forms of violence experienced by women. Hence, women survivors of sexual violence have specific needs and reporting rape and sexual violence is particularly difficult, especially if the perpetrator is the partner. In countries that do not have specific services for survivors of sexual violence (Albania, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Italy, Ukraine, Montenegro, Portugal, Moldova), women concerned are assisted as victims of domestic violence.

<sup>12</sup> The countries are: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, Spain, UK.

Legislation is also an important factor which may influence women's decisions to report such crimes and access support services. In most countries in Europe marital rape is punishable, however such crimes are incredibly difficult to prove due to stereotypes and prejudices highly prevalent among police officers and others in the criminal justice system. Technically the burden of proof lies with the State authorities in case of mandatory prosecution; however, victims are often pushed into the role of being the ones who have to provide evidence for sexual assault. A difficulty often associated with legal proceedings in many sexual assault cases is that having the perpetrator convicted is a lengthy process, with no satisfactory results, whereby the woman is subjected to re-victimisation due to intrusive questions asked by police officers or at court. Respondents from several countries (Belarus, Greece and Ukraine) have indicated that in spite of having legal provisions that criminalise rape, it is impossible to prove the occurrence of sexual violence between spouses due to existing legal practice and custom.

In the absence of adequate legislation and victim-friendly procedures, women face even greater difficulties when trying to press charges against the perpetrator, and are often left with no recourse to justice, making them feel trapped in an unbearably difficult situation. In Bulgaria the existing legal framework does not consider rape between spouses to be a crime in the criminal code, placing it under the scope of family violence.

Police officers have a crucial role in promptly collecting all pieces of relevant evidence in cases of rape, sexual assault and all other forms of violence against women and their children, according to the Istanbul Convention, Article 49. It is important to collect the necessary evidence without undue delay, hence the sooner a woman gets to a special medical unit or a forensic doctor, the better. In some countries, such as Serbia, there are only a few clinics that undertake such medical examinations. Moreover, in certain countries (Romania), a certificate from a forensic doctor is not issued free of charge. Police officers could also issue a protection order (Liechtenstein, Georgia and Moldova) in such cases. In Scotland for example, the prosecution service has a unit which specifically deals with sexual crimes and works closely with the police, thus ensuring that there is a strong focus on the detection, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences.

Elise could get immediate protection through an emergency barring order, if such an instrument exists. If her situation is very dangerous, police officers can also escort Elise to a shelter and she can stay there for varying periods of time, depending on the shelter's regulations (see chapter 5). However, if neither an effective emergency barring order is in place, nor a place in a women's shelter is available and if Elise's husband is not arrested, she might have no alternative but to go back home to her husband. This makes reporting difficult and even dangerous.

Helplines are invaluable to help women access relevant support services and are especially useful for women living in rural areas or smaller cities, which often do not have rape crisis centres or other specialist facilities. Having access to internet is also useful, not just for being able to find out general information about shelters or helpline numbers, but also in some countries, to access specialist information and counselling services for survivors of sexual violence which are available online (Romania).

In Greece women can only receive up to 12 psychological counselling sessions free of charge, however they may have to wait. There are no specialist support services for survivors of sexual violence available in the rural areas and survivors quickly find themselves in a hopeless situation.

## Conclusions

As previously described, women victims of sexual violence often hesitate to take legal action against the perpetrator, especially if the violence is committed by the husband or partner. They may also not even consider this possibility due to lack of effective protection, legal counsel or financial resources. Ineffective laws need to be reformed and victim-friendly procedures established so that women can develop trust in the police and the justice system. In many countries there are no specialist services for women victims of sexual violence and women do not get adequate support. This situation needs to be improved urgently.

#### **4. One evening Vesna is so afraid of her husband's violence that she calls the police. What happens?**

In a situation when a woman feels so afraid of her husband that she decides to call the police, her journey to support services will be exclusively influenced by police officers on duty when her call was received, therefore these play a very important role and bear a huge responsibility. First of all, it is highly important to ensure that the police respond to all calls of women victims of violence promptly and appropriately, as required by Article 50 of the Istanbul Convention. Women like Vesna are in an extremely vulnerable situation and the perpetrator is likely to be enraged if he realises that she has contacted the police. As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the kind of training police officers have received with regard to domestic violence, the protocol they have in place, and whether they will carry out a risk assessment once they arrive at the scene will be of crucial importance. Additionally, it is the task of police officers to refer victims of violence to relevant specialist support services available in her area.

Police officers generally have access to protection measures, however these differ across the 33 countries that have provided answers to this section. It has been reported that in several countries emergency barring orders can be applied by police officers in high-risk situations independent from criminal proceedings and have the effect of removing the violent person from the family home for a limited period, during which time the victim can apply for prolonged protection. Whether police officers decide to enforce an emergency barring order or whether, depending on the existing legal framework, other protective measures may be applicable, largely depends on their awareness of the problem and the level of risk they perceive after assessing the situation once they arrive at the scene.

Most countries however do not have a general protocol on how to deal with such situations of domestic abuse and a risk assessment is not always carried out by police officers. It was not indicated by those who did apply this procedure (Belgium, Austria, Croatia, Switzerland and Luxembourg) what sort of tools or instruments they used in order to do the risk assessment. It was highlighted however that in Northern Ireland the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH 2009) Risk Identification, Assessment and Management Model is being used. Furthermore, in Scotland a risk assessment multi-agency conference would be applicable in the aforementioned situation, after the woman has been brought to safety. It was also indicated that in Russia there are no unified standards applied by police officers for service provision in cases of domestic abuse. A particularly worrisome trend from Croatia was singled out, that of dual arrests, especially if there is no evidence of physical violence and the perpetrator claims that the woman had verbally abused him. A difficult situation is also encountered in Moldova, where police officers do have access to protection mechanisms, however according to existing laws they cannot enter the premises of a home without the consent of the owner or an authorisation from a judge. According to law police officers can only enter the premises of a home without authorization when a crime is in process and people's lives are at risk. Under such circumstances they are required to immediately inform the prosecutor and judge about the situation. Nevertheless, such a high-level of risk is rarely – if ever – perceived by police officers in cases of domestic violence.

If the perpetrator is taken away by police officers for interrogation, detained for only a couple of hours and given a verbal or written warning, the woman does not have enough time to reach a safe place, such as a shelter, or a relative's house. In case children are involved or the woman lives in an inaccessible, rural area, the situation is likely to be more complicated, hence she would need even more time to move to another location. If the perpetrator comes back home after a few hours and the woman is still there, violence will most likely escalate and the woman will be re-victimised.

### **Conclusions**

As in this case police officers are the gate keepers to women's support services, it is essential that they receive adequate training on violence against women and domestic abuse from a gendered, human rights-based perspective. It is important to make sure that existing legislation gives police officers the right to access the premises in which domestic violence was reported and enforce relevant protective

measures. Furthermore, having a protocol in place and carrying out a risk-assessment on arrival at the scene of domestic abuse makes a crucial difference in ensuring the safety and well-being of survivors. Tools such as the DASH checklist or multi-agency case conferences are highly useful under such circumstances.

***5. After socializing with friends on campus, Lena is sexually assaulted by a male friend who walked her back to her dorm room. Lena is scared, feels unsafe, and considers reporting the incident, so she decides to seek help. What are her options?***

In a situation in which a female student is sexually assaulted by a male friend on campus, she would first turn to university facilities for help and advice, usually the health centre or the equal opportunities office. Nevertheless, in many of the surveyed countries such facilities do not exist or are not always available, so that women go to a nearby hospital in order to seek medical assistance, or to their gynaecologist. In Belgium (Flanders) for example all general practitioners and emergency hospital rooms have a protocol and a rape kit for such situations. If Lena decides to take legal action against the perpetrator and wishes to report the incident to the police, it is crucial to collect evidence and get a certificate from a forensic doctor as soon as possible. Germany has one hospital located in Berlin with a unit specially dedicated for the treatment of victims of violence and Iceland has a hospital with a rape crisis service. Malta also has a sexual assault response team, which immediately supports survivors of sexual violence. Specialist services for victims of sexual violence are other possible destinations, depending on whether these are available in the city or region where the woman lives. Psychological counselling and legal assistance are the minimum services that should be provided to survivors of sexual assault free of charge, however these are not widely available in many of the surveyed countries, such as Latvia. A helpline represents yet again an important referral mechanism and information source, as students are often unaware of the existence of these services and how to access them, and do not know how to proceed after experiencing such a traumatizing event. In Romania for example it is possible to find relevant information online thanks to a women's network working in the field of sexual violence, and additionally a specialist online counselling service is also available for survivors.

In the absence of a helpline, other specialist support services or women's centres, hospitals or medical centres, a sexual assault survivor is likely to go to the police. It is important to note however, that due to feelings of anxiety and shame, women often decide not to report such crimes and press charges against the perpetrator.

If Lena turns to the police, the attitude of police officers she encounters and the way in which they run the investigation needs to ensure that she is not re-victimised. It is therefore important to make certain that police officers on duty have had adequate training. Even more so, it is necessary to have specially trained police officers handling sexual assault cases (as is the case in Belgium-Flanders).

Many respondents indicated that serious problems are associated with the investigation of sexual assault cases and the attitude of police officers and others from the criminal justice system (Belgium, Turkey, Hungary, Greece, Moldova and Serbia). Victim-blaming attitudes, lengthy legal proceedings, and re-victimisation are frequently encountered. In Italy for example, criminal proceedings in such situations last between one to three years, whereby the woman may have to hire a private lawyer and cover the legal fees herself. Lack of evidence collected immediately after the occurrence of the incident can also easily lead to the case not being pursued.

## **Conclusions**

In a democratic, human rights-based society, women survivors of sexual violence should not hesitate to turn to the police and file a complaint. However, due to feelings of fear, anxiety and shame, but also harmful practices prevalent in institutions, such as victim-blaming and a lack of empowering legal procedures, such women are reluctant to turn to the police. The recent survey on violence against women

conducted by FRA (2014, p. 60) reveals that there is widespread under-reporting of violence against women and that official figures from law enforcement authorities do not even come close to revealing the true extent of victimisation.

Considerable efforts are necessary to change the current state of affairs and minimum quality standards laid out in the EU Victims' Directive and the Istanbul Convention need to be implemented. All victims need to be able to exercise their right to protection and support. Hence, the establishment of country-wide specialist women's support services with a human rights and gender-specific approach is a key element in guaranteeing empowerment, safety and access to justice for women victims of violence and their children.



## 8. NATIONAL WOMEN'S NETWORKS

### Introduction

For detailed information on this section, please see table 19 on page 95.

Europe has over 100 national women's networks throughout 46 countries working in the field of combating violence against women. Within these countries are also regional networks, as well as transnational networks; for instance, WAVE is a European network joining over 112 Members of organizations, including national women's networks. The strength of national women's networks are particularly profound in lobbying, prevention and strengthening cooperation including enhancing the capacity and development of and between women's organizations within their respective countries.

Article 7 of the Istanbul Convention iterates that parties should take the necessary measures to adopt and implement comprehensive and coordinated policies related to violence against women, placing the rights and needs of survivors at the centre of all measures. Article 7 also states that the measures be implemented in cooperation with all relevant organizations. Since women's organizations are often at the core of providing holistic and empowering services for women survivors of violence, national women's networks are critical bodies for States to include in decision-making and policy development. National women's networks often work towards improving service provision, with aims at developing accessible and holistic services for women survivors of violence. Furthermore, national women's networks provide the opportunity for organizations working in the same field or for the same cause, to work closely with policy makers. Networks are in a particularly strategic position to act on behalf of its members in policy work and service provision. By uniting in a network, organizations have strengthened representation on a national level, which also strengthens the voice and impact of organizations in terms of policy developments and national standards.

Articles 12–17 of the Istanbul Convention highlight prevention work as an important tool in the prevention of violence against women. The term 'prevention' encompasses awareness raising, education, training of professionals, intervention programmes, and participation of the private sector and media. National women's networks foster enhanced collaboration for awareness raising and prevention work on a particular topic or theme. As the WAVE Report 2015 demonstrates, most national women's networks do conduct prevention and awareness raising activities, while also supporting the national campaigns and prevention work conducted independently by women's NGOs. When conducting joint projects and activities, a network allows organizations to collaborate on a national level, while still being supported in their own community and involved in regional activities.

National women's networks are key in enhancing cooperation between women's organizations; depending on the national law in which a formal network is established, organizations are given opportunities to meet on a regular basis, in which they can share experiences and best practices in the form of informal and formal meetings. During such cooperation, typically held together by the organizational body of a network office, the capacity and development of organizations are improved, allowing the space for the establishment of joint strategies, such as the development of national quality standards for service provision. National women's networks also are often the primary bodies for national data collection. Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention stipulates that data collection must be public and disaggregated at regular intervals on all forms of violence covered by the convention, and that parties should support research in the field and stimulate international cooperation. Due to their strengthened networking and cooperation on a national and international scale, national women's networks are in a strategic position to conduct data collection and research in their relevant areas, providing an independent women's NGO perspective to supplement national data collection by governments. When data is collected individually by organizations, a complete overview of the services and user statistics as a whole in the country is not

always provided. Therefore, networks are ideal platforms for data collection in that they can collect a wider range of data from a larger amount of services, thereby providing a more accurate depiction of services and statistics on a national-scale.

In this WAVE Report 2015, national women's networks can be broad in scope and definition, serving a range of purposes and engaged in various activities. There can be national women's networks which are composed of organizations working for a single cause, such as domestic violence or sexual violence; or networks which are composed of organizations working in one particular thematic area, such as women's shelters, women's helplines, or rape crisis centres. Women's networks can also be composed of mixed services, with a plethora of women's organizations in different services yet working in the same field of combating violence against women. Some networks can be politically affiliated, or be composed of both political and non-political bodies. Members of networks may be only women's organizations, or in some cases, could be individuals or institutions. Furthermore, national women's networks can be informal or formal bodies, with or without a national office, and do not necessarily need to be a legal entity.

## Aims and Content of Data Collection

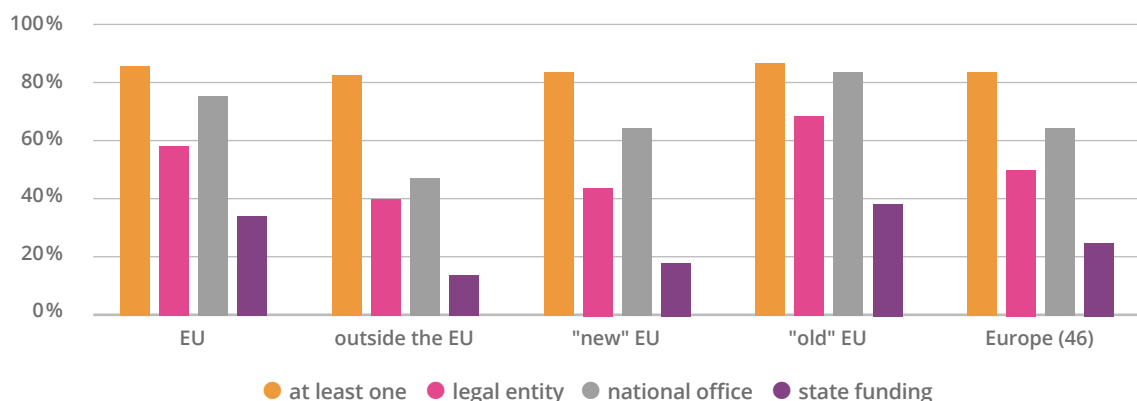
The aim of collecting data on national women's networks is to capture the capacity and cooperation of women's NGOs within networks and to highlight the ways in which networks facilitate data collection and improve cooperation. While individual women's NGOs have been researched in previous reports, there is little information on national women's networks, either in WAVE's previous reports or in other international European publications.

Another aim of collecting information on national women's networks is to determine patterns in population size and geographical regions of countries in relation to the number of national women's networks and women's services. By doing so, we are able to also determine patterns in the need for and quality of such networks. While there may be many national networks in one country in proportion to the amount of services and population, the quality of such networks are also important. Therefore, the analysis of data included indicators developed by WAVE to assess the strength of networks, such as legal entity status, existence of a national office, paid staff, and State funding, to determine the overall impact and sustainability of the networks. Analysing whether States are appropriately funding national women's networks is another important element to determining sustainability of women's networks.

The questions asked in the questionnaire pertaining to national women's networks were; the number of networks; including the type and number of members; activities of the network and strength indicators (legal entity, national office, paid staff, and funding from the national government); if there are plans to form a national women's network and obstacles to forming a national women's network.

## Findings on the Situation of Women's Networks in Europe

**FIGURE 11 – Women's Networks in EU Countries and Countries outside the EU**



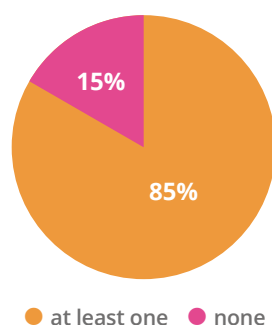
This figure demonstrates that overall, there are not large discrepancies between EU countries and countries of the EU in terms of having at least one national women's networks. Women's networks are common throughout the continent, however, it is the strength indicators which demonstrate greater degrees of variation, with EU countries more likely to have national women's networks which have national offices and are legal entities as well as receive State funding.

## Number of National Women's Networks, and Obstacles to Forming a Network

### Overview of Europe

85% of European countries have at least one national women's network, with a total of 102 networks throughout 39 countries. However, many countries have more than one network, with countries such as Denmark and the UK each listing over ten national women's networks. However, the UK, which contains four countries, reports receiving State funding and has a range of specialist women's support services, so the opportunity to develop and sustain networks is more lucrative.

15% of European countries do not have a national women's network (Belarus, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta and Spain). Of these countries which do not have a network, over half (Iceland, Luxembourg and Malta) indicated that they do not have plans to form a national women's network in the future, reasoning that they are small countries with populations under one million. Therefore, having a small population is a major factor obviating the need for a national women's network. This suggests that in small countries, cooperation between organizations is generally good without a formal network structure in place.



**FIGURE 12 – Countries in Europe with at least One National Women's Network**

This figure demonstrates that 85% of European countries have at least one national women's network.

## Comparison between EU & European Countries Outside the EU

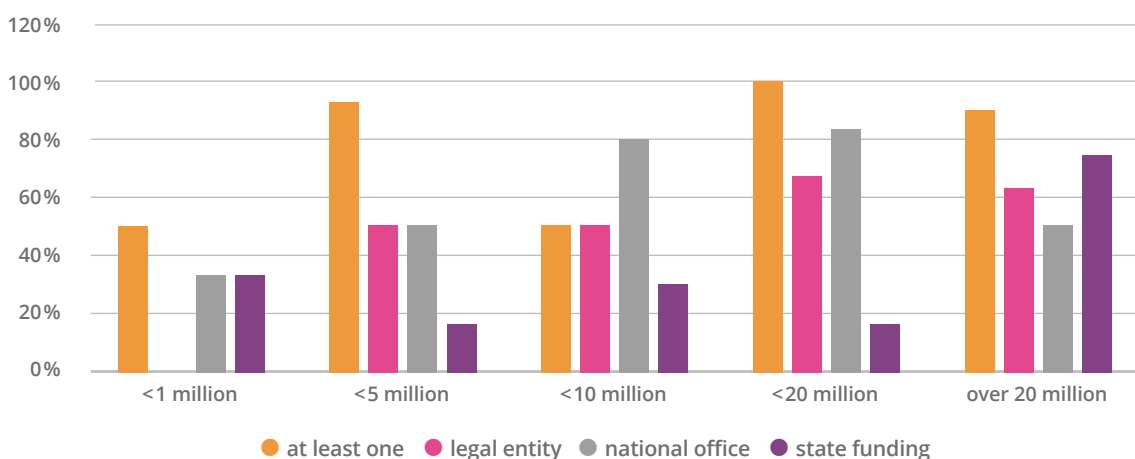
86% of EU countries and 83% of European countries outside the EU have at least one national women's network. There is no difference between the "old" and "new" EU countries in terms of having at least one national women's network. However, the difference in numbers is significant in terms of the amount of national networks per country between the EU and European countries outside the EU countries. While EU countries have on average three national women's networks per country, European countries outside the EU have on average nearly two national women's networks per country. This indicates that EU countries, particularly "old" EU countries, are more likely to have a variety of different national women's networks within one country, while European countries outside the EU are more likely to have a narrower focus for networks.

For instance Austria, an "old"-EU country, has six national women's networks, five of which have different specialist focuses: a network on women's counselling centres for sexual violence, a network of intervention centres, two networks of women's shelters, a network of counselling centres for women and girls and a political network platform against domestic violence. Furthermore, Germany has five different networks focusing on different service provision: a network of rape crisis centres and counselling centres, two networks of women's shelters, a network against trafficking and to promote the human rights of migrants and a network to improve the health care of women survivors of violence. These wide varieties of networks are in large part due to the vast amount of women's services available within some countries, and due to having the resources available to develop and sustain a network (both Austria and Germany report receiving State funding and are high in strength indicators developed by WAVE).

Ukraine, a non-EU country as well as a post-communist country, still has only two women's shelters and three women's centres. Despite the large population of over 42 million people, there is less need to form a network due to the low number of specialist women's support services and women's NGOs; hence Ukraine has four networks which focus more on gender equality and lobbying. Poland is another example; with a population around 38 million, Poland has only one national women's network called the Women's Rights Centre, since there are so few specialist services for women. Therefore, the type and number of networks often depends not only on the amount and type of services available within a country, but also on the historical, political, social, and economical development of countries.

Countries with a population of less than 20 million report having at least one national women's network, with the majority having over two networks per country, while the largest countries with over 20 million people tend to have on average four networks per country. On average the lower the population, the fewer number of networks per country.

**FIGURE 13 – Women's Networks in Europe – Existence, Legal Entity, National Office, and State Funding**



As the figure on the previous page shows, larger countries are more likely to have networks which meet the strength indicators (national office, legal entity, and State funding).

## **Obstacles to Forming a Network**

There are many reasons why a network does not exist within a country, which are not related to population. The size, variety and amount of networks also depend on the political, geographical and social context of a given country. For instance, Spain, a country with over 46 million inhabitants, has no national women's network, while Belarus, with a population of just over nine million, has no network either. While there are large population differences between the two countries, both refer to political and social obstacles, citing differences in views about gender-based violence, with some NGOs or governments recognizing different forms and definitions of violence against women. However, it is important to note that while there is no national women's network in Spain, there are regional networks, ensuring that women's organizations within such a large country are still able to organize collaboratively within their regions.

Although Latvia wishes to develop a network, the country does not have a national women's network which focuses exclusively on violence against women, citing a lack of financial and human resources as an obstacle to developing a network. In Romania, there is a lack of core funding to enable more than project based work, leaving the four networks in Romania relying on grants in the absence of governmental funding; similarly, Montenegro and Switzerland both refer to lack of funds. In Latvia, none of the NGO service providers for women suffering from violence receive financial support from the State and it is reported that there is a lack of cooperation between the government and women's NGOs. This is in stark contrast to the smaller countries like Iceland and Luxembourg, which do not want to form a network and also claim to have good informal and formal cooperation with the State.

There are also problems for some women's networks which do already exist, in terms of sustainability. Slovakia indicates that there is a lack of capacity and sustainability of organizations in the one network which already exists (the current network is weak in strength indicators: not a legal entity, lacks a national office, does not have paid staff, and receives no State funding). Hungary indicates that the budget of NGOs working in the field of violence against women, and the lack of sustainability, means that there is no financial support to form another network in the first place.

Language and cultural differences can be another hindrance to forming and sustaining a national women's network. In Belgium, there are language and cultural differences, as well as a segregated political system, which makes it difficult to find common ground and organize. The same applies to Switzerland, in that multiple languages makes cooperation and coordination challenging. However, to remedy this, Belgium has regional networks. For instance, in the Flanders part of Belgium, there is a network, which provides support to women's support services in the region. In Czech Republic, government funding tends to be geared towards favouring a gender-neutral approach, which does not recognize the gendered nature of violence against women. Consequently, women's NGOs which base their work on a gendered understanding of violence against women and domestic violence have difficulty getting funding, which poses an additional obstacle for feminist NGOs wishing to form networks.

In conclusion, common obstacles to developing a national women's network in countries are; lack of funding resulting in a lack of sustainability; linguistic, cultural and political divisions; differences in attitudes to and definitions of violence against women; national legislation which makes support difficult and fosters competition for funding among NGOs; intensified bureaucratic procedures; and a turn towards gender neutrality.

## Legal Entity, National Office, Paid Staff, Funding (strength indicators)

### Legal Entity

51% of European countries with at least one national women's network report having at least one network which is a legal entity, in addition 64% of countries indicate at least one national network in their country has a national office. There is a strong correlation between legal entity status and having a national office.

EU countries are more likely to have at least one national network which is a legal entity, 58% of EU countries with at least one national women's network have legal entity status, compared to only 40% of European countries outside the EU. The difference in legal entity status is even larger in terms of "old" and "new" EU countries, in which 69% of "old" EU countries and only 45% of "new" EU countries with at least one national women's network report having legal entity status. Therefore, EU countries, particularly old EU countries, are more likely to have at least one national network which is a legal entity.

The smaller the size of the country, the less likely it is that at least one national network is a legal entity. For instance, none of the countries under one million population have a network which is a legal entity, while 63% of countries with populations over ten million report a minimum of one national network being a legal entity.

### National Office

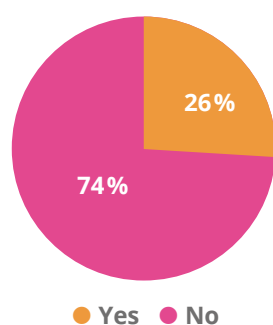
Generally, most national women's networks have a national office, with 25 of 39 countries reporting having a national women's network have a national office. EU countries, particularly "old" EU countries, are more likely to have at least one national network with a national office. While the gap between EU and European countries outside the EU is even larger. 18 of the 24 EU countries with a national women's network have a national office; on the other hand, only seven of the 15 European countries outside the EU which report having a national women's network have at least one network with a national office.

### Paid Staff

Eight countries report that national women's networks do not have paid staff (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey). This funding was withdrawn from the Romanian network at the end of 2015. All these countries except for Lithuania also report receiving no State funding. Government funding for women's support services in Lithuania are often project funding and this could be linked to the lack of paid staff. Otherwise, there is not enough data on the amount of paid staff for the national women's networks to draw any strong conclusions.

The data on paid staff is scarce. However, of the data which was provided: the countries with no paid staff for one national women's network are: Croatia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Turkey. The most paid staff are reportedly in Finland, France, Georgia, and UK.

### State Funding



**FIGURE 14 – Number of Existing Women's Networks receiving State Funding**

As this figure demonstrates, only one quarter of countries in Europe with at least one national women's network receive state funding.

All countries, regardless of geographical or political groupings, have one element in common; lack of State funding for national women's networks. European countries outside the EU are more likely to report lack of State funding: Liechtenstein and Norway. 33% of EU countries which have national women's networks report receiving State funding (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, and the UK), a majority of which are "old" EU countries. Additionally, only four countries which have networks with legal entity status also receive State funding, and meet all strength indicators developed by WAVE (Austria, Belgium, France and Germany).

There is not a high correlation between whether a national women's network is a legal entity and receives State funding. Some legal entities receive no State funding, while some legal entities do. However, when looking at State funding separately, a different pattern emerges. Countries with populations of less than 20 million have the lowest number of networks with State funding, while countries in the with populations larger than 20 million have the highest number of networks which receive State funding.

Sustainable funding is essential to the longevity and activities of the network, in terms of paid staff, data collection and conducting activities to prevent and combat violence against women, all requirements of the Istanbul Convention. Only four countries meet all these requirements (Austria, Belgium, France and Germany) all "old" EU countries.

## Conclusion

Many countries are low in strength indicators, particularly European countries outside EU. Three of these with national women's networks report not meeting any of the strength indicators, as in, they do not receive State funding, are not a legal entity, have no paid staff, and have no national office (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Turkey).

## Recommendations

- ▶ Since lack of State funding is an obstacle to establishing and sustaining a national women's network, and since a majority of European countries with at least one national women's network do not receive State funding, States are encouraged to provide sustainable annual core funding for national women's networks as part of their due diligence, particularly for European countries outside the EU.
- ▶ With some countries reporting a turn towards gender neutrality and increased competition for funding, States must develop and implement gender-sensitive policies, as required in Article 6 of the Istanbul Convention, and support the women-centred approach unique to specialist women's NGOs.
- ▶ It is crucial that States expand and improve their support of quality specialist women's support services, in order to strengthen the cooperation of women's NGOs across large geographical spaces and to enhance efforts to prevent and combat violence against women.
- ▶ A lack of administrative data on support services in most countries and the lack of homogeneity of such data, makes comparative analysis on the national level difficult or impossible. States should therefore provide adequate funding to support national networks of women's support services and develop their capacity for systematic data collection and promote the exchange and dissemination of information.



## 9. PREVENTION

### Introduction

Prevention is an important aspect of combating violence against women as avoiding and limiting violence from occurring improves women's lives and lessens the overall burden that the impact of violence has on individual women and society.

The concept of prevention, or stopping something from occurring has evolved from the medical profession and has become utilized in the area of violence against women over the last 20 years.

There are three stages of prevention: primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention aims to "obviate violence before it occurs", secondary prevention aims to "detect violence in time or to terminate it at the earliest possible juncture", and tertiary prevention aims to "prevent a renewed outbreak of violence or to soften the impact of violence" (WAVE, 2000, p. 5).

Investing in measures at all three levels of prevention is necessary to achieve the goal of reducing and eliminating violence against women and domestic violence. Consequences of intimate partner violence as well as sexual violence or rape are severe, and women whose lives have been deeply impacted by violence as well as by having experienced long-term, severe, and/or frequent violence may suffer significant harm that otherwise could have been avoided. For some forms of violence, like female genital mutilation, where apart from the mental damage, the physical damage is permanent, primary prevention is of even greater importance.

The Istanbul Convention includes a chapter on prevention (Chapter III). Articles 12-17 cover the following topics respectively: general obligations, awareness raising, education, training of professionals, preventive intervention and treatment programs, and participation of the private sector and the media. This chapter focuses mainly on a discussion of awareness-raising activities by women's NGOs, and other types of prevention activities that include education and training of professionals, and treatment programs are discussed in chapters 10 and 13 respectively. The general obligations instruct State parties to promote changes in social and cultural patterns of behaviour, while the article on awareness raising calls on State parties to "conduct on a regular basis and at all levels, awareness raising campaigns or programs, including in cooperation with national human rights institutions and equality bodies, civil society and non-governmental organizations, especially women's organizations, where appropriate, to increase awareness and understanding among the general public of the different manifestations of all forms of violence..." (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 9 – 11).

In terms of prevention of violence, preventive actions have been classified into two tiers: actions directed at individuals and actions directed at society, based on the idea that violence is a result of both environmental and individual factors (WAVE, 2000, p. 4). According to a paper on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the area of prevention, theoretical models of prevention can help provide a basis for structuring effective activities. There are four levels at which prevention activities can be conducted (macro, meso, micro and ontogenetic) referring respectively to the overall social order, social norms, day to day interactions, and individual life history. Each level has specific elements such as violence in the media or masculinity. The model provides information on the role policy plays in order to challenge each of the elements (see [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/funding/daphne3/multi-level\\_interactive\\_model/understanding\\_perpetration\\_start\\_unix.html](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/funding/daphne3/multi-level_interactive_model/understanding_perpetration_start_unix.html))<sup>®</sup>. Activities in the area of prevention should be considered essential but always be implemented as part of a broader strategy and set of measures to combat violence against women (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 8).

Women's NGOs are part of the specialist women's sector, including women's support services, and are representing women's rights and interests. Women's NGOs have been active in the area of prevention and their activities have contributed to significant progress over the last four decades, which can be

quantified by the presence of various measures that are indicative of progress, such as legislation on violence, trainings, funding for specialist services, and cooperation among various stakeholders in the area of combating violence against women (Htun & Weldon, 2012).

## **Aims of Data Collection**

The aim of presenting data on prevention activities in the WAVE Report is to reveal the work that women's NGOs have done and continue to do, and to show the role of women's NGOs in implementing the provisions on prevention found in the Istanbul Convention. It should be noted however that prevention activities in form of awareness-raising may also be conducted in partnership with other stakeholders such as government ministries or other institutions. The report however collected data from women's NGOs only, and hence includes only their perspective.

For the purpose of the report, data was collected to see to what extent women's networks, shelters, helplines and centres conduct awareness raising activities, as well as to gain an understanding of how much funding is allocated for prevention activities and to gauge the level of difficulty in collecting such information, especially related to funding. The questions aimed to estimate whether all, most, some or none of the specific organizations or services (i.e. women's networks, women's shelters, helplines and centres) conduct prevention activities.

In addition to asking specific questions related to prevention work, WAVE asked the respondents to provide examples of prevention work as a way to exchange ideas about activities conducted and to showcase the important work done by women's NGOs.

## **Findings on the Situation of Prevention Activities in Europe**

### **Overall Situation in Europe**

When asked about whether national women's networks conduct prevention activities, 29 out of 46 countries responded. Of these, about 86% or 25 stated that all or most national women's networks conduct prevention activities. The remaining answers included some and none. In countries where no national women's networks exist (seven countries), the questions did not apply (see Chapter 8).

When asked about whether women's shelters conduct prevention activities, 29 provided a response, out of 45 countries, where shelters are present (see Chapter 5), with 69% (20) stating that all or most of the women's shelters conduct prevention activities, or that some (8) do. Only one country reported that no shelters conduct prevention activities.

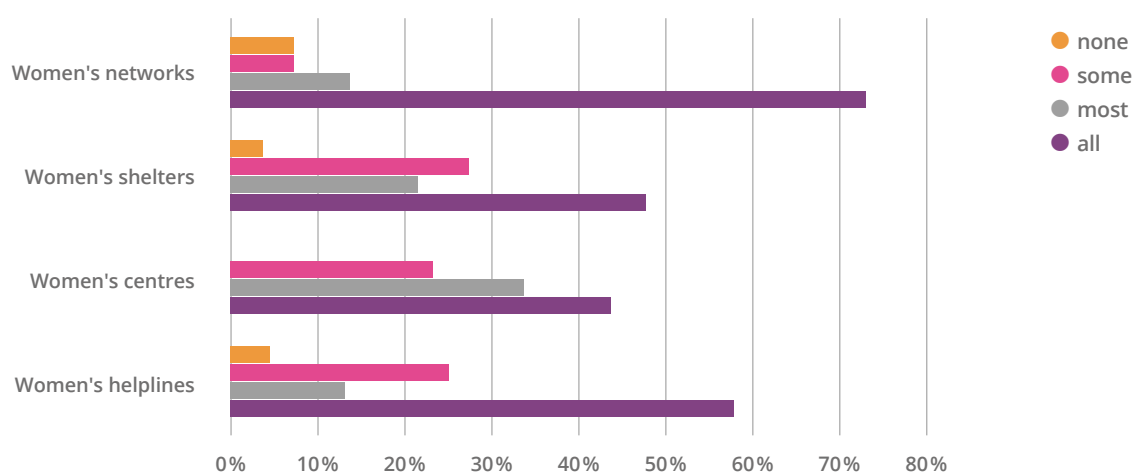
When asked about whether women's helplines conduct prevention activities, there were a total of 24 responses received, showing that all or most helplines conduct such activities in about 70% of the countries or 17 countries. In six countries, some helplines conduct prevention activities. Only one country reported that there were no prevention activities conducted by helplines. In some countries the answer was 'not applicable' as some countries do not have a national women's helpline or other helplines that could conduct such activities (see Chapter 4 for more information on national women's helplines).

When asked about whether women's centres conduct prevention activities, there were a total of 30 responses of the 46 countries asked. Twenty three or 76% stated that all women's centres conduct prevention activities, and seven stated that some centres conduct such activities. This shows that in all countries that provided data for this question, women's centres engage in prevention activities (see Chapter 6 for more information on women's centres). As a result, prevention activities seem to be very typical of women's centres.

The findings show that the vast majority of women's support services and networks are active in prevention, with women's networks most likely to conduct prevention activities such as awareness raising (86%). The latter are presumably most involved because it is part of their core activities, unlike service provision for shelters, helplines and centres, although those organizations still work at raising awareness as a supplementary activity.

The graph below shows the type of women's organizations conducting prevention activities in form of awareness raising and shows, in what percentage of countries all, most, some or none of the organizations conduct such activities. For example, in terms of women's networks, it can be seen that in more than 70% of the countries, all existing women's networks conduct awareness raising activities, in comparison to only about 50% of countries, where it could be said that all women's shelters conduct awareness raising activities. While the graph is presented in relative percentages, the figures are based on different totals (responses) (i.e. women's networks – 29 responses, women's shelters 29 responses, women's helplines – 24 responses, and women's centres – 30 responses).

**FIGURE 15 – Types of Women's Organizations Conducting Prevention Activities throughout Europe**



### Funding for Prevention Work

Gathering information on the actual funding allocated to various types of organizations is difficult and the data is scarce. This can be taken as a sign that no separate budgets are allocated to the prevention work that women's organizations, including support services, are carrying out. Only in six countries (Ireland, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Russia and United Kingdom) were specific sums allocated to prevention work in the year 2014. These sums ranged from EUR 3,000 to about EUR 305,000. Given that the six countries have a total population of over 200,000 inhabitants, the sum invested in prevention appears small. One issue related to funding for prevention work involves the source of funding, for example, whether the funds granted came from the national government or from international donors. The question simply asked the amount of funding received for prevention work. The data collection for this report did not address this issue, however, it is an important one to raise.

It was possible to see that in Ireland, one of the national women's networks 'Safe Ireland' received EUR 100,000 in 2014 for funding their campaign entitled 'Man Up Campaign', however, this reflects only one prevention activity and the information is available due to a government published report available on the website of 'Cosc' The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence. The document also shows that the organization running the women's helpline received about EUR 100,000 for three different projects. In Kosovo, we were made aware that women's shelters received about EUR 25,000 for their prevention work, however, this data was available because of the presence of one network of women's shelters that was able to provide the information. Otherwise, data

is rarely available. Furthermore, without a descriptive narrative, it is not clear what the funding actually encompassed. At the same time, level of funding alone as a comparative indicator among countries on prevention work may not be most useful. This is because prevention activities differ greatly, as do costs of the activities (e.g. producing a video versus printing of posters), and cost does not necessarily equate to impact. Nevertheless, it is useful to know which organizations are receiving money for prevention activities to address violence against women, including information on the source of funding, whether it comes from state or international sources.

Lastly, the data shows that there are very few women's non-governmental organizations in Europe that work solely in the area of prevention, as most often prevention work is done by organizations on the side of their core activities that may include service provision. Examples were only provided in Belgium and France, and only in Belgium an amount of EUR 130,000 could be provided to show the amount of state funding allocated to the specific organization, whereas in France, this wasn't possible.

## Examples of Good Practices

As part of data collection a variety of examples of prevention activities conducted by women's NGOs were gathered. We received numerous examples of interesting activities, but could only share a few in the space available. For examples from other countries, please visit the country profiles online at <http://www.wave-network.org/>. The examples below come from Armenia, Belgium, Greece, Iceland, and Romania and include activities such as public information exchange, workshops targeted at empowering migrant women, development of informational pamphlets to inform survivors of violence about their rights, public conference involving a variety of stakeholders, and public awareness raising activities in form of a festival.

### Country: ICELAND

**TIMEFRAME OF ACTIVITY:** 12–15 June 2014

**TITLE OF ACTIVITY:** Nordiskt Forum (Nordic Forum) in Malmö

**TARGET GROUPS:** Representatives of the women's movement, activists, organizations, groups, political parties, private sector, authorities and the general public.

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** The Nordic Forum took place in Malmö in 2014 involving persons from the Scandinavian region from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The conference is conducted in a way that each participant is involved and provides an active contribution with discussions on the topic of violence against women and girls. The Nordic Forum was connected to the Nordic Tour, which in 2014 focused on family formation in the Nordic countries with special attention to cases regarding



custody and visitation that also had issues of violence and abuse. During this tour, five Nordic countries were visited. One inspiration, of many, for the Nordic Tour was the 2014 FRA study on violence against women in Europe, demonstrating that policy makers need to recognize the extent of the violence that women are exposed to, and ensure that State action translates into meeting all the needs and rights of female victims. Particularly unique to the tour and forum is the close cooperation and collaboration of the organizations throughout the region.

## Country: BELGIUM

**ORGANIZATION CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITY:** Garance asbl

**TIMEFRAME OF ACTIVITY:** Since 2009

**TITLE OF ACTIVITY:** Femmes migrantes, actrices de leur sécurité

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** Migrant groups

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** The activity involves Garance conducting training of peer educators in order to facilitate group meetings for migrant women on the topic of safety and violence prevention. In addition, topics of intimate partner violence and violence in the family, by friends and within the community, as well as sexist and racist discrimination are discussed. The materials for the activity can be downloaded online: [www.garance.be/docs/14abcdelasecurite.pdf](http://www.garance.be/docs/14abcdelasecurite.pdf)

**MAIN RESULTS:** Participants report less isolation, less fear of crime and more self-confidence. They leave the workshops with basic knowledge about what works in violence prevention.



## Country: GREECE

**ORGANIZATION CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITY:** European Anti-Violence Network

**TIMEFRAME OF ACTIVITY:** 2012–2014

**TITLE OF ACTIVITY:** Re-Actions against Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) – Actions in favor of women-survivors of IPV

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** The objectives of the project were to contribute mostly to secondary and tertiary prevention of intimate partner violence (IPV) via targeted provision of specialized information and support to women survivors of IPV via a publication of the book 'Guide on how to escape from a violent relationship' and operation of an information center for IPV issues.

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** One of the main activities involve the development of a book, where a hypothetical woman who is a survivor of IPV describes how she escaped from the violent relationship. The aim is to reach other women in similar situation to make the journey easier for them. The book describes what the life of an abused woman looks like, how she feels, which factors trap her in the violent relationship, what the warning signs are, and what the myths are. The book also provides guidance for the development of a personal safety plan, describes the legal framework, explains the options available, and what the woman's expectations should be when she approaches the police, the courts or other services, from the perspective of her rights and obligations. The book can be downloaded from: [www.antiviolence-net.eu/Odigos\\_apodrasis.pdf](http://www.antiviolence-net.eu/Odigos_apodrasis.pdf)

**MAIN RESULTS:** In less than two months, 3,000 Guides were disseminated upon request. The Guide was proven to be empowering to women and to counsellors. The counsellors were able to provide information in written form to their clients, and the clients were able to use the Guide, when requesting support from institutions and in some cases, using the Guide as confirmation that certain institutions had to take action on behalf of the women.





## Country: ROMANIA

### ORGANIZATION CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITY:

A.L.E.G

**TIMEFRAME OF ACTIVITY:** Annual event

**TITLE OF ACTIVITY:** Gender Equality Festival

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** The aim was to draw attention to the fact that violence against women stems from prejudices and stereotypes. Young women, men, girls and boys were the outreach group.

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** The festival includes

several interactive activities: movie screening followed by debates, forum theatre, interactive map of urban discrimination, gender treasure hunt, living library, marches and artwork or sports competitions.

**MAIN RESULTS:** The festival increases public awareness, supports the process of eliminating prejudices and stereotypes regarding gender and gender roles, promoting the change of public perceptions about appropriate patterns of behaviour for women and men. A proof of the larger impact is the replication of the festival (organized usually in the city of Sibiu) as part of the project of the Gender Equality Coalition during NGO Fest (a large civil society event) in 2015 in Bucharest.



## Country: ARMENIA

**ORGANIZATION CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITY:** Women's Rights Center

**TIMEFRAME OF ACTIVITY:** 9 October 2014

**TITLE OF ACTIVITY:** Raising awareness about domestic violence

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** The goal was to inform persons on the street about domestic violence and available support services

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** The activity was a 'Street Action' and involved distribution of booklets, leaflets and purple bracelets with «No to Domestic Violence» message printed on them.

**MAIN RESULTS:** About 150 persons were informed about domestic violence phenomenon and support services for women.

The examples show that women's NGOs are engaged in organizing a variety of activities, ranging from formal activities such as conferences or festivals to less formal, such as passing out information to people in public spaces or organizing empowerment groups for women on the topic of safety from violence. While the costs of the activities vary and some are also organized on a volunteer basis, they all involve connecting with others and exchanging information, all slowly leading to the build-up of awareness about violence against women, contributing to its prevention.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

- ▶ Prevention in form of awareness-raising is an important aspect of an overall coordinated system of measures to prevent and combat violence against women. Work in the area of prevention is fairly new and has also been included as an obligation of State parties to the Istanbul Convention. Prevention in form of awareness-raising implies various levels and models, however, the work itself is mostly about providing information about violence as a way to change social attitudes, but may also include information about seeking help, or how to support and help survivors, in addition to other types of prevention work such as education and training of professionals, for example.
- ▶ In Europe, a significant majority of women's organizations conduct prevention activities. The ones most likely to conduct them are national women's networks, followed by women's helplines, shelters and then centres. Data on funding allocated to NGOs for prevention activities is scarce, and could also be a result of lack of commitment by States to fund activities like awareness raising. Lack of funding in the area of prevention seriously hampers the effectiveness of the work. Given the fact that women's NGOs are important actors in communities, when it comes to awareness raising and changing violent behaviour, it would be important to allocate more resources to this work. Where information on funding is available, it comes from a central authority responsible for preventing and combating of violence against women, or from the women's organization itself. Lastly, there are not many women's NGOs with the main focus on prevention; most often, NGOs providing services as their core operations conduct prevention activities in form of awareness-raising as an additional activity.
- ▶ Measuring impact of prevention is difficult. For example speaking to 150 people on a street in Armenia may not sound like changing the world, however, if it results in 150 people thinking about violence against women and having a conversation with their family, colleagues, friends and neighbours, the impact can be considerable. Public attitudes do not change overnight, but private conversations play a significant role in slowly changing individual attitudes. The existence alone of a helpline or a women's centre has an awareness raising impact as it makes the issue of violence against women visible to the public, especially when the organizations have the ability to effectively advertise their presence. At this time, most prevention work appears to be low-key and a result of individuals working in unpaid capacity. Prevention work is invaluable and much of it is conducted by unpaid volunteers.
- ▶ WAVE recommends that States revisit and consider their obligations in the area of prevention as provided for in the Istanbul Convention; a document created as guidance for implementation of the relevant provisions is available online as means to support the implementation process (Council of Europe, 2014). Additionally, States should ensure continuous budgetary allocation for prevention activities, focusing on all forms of violence against women, to be conducted by women's NGOs. Adequate investment in prevention would also support the implementation of Article 9 of the Istanbul Convention that calls on State parties to recognize, encourage and support NGOs working in the area of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 8). Last, but not least, information on funding provided to various projects should be made publically available to allow for monitoring, although meaningful indicators should be elaborated for that purpose.



# 10. TRAINING

## Introduction

The Council of Europe Analytical Report states that violence against women and domestic violence are problems that require adequate responses by all agencies involved as well as multi-agency cooperation by a range of professionals. Hence, these must be equipped with a variety of specialist skills in order to adequately respond to violence against women and domestic violence (Council of Europe, 2014 p. 36). It is essential to educate professionals regarding the prevalence, effects, symptoms and dynamics of domestic violence and how to avoid secondary victimisation.

The Istanbul Convention contains important principles for State actors to be taken into consideration: Article 5 compels parties to “refrain from engaging in any act of violence against women and ensure that State authorities, officials, agents, institutions and other actors acting on behalf of the State act in conformity with this obligation”, and that States should “exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, punish and provide reparation for acts of violence”. (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 7)

According to the former UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences, “the due diligence standard serves as a tool for rights holders to hold States accountable, by providing an assessment framework for ascertaining what constitutes effective fulfilment of a State’s obligations, and for analysing its actions or omissions.” (United Nations General Assembly, 2013, p. 1)

Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention draws attention to the importance of training professionals to ensure the prevention and detection of all acts of violence covered by the scope of the convention, achieve equality between men and women, uphold the rights of victims and prevent secondary victimisation (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 11). The provisions under Article 15 also encourage that training focuses on multi-agency cooperation complementing obligations laid out under Article 7 of the Istanbul Convention, which focuses on victims’ rights. Multi-agency trainings are essential activities that can help relevant service providers, police officers and actors from the justice system to acquire such skills and develop this practice.

In order to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of training on violence against women, it is crucial for this to be integrated in formal education, vocational training and in-service training (Council of Europe 2012, p. 71). The integration of this issue into education and basic training of professionals is of crucial importance. Should this not be the case, knowledge and skills have to be acquired outside of formal education, which is costly and practically impossible to provide for all relevant professionals. The standard should therefore be to integrate training on the prevention of violence against women in all relevant fields of formal education. It is also “important that relevant training should be supported and reinforced by clear protocols and guidelines that set the standards staff are expected to follow in their respective fields” (Ibid, p. 71).

Article 14 of the Istanbul Convention stresses that teaching materials on a range of topics including equality between men and women and gender-based violence against women should be included in formal curricula at all levels of education (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 10). The EU Victims’ Directive emphasizes that it is essential to ensure general and specialist training for judges, prosecutors and lawyers involved in criminal procedures to raise awareness of victims’ needs (EU Victims’ Directive 2012/29/EU, Article 25, §2 & §3).

An integrated approach also requires the establishment of specialist studies such as graduate, post-graduate and PhD programmes on gender, victimology and criminology studies, in order to create the necessary bodies of academic knowledge and research needed to integrate the issue of gender-based violence in all studies. Besides theoretical knowledge, practical skills of methods need to be taught to different professionals.

Past experience and practice has proven that it is effective to integrate theoretical knowledge and practical skills of experts from women's NGOs and women's support services providing support to victims of violence into education, basic trainings and in-service training of various professionals.

WAVE has developed several training manuals for preventing violence against women along the years: *WAVE Training programme on combating violence against women* for different professionals, *Away from Violence for setting up and running women's shelters*, *Bridging Gaps*, for multi-agency work and improving quality standards in the work of specialist support services, *Protect* for the support of victims in high risk situations and building multi-agency partnerships. WAVE also organized a series of multi-disciplinary trainings in the last decade and has established the WAVE Training Institute for building capacities in preventing violence against women and domestic violence and supporting survivors. In 2015, trainings focused on capacity building for risk assessment and safety management to protect victims of violence and their children.

As previously stated, trainings are essential activities to guarantee an adequate and empowering response on behalf of all relevant actors to victims, based on their safety and human rights and acknowledging the gendered nature of the problem. Experts from women's networks, shelters, centres and helplines often play an important role on the national level in providing training to police officers, actors from the criminal justice system, social workers, child protection authorities, practitioners from general and health services and others. A study commissioned by the European Union Institute for Gender Equality (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2015, p. 19) throughout which training programmes addressing domestic violence were examined revealed that 83% of Member States provide training delivered by civil society organizations, a figure which confirms the important role of women's NGOs in the area of training.

## Aims and Content of Data Collection

The research sought to identify the contributions of women's organisations and specialist women's support services such as women's networks, women's shelters, women's centres and women's helplines in the field of training. The answers provided allow for an estimate to be made with regard to the group of countries included in the analysis. The target groups for trainings and the amount of State funding allocated for such activities represented additional focus points for the data collection. WAVE respondents were also asked to provide structured information on good practice examples of trainings for professionals over the timeframe 2014 and 2015 to give an overview on the variety of activities carried out in this area.

## Findings

Out of the 46 countries included in the survey, 35<sup>13</sup> provided answers to this section. It has been reported that police officers, judges, lawyers, social workers, health professionals and psychologists are the most frequently encountered target groups for trainings provided by experts from specialist support services.

<sup>13</sup> The countries are: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the UK.

## Funding for Training Activities

Women's networks in Bulgaria receive State funding for trainings and women's shelters in Liechtenstein also get an annual share of State funding for organizing trainings. Most of the trainings carried out in Bulgaria are delivered by women's NGOs, especially after State funding for NGO projects was mandated by the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in 2011. As such, most projects on family violence have as an integral component training sessions for professionals.

The following countries are – to a certain degree – allocating State funding for training carried out by women's support services: in Spain for training conducted by women's networks, shelters, centres and helplines, and in Slovakia, for training carried out by women's centres. State funding is also sometimes allocated in the UK for training provided by women's shelters. State funding for training provided by specialist women's support services seems to be rarely allocated in the following countries: in Germany, for women's networks, shelters, centres and helplines; in Estonia for women's networks and shelters; in Lithuania for women's shelters; in Montenegro for women's shelters, centres and helplines; in Russia for women's shelters and centres; and in the UK for women's networks. In 11 of the surveyed countries it was not possible to give an estimation of the allocation of State funding. 12 of the surveyed countries reported that State funding is never allocated to this sort of activities.<sup>14</sup> Even though there is no State funding, 10 countries indicated that all of their women's networks, shelters, centres or helplines are doing trainings. In this case funding is often provided by international donors, charitable organizations, or the activities are carried out by volunteers.

## Conclusions

As was mentioned in the section on shelters, receiving false or inadequate information from a responding officer or a first point of contact can be a barrier to women accessing specialist services such as shelters. In order to ensure that society as a whole is making advances in the way it addresses violence against women, it is essential to make sure that trainings addressing this phenomenon from a human rights and gender-specific approach are integrated into education and basic training as well as in-service training for key target groups, including: police officers and important actors from the justice system, such as judges, prosecutors, or lawyers, health care professionals, social workers, teachers and pre-school staff, immigration and asylum authorities, youth leaders and youth workers, which are key in identifying sexual violence against children and last but not least practitioners in general.

It has proven to be important to invite experts from women's organisations and specialist women's support services to take part in the development, implementation and evaluation of training programmes. Establishing effective cooperation in the area of training ensures that the support provided by agencies to victims of violence is based on the human rights and needs of survivors. This is also an indicator that States recognise the important role of women's NGOs as required by the Istanbul Convention in Article 9. Such recognition should be accompanied by support through funding being allocated for the work of women's NGOs in the area of training. Some of the aforementioned European countries are already leading the way in this regard, as demonstrated by this research.

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<sup>14</sup> The countries are: Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine and Turkey.

## Good Practice Examples

### Training – Good practice example from AUSTRIA

**ORGANISATION CARRYING OUT THE TRAINING:** Domestic Violence Intervention Centres and Women's Shelters

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** The main target groups of this training project are students from the police academy. The goal of the training is to enable them to respond to appeals made by victims of domestic violence and stalking in a professional way, paying attention to their safety and human rights. The main focus of the training is to protect victims by applying legal measures of protection, especially the Austrian emergency barring order, and to refer them to specialist support services.

**TIMEFRAME:** ongoing

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** The two day training is integrated into the basic training of the police. The content of the programme has been developed by the Ministry of the Interior together with experts from women's shelters and intervention centres for survivors of domestic violence and stalking. The trainings are carried out in "tandems" by a trainer from the police and a trainer from specialist support services. The training contains practical methods such as role-playing a police intervention based on a fictional case of domestic violence against women and children.

**MAIN RESULTS:** The main result of this project, which has been ongoing ever since the police emergency barring order came into force in Austria (1997), is that every new police officer is trained on this subject within his or her basic education. In addition to the two-day-seminar described above, which is oriented towards the practical implementation of standards for interventions, students receive detailed information about the legal base of their intervention (Police Security Law) and of course the criminal code and the criminal procedure law in the area of violence against women and domestic violence.

### Training – Good practice example from BULGARIA

**ORGANISATION CARRYING OUT THE TRAINING:** The Black Sea Academy for Prevention of Violence - an initiative of the Alliance for Protection against Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** police officers, lawyers, representatives of the judiciary, social workers and NGO representatives.

**TIMEFRAME:** 2013-2016

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** Several sessions have been conducted with police officers, social workers and NGO representatives. Many other training sessions with representatives of the judiciary are under way in several towns in Bulgaria. These training sessions are funded by the Ministry of Justice. The Alliance on gender-based violence also has a similar separate project and so do several of its member organizations. All these initiatives are interlinked and the sessions are to be delivered by the end of 2016. A special training programme on gender-based violence is being developed and enriched through every project and training session.

**MAIN RESULTS:** Thanks to the aforementioned collective and sustained activities, Bulgaria has managed to train a variety of practitioners, lawyers and representatives of the judiciary, improving their knowledge and strengthening their capacities and institutional practices to better tackle the phenomena of violence and gender based violence.

### Training – Good practice example from ENGLAND

**ORGANISATION CARRYING OUT THE TRAINING:** College of Policing (CoP) with Women's Aid Federation England (WA) and other expert trainers from the voluntary sector in England.

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** The goal was to develop and pilot a training programme for domestic abuse within Hertfordshire police force that would bring about substantial change to the practice, attitude and culture of front line police officers when responding to domestic abuse. Additionally, the aim was to offer a focused skills uplift on domestic abuse, as the training introduced the recommendations made

by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for the Constabulary (HMIC), following their 2014 national inspection of police responses to domestic abuse. Another goal was to introduce the new legislation around coercive control – how to identify and respond to it.

The target group consisted of 1,200 front line police officers from within one police force in England. This group was intended to be large enough so as to form a critical mass enabling significant change across the wider force.

**TIMEFRAME:** The project was delivered over 18 days spread over two months – April-June 2015. The 1,200 officers attended in groups of around 20 for a focused one-day course facilitated by two trainers – one with police service experience and one expert from the voluntary sector.

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:**<sup>15</sup> The training package, entitled DOMESTIC ABUSE MATTERS - 25 DAYS OF ACTION, was developed by the CoP and reviewed by WA. The package was then piloted by 20 trainers, who had to deliver the training to the Hertfordshire police force. The attendees were trainers from the police force and specialist trainers from the voluntary sector - WA being one of them. The training was delivered between April and June 2015 and evaluated by the College of Policing.

1,200 officers and staff received training on how they can better respond to the needs of victims (and their children) and on how to manage perpetrators. Supervisors and coaches were trained to support their first responder colleagues in their work and in the supervision of domestic abuse responses.

The first responders were trained in understanding coercive control, responses to trauma, perpetrator behaviour, evidence gathering and safety planning. The training involved interactive exercises, case studies, actual 'Body Worn Video' footage and incident footage, victim and perpetrator testimonies and experiential learning exercises. The supervisor's training was based on a variety of case studies and used actual 'Body Worn Video' footage.

The programme also included a two-day domestic abuse matters health check on the wider force to ensure that the leadership, procedures and policies supported an improved response to domestic abuse and coercion and control.

**MAIN RESULTS:** The delivery was accomplished in 18 days. A critical mass (1,200) staff were trained to create a substantial culture and attitude change as well as a skills uplift. This will enable Hertfordshire Constabulary to offer the best services to victims, offenders and their children.

## Training – Good practice example from LATVIA

**ORGANISATION CARRYING OUT THE TRAINING:** the NGO "Skalbes" in cooperation with the international association "SOS Children's Villages Latvia" and Bauska County Municipality institution "Bauska County Social Service"

**GOALS AND TARGET GROUPS:** social workers and psychologists

**TIMEFRAME:** March - April 2014

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:** The training was conducted through individual work carried out with women survivors of violence and support groups caring for these women.

**MAIN RESULTS:** The training developed theoretical knowledge about how to better understand violence and women in situations of violence, and also incorporated practical training for practitioners working with women survivors of violence and practitioners leading support groups. 35 people were given training on how to do individual work with women survivors of violence and within the framework of support groups caring for these women.

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<sup>15</sup> Link to trailer video: [http://jweb.ncalt.com/shared/CB/DA\\_Trailer\\_comp\\_01.mp4](http://jweb.ncalt.com/shared/CB/DA_Trailer_comp_01.mp4)

## Recommendations

- ▶ Integrate training into education and basic training for all relevant professionals including the curricula of graduate and post-graduate studies;
- ▶ Back up training with protocols and guidelines in core agencies (police, prosecutors, social and healthcare agencies, etc.) which set out clear quality standards for interventions and responses to survivors of violence;
- ▶ Educate and train professionals, especially police and justice system personnel on the principle of due diligence in preventing violence and protecting victims (Article 5 of the Istanbul Convention);
- ▶ Attach sanctions when duties and protocols are not carried out properly and ensure that there will be consequences to any lack of responsibility;
- ▶ Provide regular in-service training in all agencies involved and at all levels, including management;
- ▶ Keep training up to date with regular evaluation on effectiveness of interventions and implementation of existing protocols and standards;
- ▶ Keep training up to date with regular training sessions on changes in legislation, practice etc.;
- ▶ Provide inter-agency training of professionals to ensure comprehensive care, introduce inter-agency protocols to deal with gender violence and suspicion of gender-based violence (e.g. sexual violence against children);
- ▶ Support and promote the work of women's NGOs in training professionals including through allocating adequate funding and ensuring close cooperation in developing and implementing training on violence against women.

# 11. GOVERNMENT POLICY, FUNDING AND RECOGNITION OF THE WORK OF WOMEN'S NGOS

## National Policies on Violence against Women

### Introduction

The Istanbul Convention emphasises the importance of comprehensive and coordinated policies to prevent violence against women. It defines violence against women as a form of discrimination and recognises that the realization of de jure and de facto equality between women and men is a key element in prevention. Article 4 of the convention requires governments to take legislative and other measures to prevent violence against women and to prevent discrimination (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 6).

A national action plan (NAP) to combat and prevent violence against women can be seen as an indicator of the existence of a coordinated policy. However, the existence of a plan is in itself not enough. Effective measures for implementation are needed to achieve real change. Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention foresees the establishment of "one or more official bodies responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures" (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 8).

### Aims and Content of Data Collection

The aim of the WAVE Report 2015 questionnaire was to gather information on the current number of national policies in existence, the scope of violence covered and the timeframe for action plans. Since the report is focusing on the provision of specialist support for women victims of violence and their children, it was asked if the national policy contains measures in this area.

Further questions concerned the establishment of coordinating bodies to monitor the implementation of policies. To find out about the level of cooperation with women's NGOs, a question on their involvement in the work of coordinating bodies was asked.

Experts were also asked about their opinion on the effectiveness of the coordinating body.

To get an impression of the implementation of policies, questions were asked about the existence and tasks of a body responsible for monitoring and evaluating policies, the involvement of women's NGOs and the existence of evaluation reports.

However, these indicators alone are certainly not enough to assess the effectiveness of policies. In-depth research is needed on the measures to assess whether or not they are located in all policy areas (prevention, provision, protection and prosecution). Action plans and policies which mainly focus on establishment of laws or on the area of criminal law will not be effective in preventing violence against women and domestic violence (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 10).

Evaluation of how comprehensive and coordinated national action plans and strategies are is necessary in order to assess the quality of policy plans. Most importantly, evaluation research and impact assessments, carried out at regular intervals, are necessary to establish the effectiveness of measures in preventing violence against women and protecting victims. Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention on data collection and research requires parties to support research regarding the efficacy of measures taken to implement the convention (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 9).



## Findings

Although data gathered on the questions is patchy and not always complete, an impression can be drawn on the situation concerning national policies and their implementation.

### Existence of a National Policy

The findings show that 33 of 46 European countries have some kind of national policy. However, the question on the timeframe revealed that seven had expired. 26 continue until 2016 or beyond. In at least three countries a national action plan or policy is in the making. Ten countries have no such instrument. National policies can have the form of a national action plan or strategy on forms of violence against women (see next section) or measures within a broader strategy or action plan on gender equality or human rights. For example, Bosnia & Herzegovina has adopted a Framework Strategy for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

As the Council of Europe Analytical Study found, while it can be beneficial to integrate measures on violence against women in action plans and strategies on gender equality in order to recognize it as a form of discrimination, such an approach runs the danger of failing to deal with the issue in a comprehensive way (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 8). National Action Plans specifically addressing all forms of violence against women coordinated and integrated into gender equality programmes is the most effective way of ensuring that the issue of violence against women is most effectively addressed at a policy level. Failure to tie national action plans to "an overarching policy that takes account of the interconnections among the various forms of violence, [they] can obscure the structural foundations of violence against women in gender power relations and its character as a form of discrimination, thus weakening the human rights basis for a holistic approach" (ibid. p. 8). Thus, while it is of great importance to coordinate policies and measures on gender equality and violence against women, developing and implementing separate action plans and strategies on violence against women is necessary in order to deal with the problem thoroughly.

### Comprehensive and Holistic Policies

The findings of the Council of Europe Analytical Study (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 9) show that the number of forms of violence against women, which are addressed in action plans and strategies, has increased from 2005 to 2013. 23 Member States of the Council of Europe confirmed having a comprehensive and holistic policy addressing all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention (ibid. p. 6) yet only four member states actually had a policy that covered all nine forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention (ibid. p. 8).

During data collection, respondents were asked their opinion regarding the nine forms of violence included in the Istanbul Convention (rape and sexual violence; violence within the family or domestic violence; sexual harassment; FGM; violence in conflict and post-conflict situations; violence in institutional environments; failure to respect freedom of choice with regard to reproduction; killings in the name of "honour" and forced and early marriage) and whether these forms of violence were adequately covered in their national action plan or strategy. 19 countries provided answers. None of the experts were of the opinion that all forms of violence were adequately covered. Of the 171 possible affirmatives, in only 43 cases did respondents report that forms of violence were covered, often adding that they were not adequately covered.

The forms of violence most often considered to be adequately covered were violence within the family and domestic violence (16) followed by rape and sexual violence (5). Violence in conflict and post-conflict situations was least often named (1).

Taking this finding together with the Council of Europe Analytical Study findings demonstrates that there certainly is a lack of comprehensive policies and a tendency to link together single measures in

action plans and strategies, rather than to develop a holistic approach and coordinate measures. Overall, respondents from governments and women's NGOs both demonstrate that there is much room for improvement in developing national action plans and strategies.

### **Integration of Specialist Women's Support Services in National Policies**

32 WAVE respondents answered the question, of whether policies and measures relating to specialist women's support services are integrated into the national action plan or strategy. 22 indicated that the issue was mentioned in the national action plan or strategy; however, they often added that it was not covered adequately and no concrete measures and plans for identifying and closing gaps were attached.

### **Coordinating Bodies and Monitoring**

Article 10 in the Istanbul Convention requires parties to designate or establish one or more official bodies responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent violence against women and domestic violence.

WAVE respondents were asked about the existence of such a governmental body and out of 37 responses, 31 confirmed that such a body existed, five said there was no such body and one respondent indicated that the establishment of a coordinating body is planned.

This figure demonstrates that many European countries recognise the importance of a coordinated policy on violence against women. However, when it comes to the questions of role, status, competences and resources of such bodies, the picture is less positive. It was not possible to investigate in-depth the nature and role of the coordinating body in this research, but respondents were asked for their opinion on its effectiveness. The answers given revealed a number of fundamental problems and challenges of coordinating bodies:

### **Lack of Influence of Coordinating Bodies**

Most often mentioned was the problem of the effectiveness of coordinating bodies, for example, that they are "no power broker" and have little or no influence on policy-making. A further problem was that the status and competence of coordinating bodies is often unclear as is the role of members. Consequently, some meet only occasionally and rather than being able to coordinate and monitor the work of the government on violence against women are relegated to a consultative status with no power or resources to influence policy makers. To be effective, such bodies need to have the power to coordinate between government ministries and regions within a country. Furthermore, a lack of involvement of women's NGOs and academics who are experts in the field of violence against women is obviously a loss to coordinating bodies. An additional impediment to the effectiveness of coordinating bodies is that in some cases austerity measures and budget cuts have made it difficult to complete planned projects and achieve targets and have also resulted in administrative restructuring which scatters any progress which has been made. One respondent mentioned, that the coordinating body only became active after 27 femicides were registered in one year. Despite these criticisms, it is important to note that respondents from 31 countries indicated that there is some involvement of women's NGOs working to prevent violence against women in the work of coordinating bodies. Two respondents made positive comments one mentioned that the coordinating body is effective and led to a reform of domestic violence legislation and another reported that considerable efforts had been made to make the coordinating body more effective and that the body was implementing the largest ever project in the area of violence against women with support of the EU structural fund.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of National Policies**

Monitoring and evaluation of national action plans or strategies are important to ensure they are effective. The Istanbul Convention assigns these tasks to the coordinating bodies. However, this does not

mean that this work needs to be carried out by one single body. Greater objectivity would be achieved if the task of coordinating and implementing policies is separated from the task of monitoring and evaluation and the body responsible for monitoring is independent of the government.

The WAVE questionnaire asked about the existence of a national body entrusted with evaluation and monitoring of the national strategy. Experts from 36 countries provided information on this question. 23 indicated that a body carrying out evaluation and monitoring exists, while 13 said it did not. They were also asked to provide information on both the name and location of the coordinating body as well as of the monitoring body. From the information received it appears that in most countries the two functions are carried out by the same entity. Among the few countries which seem to have an independent monitoring body are Spain (Observatory on Violence against Women) and Scotland (Accountability Working Group). On the question of whether national action plan or policy has clearly set outcomes 29 responses were received of which 18 indicated this was so and 11 experts said there were no outcomes formulated in the document, indicating that not all national action plans and policies have been targeted towards concrete outcomes. This makes it even more difficult to monitor the implementation and only seven WAVE respondents answered that the government has been able to meet outcomes set in the action plan. Evaluation reports are an indicator for the level of implementation of policies and WAVE respondents were asked if the monitoring body is carrying out evaluation reports. 27 provided information to the question, 17 answered that an evaluation existed, while ten said it did not. 12 respondents (out of 22 responses) stated that the evaluation report was made public, and ten indicated it was not.

A further aim of the research was to find out if women's NGOs were involved in monitoring and evaluation. Responses from 28 countries stated that this was the case; however, the research was not able to go into greater depth and explore how women's NGOs were involved. WAVE experts were also asked if they themselves carry out evaluation activities regarding the measures in the national action plan or strategy and only 11 out of 31 who responded were able to say they did.

## **Funding for Measures and Policies to Prevent Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**

### **Introduction**

Article 8 of the Istanbul Convention states that parties shall allocate appropriate financial and human resources for the adequate implementation of integrated policies, including those carried out by NGOs.

The allocation of funding for measures and policies to prevent violence against women and domestic violence, is a strong indicator for the commitment of governments to the implementation of policies and measures. However, there are many obstacles to using such an indicator since data on financial spending in this area is difficult to obtain. This is not only due the fact that some resource costs are difficult to calculate, for instance resources for police intervention or health services supporting victims of violence. Governments also seem to have difficulties in specifying the amount of funding allocated to specific programs such as the amount spent on funding women's shelters. Reasons for this might be that such funding is not provided by one agency and that there are no mechanisms allowing the identification of spending on measures to prevent violence against women and domestic violence and to support victims.

The Council of Europe Analytical Study (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 13) reported that although 39 countries indicated that there were funds at the national level allocated for activities to combat violence against women, only eight were able to provide a figure for this (ibid. p. 60).

## Aims and Content of Data Collection

WAVE respondents were asked the number of questions about funding; their assessment of the availability of funding for the implementation of national action plans or policies; the allocation of funds for activities to combat violence against women on the national level; the amount of funding in the year 2014 for government activities and NGOs; whether governmental funding for women's support services is mandated by laws or regulations and types of funding.

## Findings

WAVE respondents were not able to provide concrete information about the funding situation in their country because such data is not available to them.

However, all were of the opinion that their country does not provide sufficient financial resources to combat violence against women. Respondents from 23 countries stated that specific government funds were allocated for activities to combat violence against women at the national level, while ten stated that there were no such funds. Only five respondents were able to give a figure on the amount of funding for government activities in 2014 (Italy, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Slovenia and Spain) and seven on funding for NGO activities (Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Slovenia, Spain).

The question of whether government funding of women's support services is mandated by laws or regulations was affirmed only by 15 respondents. 25 said it was not. The lack of a legal base for the funding of specialist support measures contributes to the lack of funding and the lack of information available on the funding situation.

Respondents were also asked what kind of funding women's support services received from governments. There were five options to choose from (project funding; annual core funding; 2-3 years core funding; permanent core funding and public procurement). Project funding was by far the most common form mentioned 27 times, followed by annual core funding (18) and 2-3 years core funding (10). Permanent funding is very rare, and public procurement funding seems to be on the rise.

This means that women's support services, which require stability and sustainable funding in order to provide middle and long term support to survivors and are, even decades after being established, permanently insecure and have a precarious existence.

## Recognition of Women's NGOs

### Introduction

Article 9 of the Istanbul Convention requires States to "recognize, encourage and support, at all levels, the work of relevant NGOs and of civil society active in combating violence against women and establish effective co-operation with these organizations" (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 8). This shows the important role the Convention attributes to women's organizations working to end violence against women and domestic violence and requires parties to work together effectively with them.

### Aims and Content of Data Collection

Respondents were asked if they were of the opinion that the State recognizes, encourages and supports women's NGOs working to prevent violence and support victims. Furthermore, the question whether there is effective cooperation with the government was posed. Both measures are foreseen in the Istanbul Convention, Article 9.

## Findings

Opinions expressed show a mixed picture. Whilst some respondents report good cooperation, for example; women's NGOs being consulted by ministries when drafting legislation or national governments advertising the services and work of women's NGOs and including them in national consultations and workshops for the national strategy; other respondents complained that women's NGOs do not feel recognised, encouraged or supported by the state or even that the State is establishing its own NGOs to exclude the independent women's NGOs. It should, however, be pointed out that one respondent considered that although the State did not directly encourage or support women's NGOs this has the advantage that they could work without interference from the government. Similarly although some respondents reported that the government supports women's helplines and other services, others complained of a lack of specific budget lines for funding women's NGOs, which feel they are not valued and not included as key actors in the development of NAPs. Furthermore, whilst in some cases governments cooperate with NGOs around activities for the national policy or strategy, invite them to conferences, involve them in training government officials and in planning surveys on violence against women and the recommendations of women's NGOs are included in election programmes of political parties others complain that their government does not support women's NGOs with a gender-specific approach.

## Cooperation between Government and Women's NGOs

Respondents were asked if in their opinion there is an effective co-operation between government and women's NGOs. Eight respondents answered with yes, 10 with no and 15 provided their opinion in writing. Again the responses show a mixed picture. On the positive side, some countries reported that women's NGOs were invited not only to participate but to lead accountability workshops and were appreciated by the Government and invited as expert consultants to provide their expertise for the formulation and implementation of policies. Other respondents highlighted the limitations of such collaboration, for example, although women's NGOs were invited to meetings and can express their opinion they were not included in decision making, or they were recognized as experts, but not funded. Some even felt that the involvement of NGOs in developing the national action plan is sometimes a purely formal act and the plan often does not reflect the input of women's NGOs.

Some respondents reported that despite positive examples of cooperation, there was a lack of government interest in the work of the women's NGOs and rather a desire to demonstrate that they are fulfilling EU recommendations. Cooperation was often easier to achieve at the practice level e.g. with the police or social work departments rather than the policy level with governments. Several respondents bemoaned the lack of government support for prevention activities or that such work was diluted by the involvement with groups lacking expertise on the issue such as fathers' rights and church based organisations. One respondent simply states that women's issues were simply not on the agenda of the government

## Recommendations

Despite some very good examples of women's NGOs being funded, recognised and involved in developing government policy to combat violence against women, overall there is much work to be done in achieving the level of support and cooperation necessary to be effective.

- ▶ A gender-specific analysis and human rights approach to tackling violence against women is required by the Istanbul Convention and should form the cornerstone of government policy on the subject. Governments should consult women's NGOs when drafting legislation on violence against women and establishing national policy and strategy and specialist women's support services should be integrated in national policies.
- ▶ All countries should develop and implement national action plans or strategies on violence against women. These NAPs or strategies should be comprehensive and holistic and adequately address all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention and include clearly formulated goals and concrete outcomes
- ▶ A government body should be designated to coordinate the NAPs or strategy. This coordinating body should have clearly defined areas of competence and be able to take decisions and establish policies. Thus a coordinating body needs to be a high level body i.e. on ministerial level. Women's NGOs and academics in the field should be involved in the coordinating body.
- ▶ The Istanbul Convention includes the requirement to "designate or establish one or more official bodies responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence" (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 8) covered by the Convention (Article 10). While the Convention does not explicitly foresee that monitoring and evaluation are being carried out by a separate body, it does also not state that there should be only one body carrying out these tasks. For the sake of objectivity, functions should be divided and the body coordinating and implementing policies should not be the same as the body carrying out the monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring of the NAPs or strategy should be separate from the coordinating body and also independent of government.
- ▶ There is little known about government funding for activities and measures to prevent violence against women and domestic violence. This is an alarming situation and more in-depth research is needed to reveal the financial commitment governments are making to eliminate this widespread human rights violation. Funding of policies and measures to end violence against women and to support survivors is definitely a weak point in many countries and this a serious obstacle to successful prevention of the problem. Change cannot be achieved with little investment and violence against women prevails if not impeded. National monitoring bodies should be given the task to regularly research government spending in this area and compare this to the costs of violence.

## 12. EMERGENCY BARRING ORDERS

### Introduction

Next to safe accommodation in women's shelters, protection orders, especially emergency protection orders, are central measures to guarantee women victims of violence and their children protection in situations of immediate danger. The Istanbul Convention requires that in such situations the police or another authority can order a perpetrator to vacate the residence of the victim for a sufficient period of time (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 22).

Several European countries have established such measures in recent years (Van der Aa, 2015; Freixes & Román, 2014). The Council of Europe Analytical Study indicated that in 36 countries, authorities have the power to issue an emergency barring order (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 65). Since January 2015, new European protective measures are in place, allowing for a mutual recognition of protective measures in across borders in EU Member States (European Union, 2011 and 2013).<sup>16</sup> Evaluation of these measures are still outstanding, however, the Directive 2011/99/EU foresees that the EU Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament and to the Council on its application by 11 January 2016.

Despite progress made in establishing protective measures, there is still considerable concern about the implementation, which is also reflected in women's journeys to support in chapter 7. There is little data and research on the application of emergency barring orders and other protective measures by courts and it is difficult to assess their impact and effectiveness in protecting victims. What is known from the experience of women's support services is that there are many obstacles for victim in accessing such measures including the provisional and temporary nature of measures and a shortage of housing programs which force victims to live together with an abusive ex-partner after separation. An order for the abuser to leave the house of the victim is often only temporary and he has the right to come back after the order expires.

In Austria, the first country in Europe to introduce an emergency barring order issued by the police in 1997, over 173,000 police barring orders have been issued from 1997 to 2014 (Wiener Interventions-stelle, 2015, p. 69).<sup>17</sup> Emergency barring orders are followed by civil court protection orders if victims apply for them and the measures are coordinated so that no gap in protection occurs jeopardizing the safety of victims of domestic violence. An indicator has been developed to measure the level of implementation of emergency protection orders, the number of police barring orders per 10,000 population. In 2014, an average of ten police barring orders were issued per 10,000 inhabitants (ibid., p. 72).<sup>18</sup> This indicator, if applied Europe wide, could make comparisons in the implementation of protective measures possible.

### Aims and Content of Data Collection

The aim of the data collection was to ask for data on the number of emergency barring orders as well as the number of civil and criminal court protection orders issued in 2014. Unfortunately, the respondents for many countries were not able to provide this information. Most of the information provided was on emergency barring orders and the presentation of the findings therefore concentrates on this measure.

<sup>16</sup> See also WAVE fact sheet on European Protection Orders: [http://wave-network.org/sites/default/files/2015-03%20WAVE%20Fact%20sheet%20on%20the%20European%20Protection%20Orders\\_2015%20MR\\_0.pdf](http://wave-network.org/sites/default/files/2015-03%20WAVE%20Fact%20sheet%20on%20the%20European%20Protection%20Orders_2015%20MR_0.pdf), 30 December 2015

<sup>17</sup> Austria has approximately 8,5 million inhabitants. Information brochures on the Austrian laws on the protection from violence are available in 20 languages on the website of the Vienna Intervention Centre against domestic violence: <http://www.interventionsstelle-wien.at/gewaltschutzbrochure>, 15 Dec 2015

<sup>18</sup> The 2013 Statistic of the Domestic Violence Intervention Centre Vienna is available in English on the website of the Centre: <http://www.interventionsstelle-wien.at/statistiken-der-wiener-interventionsstelle>, 30th December 2015



**TABLE 7 – Existence of Emergency Barring Orders in Europe, and Number of Orders Issued in 2014**

Police emergency barring orders (EBOs)	Total Population	Existence of police EBOs (yes/no)	Number of police EBOs issued in 2014	Number of police EBOs issued to protect female victims in 2014
Albania	2,895,947	/	/	/
Armenia	3,010,598	yes	/	/
Austria	8,506,889	yes	8,466	/
Azerbaijan	9,356,483	/	/	/
Belarus	9,463,840	yes	/	/
Belgium	11,203,992	yes	/	/
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3,791,662	No	/	/
Bulgaria	7,245,677	No	/	/
Croatia	4,246,809	yes	/	/
Cyprus	858,000	yes	/	/
Czech Republic	10,538,300	yes	1,378	1,300
Denmark	5,627,235	yes	/	/
Estonia	1,315,819	yes	/	/
Finland	5,451,270	yes	/	/
France	66,320,000	/	/	/
Georgia	4,497,617	No	/	/
Germany	80,767,463	/	/	/
Greece	10,816,286	No	/	/
Hungary	9,877,365	yes	/	/
Iceland	329,100	/	/	/
Ireland	4,605,501	No	/	/
Italy	60,782,668	No	/	/
Kosovo	1,794,180	yes <sup>19</sup>	86	/
Latvia	2,001,468	yes	83	/
Liechtenstein	37,129	yes	4	/
Lithuania	2,943,472	No	/	/
Luxembourg	549,680	/	/	/
Macedonia	2,022,547	/	/	/
Malta	425,284	/	/	/
Moldova	3,559,497	yes	/	/
Montenegro	621, 521	yes	22	/
Netherlands	16,829,289	yes	/	/
Norway	5,107,970	/	/	/
Poland	38,017,856	No	/	/
Portugal	10,347,822	/	/	/
Romania	19,947,311	No	/	/
Russia	142,856,536	No	/	/
Serbia	7,146,759	No	/	/
Slovakia	5,415,949	/	/	/
Slovenia	2,061,085	yes	1,046	/
Spain	46,439,864	/	/	/
Sweden	9,644,864	/	/	/
Switzerland	8,139,631	yes	/	/
Turkey	76,667,864	yes	/	/
Ukraine	42,701,791	yes	5,464	/
UK	64,308,261	yes	/	/

<sup>19</sup> In one region of Kosovo

## Findings

WAVE respondents from 33 countries provided information on emergency barring orders in their countries. 22 stated that such a measure was available, 11 negated it. Only eight respondents were able to provide some figures on the number of barring orders issued in 2014 and only two on the number of women protected by such orders. The obvious conclusion from our attempt to gather data on this issue is that such information is not easy to obtain.

## Recommendations

- ▶ It should be a minimum requirement that authorities publish annually the number of emergency barring orders issued to protect victims of violence against women
- ▶ More information on the implementation and the impact of emergency barring orders is urgently needed.
- ▶ Administrative data collection needs to be improved and minimum standards for data collection established
- ▶ Data on emergency barring orders (police, other authority)
- ▶ Number of emergency barring orders issued per year
- ▶ Number barring orders violated, including data on sanctions for violations

### Data on restraining and protective orders issued by civil courts

- ▶ Number of orders applied for by victims
- ▶ Number of orders granted
- ▶ Number of orders violated including data on sanctions for violations
- ▶ Number of repeat orders

### Data on restraining and protective orders issued by the criminal justice system

- ▶ Number of orders issued
- ▶ Number of violations including data on sanctions for violations
- ▶ Number of repeat orders

### Indicator for implementation of protective measures:

- ▶ Number of emergency barring orders per 10,000 inhabitants
- ▶ Number of restraining and protective orders per 10,000 inhabitants
- ▶ Violation rate (percentage of orders violated by perpetrators)

### In accordance with the recommendations in the Istanbul Convention information on protection orders collected should include the following variables:

- ▶ Sex of victim
- ▶ Age of victim
- ▶ Sex of aggressor
- ▶ Age of aggressor
- ▶ Type of violence
- ▶ Relationship between aggressor and victim
- ▶ Geographical location
- ▶ Additionally qualitative research is needed to include the voices of survivors and their assessment of the usefulness and effectiveness of protective orders and their experiences in accessing these measures.

# 13. SUPPORT FOR WOMEN WHOSE PARTNERS ARE IN PERPETRATOR PROGRAMMES

## Introduction

Perpetrator-related interventions include more measures than just treatment programmes. These interventions comprise all measures addressing perpetrators and are aimed at stopping the violent behaviour, such as with barring orders, protective orders in criminal or civil law, detention, sanctions, probation, work in prison, or anti-violence programs run by men's centres. Article 7 of the Istanbul Convention indicates that work with perpetrators needs to focus on and be integrated in "State-wide effective, comprehensive and co-ordinated policies encompassing all relevant measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence" against women and domestic violence (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 7).

Work with perpetrators is not an alternative, but rather a supplement to legal sanctions, in order to help perpetrators change their violent behaviour, to avoid recidivism, and to protect victims.

Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention sets the standards that prevention and treatment programmes with perpetrators must:

- Ensure "that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern" and that, where appropriate,
- Programmes "are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims" (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 11).

The work with perpetrators of violence against women is still in its infancy in Europe. WAVE has been involved in networking activities for the development of perpetrator programmes since 2006. From 2006 to 2008 WAVE Members were part of a European DAPHNE project which developed guidelines to develop standards for programmes working with male perpetrators of domestic violence (European Network for Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, 2015)<sup>20</sup>. When the legal association Work with Perpetrators was established in 2014, women's organizations providing specialist services to victims were invited to become members of the Board where WAVE has a seat. WAVE engages in the work to ensure that safety and human rights of victims are of primary concern in the work with perpetrators.

There are no clear figures about the number of programmes working with perpetrators in Europe. The Council of Europe Analytical Report (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 73) lists about 450 programmes in 28 European countries. The database of the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators lists about 190 programmes.<sup>21</sup>

## Aims and Content of Data Collection

WAVE research focused on the question of cooperation between perpetrator programmes and specialist women's support services. WAVE respondents were specifically asked if specialist women's support services in their country were working together with programmes listed in the database of the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators.

<sup>20</sup> European Network Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence-Guidelines for standards for perpetrator programmes: <http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=29>, 30th December 2015.

<sup>21</sup> European Network Work with Perpetrators Database of programmes: <http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/index.php?id=62>, 30th December 2015.

This simple question does not provide any information on the nature and effectiveness of the programmes nor the quality of the cooperation. It simply provides an indication on the level of cooperation between perpetrator programmes and specialist women's support services in Europe.

**TABLE 8 – Cooperation between Perpetrator Programmes and Specialist Support Services for Victims**

Country	Total Population	Number of programmes for perpetrators according to the WWP database	Existence of cooperation with women's support services (yes/no)
Albania	2,895,947	1	yes
Austria	8,506,889	5	yes
Belgium	11,203,992	9	yes
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3,791,662	4	yes
Bulgaria	7,245,677	6	yes
Croatia	4,246,809	8	yes
Cyprus	858,000	1	yes
Ireland	4,605,501	1	yes
Luxembourg	549,680	1	yes
Moldova	3,559,497	1	yes
Slovenia	2,061,085	1	yes
Switzerland	8,139,631	14	yes
UK	64,308,261	20	yes
" YES "	121,972,631	72	13

Respondents from 13 countries answered the question on cooperation between perpetrators programmes and specialist support services in their country. The database of work with perpetrators lists 72 programs in these countries.

All 13 respondents confirmed that some cooperation between the database listed perpetrator programmes and women's support services exist, at least with one of the programmes listed.

This finding is similar to the Council of Europe Analytical Study (Council of Europe, 2014, p. 74) which indicates that perpetrator programmes exist in 37 countries and, in the government's opinion, one third of programmes had established cooperation with women's support services.

## Recommendations

- ▶ In line with the standard set by the Istanbul Convention, perpetrator programmes need to reach out to women's support services and develop cooperation to ensure the safety of victims while perpetrators are attending programs
- ▶ It is important to acknowledge barriers for cooperation such as different approaches and a separate history of development and to address these carefully; survivors and survivor organizations should never be pushed or forced to cooperate, and the safety of the victim needs to be or primary concern.
- ▶ The existing examples of integrated approaches need to be assessed to identify best practice.
- ▶ More resources are needed to disseminate this information and encourage an exchange of experiences to assess the successes and challenges of this work and promote more cooperation.

**TABLE 9 – National Women's Helplines in 46 European Countries**

Countries	National Women's Helplines	24/7 and Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Operating 24/7	Multilingual Support
Albania	Yes	No	No	No	No
Armenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Azerbaijan <sup>22</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Belarus	No	/	/	/	/
Belgium	No	/	/	/	/
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Bulgaria	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Croatia	No	/	/	/	/
Cyprus	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Czech Republic	No	/	/	/	/
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
France	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Iceland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	/
Ireland <sup>23</sup>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kosovo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	No	/	/	/	/
Liechtenstein	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Lithuania	No	/	/	/	/
Luxembourg	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Macedonia	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Malta	No	/	/	/	/
Moldova	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montenegro	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Netherlands	No	/	/	/	/
Norway	No	/	/	/	/
Poland <sup>24</sup>	No	/	/	/	/
Portugal	No	/	/	/	/
Romania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Russia	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Serbia	No	/	/	/	/
Slovakia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Slovenia	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden <sup>25</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	No	/	/	/	/
Turkey	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Ukraine	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>

<sup>22</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, P.25, published in 2015.<sup>23</sup> Ibid.<sup>24</sup> Ibid.<sup>25</sup> Ibid.**TABLE 10 – National Women's Helplines – User Statistics**

Countries	National Women's Helplines	Year Data Collected	Number of calls
Albania	Yes	/	/
Armenia	Yes	2014	1,428
Austria	Yes	2014	8,020
Azerbaijan <sup>26</sup>	Yes	2013	4,865
Belarus	No	/	/
Belgium	No	/	/
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Yes	2014	4,636
Bulgaria	Yes	2014	1,455
Croatia	No	/	/
Cyprus	Yes	2014	1,636
Czech Republic	No	/	/
Denmark	Yes	2014	5,000
Estonia	Yes	2014	724
Finland	Yes	2015	1,000
France	Yes	2014	76,672
Georgia	Yes	/	/
Germany	Yes	2014	23,912
Greece	Yes	/	/
Hungary	Yes	/	/
Iceland	Yes	/	/
Ireland	Yes	2014	11,167
Italy	Yes	2014	41,897
Kosovo	Yes	/	/
Latvia	No	/	/
Liechtenstein	Yes	/	/
Lithuania	No	/	/
Luxembourg	Yes	2014	291
Macedonia	Yes	2014	2,219
Malta	No	/	/
Moldova	Yes	2014	2,634
Montenegro	Yes	Sep.-Dec. 2015	1,155
Netherlands	No	/	/
Norway	No	/	/
Poland	No	/	/
Portugal	No	/	/
Romania	Yes	/	/
Russia	Yes	2014	8,242
Serbia	No	/	/
Slovakia	Yes	Feb.-June 2015	1,869
Slovenia	Yes	2014	1,728
Spain	Yes	2014	68,651
Sweden	Yes	/	/
Switzerland	No	/	/
Turkey	Yes	2014	4,035
Ukraine	Yes	2014	7,725
United Kingdom	Yes	/	varies

<sup>26</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, P.25, published in 2015.

TABLE 11 – National Women's Helplines in EU28 Member States

Countries	National Women's Helplines	24/7 and Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Operating 24/7	Multilingual Support
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Belgium	No	/	/	/	/
Bulgaria	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Croatia	No	/	/	/	/
Cyprus	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Czech Republic	No	/	/	/	/
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
France	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Ireland	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	No	/	/	/	/
Lithuania	No	/	/	/	/
Luxembourg	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Malta	No	/	/	/	/
Netherlands	No	/	/	/	/
Poland	No	/	/	/	/
Portugal	No	/	/	/	/
Romania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Slovakia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Slovenia	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>

TABLE 12 – National Women's Helplines in European Countries outside the EU

Countries	National Women's Helplines	24/7 and Free of Charge	Free of Charge	Operating 24/7	Multilingual Support
Albania	Yes	No	No	No	No
Armenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Azerbaijan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Belarus	No	/	/	/	/
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Iceland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	/
Kosovo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liechtenstein	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Macedonia	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Moldova	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montenegro	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Norway	No	/	/	/	/
Russia	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Serbia	No	/	/	/	/
Switzerland	No	/	/	/	/
Turkey	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Ukraine	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

TABLE 13 – Women's Shelters in 46 European countries

Countries	Total Population	Meets the Minimum Standard	Number of Women's Shelters	Number of Beds in Women's Shelters	Women's Shelters Beds Available (%)	Women's Shelters Beds Needed	Women's Shelters Beds Missing
Albania	2,895,947	No	5	153	53%	290	90
Armenia	3,010,598	No	3	12	4%	301	289
Austria	8,506,889	No	30	759	89%	850	91
Azerbaijan <sup>27</sup>	9,356,483	No	4	19	2%	936	917
Belarus	9,463,840	No	4	30	3%	946	916
Belgium	11,203,992	No	37	283	25%	1,120	837
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3,791,662	No	9	204	54%	379	175
Bulgaria	7,245,677	No	7	72	10%	725	653
Croatia	4,246,809	No	7	267	63%	425	158
Cyprus	858,000	No	2	17	20%	86	69
Czech Republic	10,538,300	No	4	96	9%	1,054	958
Denmark	5,627,235	Yes	43	934	n/a	568	0
Estonia	1,315,819	No	13	86	65%	132	46
Finland	5,451,270	No	19	114	21%	545	431
France <sup>28</sup>	66,320,000	/	/	/	/	6,632	/
Georgia	4,497,617	/	8	/	/	450	/
Germany	80,767,463	No	369	6,800	84%	8,077	1,277
Greece	10,816,286	No	26	470	43%	1,082	612
Hungary	9,877,365	No	15	140	14%	988	848
Iceland	329,100	No	1	18	55%	33	15
Ireland <sup>29</sup>	4,605,501	No	21	141	31%	460	319
Italy	60,782,668	No	73	627	10%	6,078	5,451
Kosovo	1,794,180	No	8	140	78%	179	39
Latvia	2,001,468	Yes	23	1,084	n/a	200	0
Liechtenstein	37,129	No	1	3	75%	4	1
Lithuania	2,943,472	No	0	/	/	294	294
Luxembourg	549,680	Yes	8	150	n/a	55	0
Macedonia	2,022,547	No	5	22	11%	202	180
Malta	425,284	No	4	41	95%	43	2
Moldova	3,559,497	No	1	25	7%	356	331
Montenegro	621,521	No	3	44	71%	62	18
Netherlands	16,829,289	No	96	1,608	96%	1,683	75
Norway	5,107,970	Yes	45	907	n/a	511	0
Poland <sup>30</sup>	38,017,856	No	1	26	1%	3,802	3,776
Portugal	10,347,822	No	37	639	62%	1,035	396
Romania	19,947,311	No	73	828	42%	1,995	1,167
Russia	142,856,536	No	95	434	3%	14,286	13,852
Serbia	7,146,759	No	12	257	36%	715	458
Slovakia	5,415,949	/	2	/	/	542	/
Slovenia	2,061,085	Yes	16	274	n/a	206	0
Spain	46,439,864	/	53	/	/	4,644	/
Sweden <sup>31</sup>	9,644,864	No	161	631	65%	964	333
Switzerland	8,139,631	No	18	284	35%	814	530
Turkey	76,667,864	No	130	3,402	44%	7,667	4,265
Ukraine	42,701,791	/	2	/	/	4,270	/
United Kingdom	64,308,261	No	348 <sup>32</sup>	4,744	78%	6,431	1,687
<b>Total</b>	<b>831,096,151</b>	<b>5/41</b>	<b>1,842</b>	<b>26,785</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>83,110</b>	<b>47,556</b>

<sup>27</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, PP.32-33, published in 2015.

<sup>28</sup> Data on available women's shelters, and shelter places, for France was not available in 2015, due to the current updating of such data on the national level.

<sup>29</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, PP.32-33, published in 2015.

<sup>30,31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> This number is made up of shelters in England (243), Northern Ireland (14), Scotland (37) and Wales (54)

TABLE 14 – Women's Shelters – User Statistics

Countries	Number of Women's Shelters	Women & Children accommodated in Women's Shelters	Women who could not be accommodated due to lack of space
Albania	8	145 women, 179 children	0
Armenia	3	/	/
Austria	30	1,735 women, 1,767 children	460
Azerbaijan	4	/	/
Belarus	4	106 women, 104 children	/
Belgium	37	53 women, 70 children	/
Bosnia & Herzegovina	9	210 women, 216 children	/
Bulgaria	7	108 women, 96 children	55
Croatia	7	/	/
Cyprus	2	32 women, 40 children	/
Czech Republic	4	122 women, 104 children	139
Denmark	43	1,840 women, 1,768 children	2,248
Estonia	13	215 women, 186 children	/
Finland	19	987 women, 1,148 children	/
France <sup>33</sup>	/	/	/
Georgia	8	/	/
Germany	369	/	/
Greece	26	172 women	/
Hungary	14	/	/
Iceland	1	100 women, 84 children	0
Ireland	21	/	/
Italy	73	681 women, 721 children	308
Kosovo	8	315 women, 197 children	/
Latvia	23	/	/
Liechtenstein	1	17 women, 20 children	/
Lithuania	0	/	/
Luxembourg	8	/	/
Macedonia	5	/	/
Malta	4	214 women, 204 children	/
Moldova	1	/	0
Montenegro	3	171 women, 198 children	/
Netherlands	96	/	/
Norway	45	1,770 women, 1,507 children	/
Poland	1	/	/
Portugal	37	/	/
Romania	73	/	/
Russia	95	/	/
Serbia	12	1,250 women	/
Slovakia	2	/	/
Slovenia	16	/	/
Spain	53	/	/
Sweden	161	/	/
Switzerland	18	1,057 women, 989 children	1,033
Turkey	130	14,123 women, 5,742 children	/
Ukraine	2	126 women	/
United Kingdom	348 <sup>32</sup>	8,741 women, 8,461 children <sup>34</sup>	7,105

<sup>33</sup> Data on available women's shelters, and shelter places, for France was not available in 2015, due to the current updating of such data on the national level.

<sup>34</sup> This information is partly based on statistics from England which provide information on referrals, not residents, this means women may be counted twice. In addition, the information is taken from a survey to which not all shelters submit information.



**TABLE 15 – Women's Shelters in EU28 Member States**

Countries	Total Population	Meets the Minimum Standard	Number of Women's Shelters	Number of Beds in Women's Shelters	Women's Shelters Beds Available (%)	Women's Shelters Beds Needed	Women's Shelters Beds Missing
Austria	8,506,889	No	30	759	89%	850	91
Belgium	11,203,992	No	37	283	25%	1,120	837
Bulgaria	7,245,677	No	7	72	10%	725	653
Croatia	4,246,809	No	7	267	63%	425	158
Cyprus	858,000	No	2	17	20%	86	69
Czech Republic	10,538,300	No	4	96	9%	1,054	958
Denmark	5,627,235	Yes	43	934	n/a	568	0
Estonia	1,315,819	No	13	86	65%	132	46
Finland	5,451,270	No	19	114	21%	545	431
France	66,320,000	/	/	/	/	6,632	/
Germany	80,767,463	No	369	6,800	84%	8,077	1,277
Greece	10,816,286	No	26	470	43%	1,082	612
Hungary	9,877,365	No	15	140	14%	988	848
Ireland	4,605,501	No	21	141	31%	460	319
Italy	60,782,668	No	73	627	10%	6,078	5,451
Latvia	2,001,468	Yes	23	1,084	n/a	200	0
Lithuania	2,943,472	No	0	/	/	294	294
Luxembourg	549,680	Yes	8	150	n/a	55	0
Malta	425,284	No	4	41	95%	43	2
Netherlands	16,829,289	No	96	1,608	96%	1,683	75
Poland	38,017,856	No	1	26	1%	3,802	3,776
Portugal	10,347,822	No	37	639	62%	1,035	396
Romania	19,947,311	No	73	828	42%	1,995	1,167
Slovakia	5,415,949	/	2	/	/	542	/
Slovenia	2,061,085	Yes	16	274	n/a	206	0
Spain	46,439,864	/	53	/	/	4,644	/
Sweden	9,644,864	No	161	631	65%	964	333
United Kingdom	64,308,261	No	348 <sup>35</sup>	4,744	78%	6,431	1,687
<b>Total</b>	<b>507,095,479</b>	<b>4/25</b>	<b>1,488</b>	<b>20,831</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>50,716</b>	<b>19,480</b>

**TABLE 16 – Women's Shelters in "New" EU Member States\***

Bulgaria	7,245,677	No	7	72	10%	725	653
Croatia	4,246,809	No	7	267	63%	425	158
Cyprus	858,000	No	2	17	20%	86	69
Czech Republic	10,538,300	No	4	96	9%	1,054	958
Estonia	1,315,819	No	13	86	65%	132	46
Hungary	9,877,365	No	15	140	14%	988	848
Latvia	2,001,468	Yes	23	1,084	n/a	200	0
Lithuania	2,943,472	No	0	/	/	294	294
Malta	425,284	No	4	41	95%	43	2
Poland	38,017,856	No	1	26	1%	3,802	3,776
Romania	19,947,311	No	73	828	42%	1,995	1,167
Slovakia	5,415,949	/	2	/	/	542	/
Slovenia	2,061,085	Yes	16	274	n/a	206	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>104,894,395</b>	<b>2/12</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>2,931</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>10,492</b>	<b>7,971</b>

\* Regarding the definition "Old" and "New" EU Countries see Glossary on p. 102.

<sup>35</sup> This number is made up of shelters in England (243), Northern Ireland (14), Scotland (37) and Wales (54)

**TABLE 17 – Women's Shelters in European Countries outside the EU**

Countries	Total Population	Meets the Minimum Standard	Number of Women's Shelters	Number of Beds in Women's Shelters	Women's Shelters Beds Available (%)	Women's Shelters Beds Needed	Women's Shelters Beds Missing
Albania	2,895,947	No	5	153	53%	290	90
Armenia	3,010,598	No	3	12	4%	301	289
Azerbaijan	9,356,483	No	4	19	2%	936	917
Belarus	9,463,840	No	4	30	3%	946	916
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3,791,662	No	9	204	54%	379	175
Georgia	4,497,617	/	8	/	/	450	450
Iceland	329,100	No	1	18	55%	33	15
Kosovo	1,794,180	No	8	140	78%	179	39
Liechtenstein	37,129	No	1	3	75%	4	1
Macedonia	2,022,547	No	5	22	11%	202	180
Moldova	3,559,497	No	1	25	7%	356	331
Montenegro	621,521	No	3	44	71%	62	18
Norway	5,107,970	Yes	45	907	n/a	511	0
Russia	142,856,536	No	95	434	3%	14,286	13,852
Serbia	7,146,759	No	12	257	36%	715	458
Switzerland	8,139,631	No	18	284	35%	814	530
Turkey	76,667,864	No	130	3,402	44%	7,667	4,265
Ukraine	42,701,791	/	2	/	/	4,270	/
<b>Total</b>	<b>324,000,672</b>	<b>1/16</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>5,954</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>32,401</b>	<b>22,076</b>

**TABLE 18 – Women's Shelters in "Old" EU Member States \***

Austria	8,506,889	No	30	759	89%	850	91
Belgium	11,203,992	No	37	283	25%	1,120	837
Denmark	5,627,235	Yes	43	934	n/a	568	0
Finland	5,451,270	No	19	114	21%	545	431
France	66,320,000	/	/	/	/	6,632	/
Germany	80,767,463	No	369	6,800	84%	8,077	1,277
Greece	10,816,286	No	26	470	43%	1,082	612
Ireland	4,605,501	No	21	141	31%	460	319
Italy	60,782,668	No	73	627	10%	6,078	5,451
Luxembourg	549,680	Yes	8	150	n/a	55	0
Netherlands	16,829,289	No	96	1,608	96%	1,683	75
Portugal	10,347,822	No	37	639	62%	1,035	396
Spain	46,439,864	/	53	/	/	4,644	/
Sweden	9,644,864	No	161	631	65%	964	333
United Kingdom	64,308,261	No	348 <sup>36</sup>	4,744	78%	6,431	1,687
<b>Total</b>	<b>402,201,084</b>	<b>2/13</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>17,900</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>40,224</b>	<b>11,509</b>

\* Regarding the definition "Old" and "New" EU Countries see Glossary on p. 102.

<sup>36</sup> This number is made up of shelters in England (243), Northern Ireland (14), Scotland (37) and Wales (54)

TABLE 19 – National Women's Networks in 46 European Countries

Countries	National Women's Networks	Number of Members	Legal Entity	Existence of a National Office	State Funding
Albania	3	18	Yes	Yes	No
Armenia	1	7	/	/	/
Austria	6	141	Yes	Yes	Yes
Azerbaijan	/	/	/	/	/
Belarus	0	/	/	/	/
Belgium	2	33	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bosnia & Herzegovina	2	69	No	No	No
Bulgaria	1	11	Yes	Yes	Yes
Croatia	1	30	Yes	Yes	No
Cyprus	1	9	No	/	/
Czech Republic	2	25	Yes	Yes	No
Denmark	11	42	/	Yes	/
Estonia	2	14	Yes	Yes	No
Finland	4	98	Yes	Yes	No
France	1	64	Yes	Yes	Yes
Georgia	1	14	Yes	Yes	No
Germany	5	278	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	1	61	Yes	Yes	No
Hungary	2	27	Yes	Yes	No
Iceland	0	/	/	/	/
Ireland	2	35	/	Yes	Yes
Italy	1	73	Yes	Yes	No
Kosovo	2	101	Yes	/	/
Latvia	0	/	/	/	/
Liechtenstein	1	16	No	Yes	Yes
Lithuania	1	10	No	Yes	Yes
Luxembourg	0	/	/	/	/
Macedonia	1	20	Yes	Yes	No
Malta	0	/	/	/	/
Moldova	1	18	/	/	No
Montenegro	1	6	No	No	No
Netherlands	1	70	/	/	/
Norway	2	86	/	Yes	Yes
Poland	1	7	/	/	/
Portugal	2	/	Yes	Yes	/
Romania	4	39	No	Yes	No
Russia	3	At least 150	No	No	No
Serbia	1	27	No	Yes	No
Slovakia	1	8	No	No	No
Slovenia	1	19	No	No	No
Spain	0	/	/	/	/
Sweden <sup>37</sup>	2	230	/	/	/
Switzerland	4	1,092 <sup>38</sup>	Yes	Yes	No
Turkey	1	21	No	No	No
Ukraine	4	60	Yes	No	/
United Kingdom	19	571	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>3,520</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>

<sup>37</sup> Information provided on the websites of the organisations Roks – <http://www.roks.se/about-roks-1>, and Unizon – <http://unizon.se/>

<sup>38</sup> The data is an aggregated number of organisation and individual memberships.

TABLE 20 – Women's Centres in 46 European Countries

Countries	Total Population	Number of Women's Centres	Indicator (Population/ Women's Centres)	Geographical Coverage
Albania	2,895,947	6	482,658	Major cities
Armenia	3,010,598	13	231,584	All provinces
Austria	8,506,889	32	265,840	Major cities
Azerbaijan	9,356,483	0	/	/
Belarus	9,463,840	0	/	/
Belgium	11,203,992	25	448,160	All provinces
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3,791,662	8	473,958	All provinces
Bulgaria	7,245,677	14	517,548	Major cities
Croatia	4,246,809	20	212,340	/
Cyprus	858,000	1	858,000	Major cities
Czech Republic	10,538,300	23	458,187	All provinces
Denmark	5,627,235	10	562,723	/
Estonia	1,315,819	0	/	/
Finland	5,451,270	20	272,563	/
France	66,320,000	/	/	/
Georgia	4,497,617	6	749,602	Major cities
Germany	80,767,463	420	192,303	Most provinces
Greece	10,816,286	57	189,759	Just major cities
Hungary	9,877,365	1	9,877,365	All provinces
Iceland	329,100	6	54,850	Capital city
Ireland <sup>39</sup>	4,605,501	23	200,239	/
Italy	60,782,668	140	434,162	Most provinces
Kosovo	1,794,180	10	179,418	All provinces
Latvia	2,001,468	21	95,308	Just major cities
Liechtenstein	37,129	5	7,426	Capital city
Lithuania	2,943,472	16	183,967	All provinces
Luxembourg	549,680	13	42,283	All provinces
Macedonia	2,022,547	3	674,182	Capital city
Malta	425,284	1	425,284	Capital city
Moldova	3,559,497	26	136,904	All provinces
Montenegro	621,521	3	207,174	Capital city
Netherlands	16,829,289	44	382,484	All provinces
Norway	5,107,970	23	222,086	All provinces
Poland <sup>40</sup>	38,017,856	35	1,086,224	Capital city
Portugal	10,347,822	7	1,478,260	All provinces
Romania	19,947,311	26	767,204	/
Russia	142,856,536	20	7,142,827	/
Serbia	7,146,759	28	255,241	All provinces
Slovakia	5,415,949	5	1,083,190	/
Slovenia	2,061,085	7	294,441	Just major cities
Spain	46,439,864	869	53,441	All provinces
Sweden	9,644,864	/	/	/
Switzerland	8,139,631	27	301,468	All provinces
Turkey	76,667,864	59	1,299,455	Just major cities
Ukraine	42,701,791	3	14,233,930	Capital city
United Kingdom	64,308,261	863	74,517	All provinces
<b>Total</b>	<b>831,096,151</b>	<b>2,937</b>	<b>282,975</b>	

<sup>39</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, P.63, published in 2015.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.P.70.

**TABLE 21 – Categories of Women's Centres in 46 European Countries**

Countries	Women's Centres (non-residential services)	Rape Crisis Centres	Sexual Assault Centres	Centres for Girls experiencing Sexual Abuse	Intervention Centres	Regional Crisis Centres for Victims of Domestic Violence	Centres for Black, and Minority Ethnic (BME) Women	Centres for Women Victims of Trafficking	Other kinds of Women's Services, i.e. IDVAs, ISVAS	Number of Women's Centres (All Categories)
Albania	5	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	6
Armenia	2	/	1	/	/	7	1	2	0	13
Austria	6	6	/	3	9	/	7	1	/	32
Azerbaijan	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
Belarus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Belgium	15	1	0	0	0	7	0	2	/	25
Bosnia & Herzegovina	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Bulgaria	/	/	/	/	/	14	/	/	/	14
Croatia	15	/	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	20
Cyprus	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Czech Republic	2	0	0	0	18	0	0	3	0	23
Denmark	3	1	6	/	/	/	/	/	IDVAs	10
Estonia	0	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	0
Finland	17	1	/	/	1	/	1	/	/	20
France	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Georgia	6	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	0	6
Germany	0	183	/	67	130	/	/	40	/	420
Greece	56	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	57
Hungary	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Iceland	1	2	3	/	/	/	/	/	/	6
Ireland <sup>41</sup>	/	16	7	/	/	/	/	/	/	23
Italy	140	0	0	0	0	0	/	/	/	140
Kosovo	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Latvia	20	0	0	0	0	/	/	1	/	21
Liechtenstein	2	0	0	0	1	/	1	1	0	5
Lithuania	/	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	/	16
Luxembourg	13	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	13
Macedonia	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Malta	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Moldova	16	1	/	1	1	/	0	7	/	26
Montenegro	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
Netherlands	35	/	8	/	/	/	/	/	1	44
Norway	/	1	/	21	/	/	/	/	/	22
Poland <sup>42</sup>	1	/	/	/	/	34	/	/	/	35
Portugal	7	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	7
Romania	21	/	5	/	/	/	/	/	/	26
Russia	/	/	1	/	/	19	/	/	/	20
Serbia	22	0	0	1	/	/	3	2	/	28
Slovakia	/	/	/	/	/	5	/	/	/	5
Slovenia	6	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	/	7
Spain	717	26	0	0	/	/	/	126	/	869
Sweden	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Switzerland	19	6	0	0	/	/	1	0	1	27
Turkey	55	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	/	59
Ukraine	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
United Kingdom	16	108	36	/	/	/	2	/	700 <sup>43</sup>	862
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,243</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>2,937</b>

<sup>41</sup> Information provided in the WAVE Report 2014, P.63, published in 2015.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.P.70.

<sup>43</sup> These are only two examples of a range of similar services in England.

## 15. APPENDICES

### **WAVE Standards on the Provision of Specialist Support for Women Survivors of Violence and their Children<sup>44</sup>**

Findings of the 2014 FRA survey indicate that an estimated 13 million women in the EU have experienced physical violence in the course of 12 months prior to the survey interview, corresponding to 7% of women aged 18-74 in the Union.<sup>45</sup> This concerning figure makes it all the more urgent to act to build and strengthen the provision of quality support for victims.

The Council of Europe and the European Union have demonstrated commendable political will and commitment to combat gender-based violence and protect victims of such violence. Three important measures that complement and reinforce each other have been adopted by many Member States over recent years; these are the Istanbul Convention, the two European Protection Orders in the criminal and in the civil area, and the EU Victims' Directive. The effects of such these measures will become increasingly visible in upcoming years, and it is crucial for women survivors of gender-based violence and their children that they be implemented effectively.

Effective protection and support for victims of gender-based violence, and decrease in the prevalence of this widespread form of human rights violation, will not be reached without investing adequate financial resources. Given the high financial costs induced by GBV on the society, investment in tackling the issue pays off:

#### **Investment in the Prevention of Violence Pays Off**

- The European Added Value Assessment estimates that the annual cost to the EU of gender-based violence against women in 2011 was about EUR 228 billion (1.8% of EU GDP)<sup>46</sup>;
- This amounts to about EUR 450 per European citizen each year;
- An investment of only 10% of this cost (or EUR 45 per citizen, per year), would significantly contribute to reducing the financial impact of gender-based violence on national budgets, i.e. through investment in prevention of violence.

### **Minimum Standards for Specialist Women's Support Services**

The following recommendations are based on principles established in the Istanbul Convention, the EU Victims' Directive, and the experience and knowledge gathered by specialized women's support services in Europe.

#### **Principles of Service Provision**

- Services to victims of GBV and their children need to be provided by independent, specialist women's support services which apply a human rights-based, gender-specific, and empowering approach.
- Staff working at specialized women's support services should have professional knowledge and training, enabling them to best assist women survivors of GBV and their children.
- Every women victim of GBV and her children should be guaranteed effective protection and adequate support, regardless of age, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, residence status, ethnicity or any other ground, following the principle of non-discrimination.

<sup>44</sup> From: WAVE (2015): WAVE Report 2014. Specialized Women's Support Services and New Tools for Combating Gender-based Violence in Europe, Vienna

<sup>45</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014): Violence against Women – An EU wide Survey, Fact sheets, Vienna

<sup>46</sup> European Parliament (2014): European Parliament resolution of 25 February 2014 with recommendations to the Commission on combating Violence against Women (2013/2004(INL)), Para R.

## Specialized Women's Support Services

- ▶ At least one national women's helpline addressing all forms of violence against women, operating 24/7 and free of charge.
- ▶ A national network of specialized women's shelters accommodating women and their children.
- ▶ Provision of 24/7 and immediate support at women's shelters.
- ▶ At least one shelter place per 10.000 of inhabitants.
- ▶ Qualitative minimum standard of one room, including bathroom, per family.
- ▶ One women's centre for survivors of sexual violence per 200.000 women.
- ▶ One women's counselling centre per 50.000 women, providing crisis intervention as well as short and long-term support to women victims of GBV and their children, as well as specialized support for more vulnerable groups, i.e. black and minority ethnic women, migrant and undocumented migrant women, young women, asylum-seeking women, women with disabilities, older women, and others.
- ▶ Sufficient number of specialized services addressing the specific needs of migrant and minority ethnic women, as well as and refugee and asylum-seeking women.
- ▶ One intervention centre against VAW and DV per court district, providing pro-active support and advocacy to women survivors of violence after police interventions or interventions of health, or other agencies.
- ▶ Every woman victim of violence should have the right to free support and representation by an independent advocate, throughout all legal and institutional proceedings.
- ▶ Outreach services should be made available to women victims of violence in rural areas.
- ▶ Short and long-term support, including psychological support and therapy, should be provided to victims in order to overcome traumatic experiences of violence.
- ▶ All specialized women's support services should be free of charge and aim at empowering women and ensuring their safety; they should also have access to the necessary resources to provide adequate support to the children of women victims of violence.

## Funding for Awareness-raising and Prevention Activities

- ▶ Specialized women's support services do not only provide support to survivors. As civil society organizations, they also engage in awareness raising and prevention activities as well as training, as such making an important contribution to social change in society, and to the elimination of the root causes of GBV. States should therefore provide adequate funding to support the work in awareness raising and prevention of violence conducted by support services.

## Networking and Data Collection

An important lack of administrative data on support services in most countries, and the lack of homogeneity of such data, makes comparative analysis on the national level impossible. States should therefore provide adequate funding to support national networks of women's support services and develop their capacity for systemic data collection, and promote the exchange and dissemination of information.

## Right to Support and Protection for Black, Minority Ethnic, Migrant and Asylum-seeking Women

- ▶ Access to justice, as well as access to general and specialized women's support services should be guaranteed for all women survivors of violence, regardless of their legal or residence status, or country of origin.
- ▶ Access to State funding by women's shelters to support all women and children seeking help from violence, regardless of their legal or residence status, should be guaranteed.
- ▶ Access to, and freedom to remain in women's shelters as long as needed, should be guaranteed for all women victims of violence and their children.
- ▶ Access to culturally sensitive services, including multilingual information and counselling, as well as gender- and culturally-sensitive interpretation support, should be provided.

- ▶ Access to an independent residence permit for women survivors of violence and their children should be facilitated.
- ▶ Access to women's shelters by the children of women survivors, up until the age of 18, should be guaranteed, with no restriction based on sex.
- ▶ Availability of appropriate and empowering shelter conditions and arrangements should be guaranteed.

## Victims' Empowerment, and Access to Social and Economic Rights

Social and economic rights should be guaranteed for all women victims of gender-based violence, so that they have a chance to live empowered and independent lives. This aspect is particularly important in the prevention of violence, since women who are dependent on a partner or the family are at higher risks of victimization by domestic violence. Social and economic rights are also essential in providing victims with a way out of violent relationships, which is made easier when a woman disposes of her own income. It should also be taken into account that women are often the primary caretakers of the children.

Consequently, the following social and economic rights should be guaranteed for all women, and in particular for women who experience violence:

- Right to affordable housing; women survivors of violence should not be compelled to live with a violent partner, especially after separation, because of the lack of affordable housing. Similarly, survivors of violence and their children should not have to remain in women's shelters due to the lack of affordable housing.
- Right to free or affordable childcare.
- Right to education and training, including free language courses for migrant and refugee or asylum-seeking women.
- Right to support in accessing the labour market, to guarantee the subsistence of women and their children.
- Right to adequate financial aid (at a level that ensures subsistence) for all women who do not have access to sufficient income.
- Access to free health care for all women survivors of violence and their children.



## REFERENCES

### Abbreviations

LGBT = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender  
NGO = Non-governmental organisation  
FRA = European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights  
BME = Black and minority ethnic  
FGM = Female genital mutilation

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## GLOSSARY

### Countries outside the EU

This refers to European countries included in the report which are not Members of the European Union. These countries include: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Russia, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine

### Domestic violence

"Domestic violence" shall mean all acts of physical, sexual, psychological, or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.<sup>47</sup>

### Gender-based violence

"Gender-based violence against women" shall mean violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.<sup>48</sup>

### Gender-specific approach

Violence against women is a specific form of violence, it is gender based and cannot be adequately addressed by "gender neutral" measures. Therefore Article 6 of the Istanbul Convention states that "parties shall undertake to include a gender perspective in the implementation and evaluation of the impact of the provisions of this Convention and to promote and effectively implement policies of equality between women and men and the empowerment of women."<sup>49</sup> The Convention further requires that measures of support and protection need to be "based on a gendered understanding of violence against women and domestic violence and shall focus on the human rights and safety of the victim."<sup>50</sup>

### National women's helpline

A helpline qualifies as a national women's helpline if it is a service provided specifically for women and if it only, or predominantly, serves women survivors of violence. A women's helpline should operate 24/7, should be free of charge and should serve survivors of all forms of violence against women. It should operate nationally and provide adequate support to women from all regions; this means the staff must be properly trained, have effective communication skills and be knowledgeable about regional situations and all relevant provisions.

### "New" EU countries

This refers to European countries which became Members of the European Union after 2004. These countries include: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

### "Old" EU countries

This refers to European countries which became Members of the European Union before 2004. These countries include: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and UK

### Specialist women's support services

This phrase is used as a collective term covering all specialist services addressed in Articles 22-26 of the Istanbul Convention. It encompasses specialist women's support services for all women victims of violence and their children, such as women's shelters, women's helplines and women's centres. Specialist women's support services are often highly engaged in awareness raising activities, prevention, training

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., Article 3 b, p. 8

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Article 3 d, p. 8

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., Article 6, p. 9

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., Article 18, p. 13

and multi-agency work in their communities. They are also involved in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive and coordinated policies to end violence against women, including the development of principles and standards for empowering support for survivors, and data collection.

### **Women's centres**

The term 'women's centre' includes all women's services providing non-residential specialist support to victims, serving only or predominantly women survivors of violence and their children. The following services are subsumed under the term: women's counselling and women crises centres, supporting women survivors of all forms of gender-based violence; services focussing on the support of survivors of sexual violence such as rape crisis, sexual assault centres and centres for girls who experienced sexual violence; regional crises centres on domestic violence; pro-active intervention centres serving victims as a follow-up to police interventions; specialist services for black, minority ethnic women, migrant and refugee women victims of violence; outreach services; services providing independent domestic or sexual violence advisors, and other newer types of services. These centres usually provide the following kind of support: information, advice, advocacy and counselling, practical support, court accompaniment, pro-active support, outreach and other services. Women's centres are a specialist service for women survivors of violence and their children, if any, providing empowering short and long term support, based on a gendered understanding of violence and focusing on the human rights and safety of victims.

### **Women's shelters**

The term "women's shelter" is used interchangeably with "women's refuge." A women's shelter is a specialist service for women survivors of violence and their children, if any, providing safe accommodation and empowering support, based on a gendered understanding of violence and focusing on the human rights and safety of victims. Women's shelters offer immediate and unbureaucratic services and safety precautions. They also offer long-term support in order to provide women and their children, if any, with the opportunity and resources necessary to resume their lives free from violence.

### **Victims/Survivors**

The terms "victim" and "survivor" are used interchangeably. The term "survivor" is used acknowledging that women do not just "endure" violence, but actively try to prevent, resist and cope with it. The term "victim" is used to recognise that women experiencing violence and their children, if any, have suffered injustice and have a right to justice, protection and compensation.

### **Violence against women**

"Violence against women" is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.<sup>51</sup> As stated in the Istanbul Convention the term "women" includes girls under the age of 18.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Council of Europe, 2012, Article 3 a, p. 8

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., Article 3 f, p. 8

## WAVE MEMBERS (Status: January 2016)

1	Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC)	Albania	57	Women's Wellness Centre	Kosovo
2	Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC)	Albania	58	Križu un Konsultāciju Centrs Skalbes	Latvia
3	Women's Association Refleksione	Albania	59	Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein	Liechtenstein
4	Woman Forum Elbasan	Albania	60	Vilniaus Moterų namai - Intervention Centre	Lithuania
5	Women's Right Center	Armenia	61	Femmes en Detresse asbl	Luxembourg
6	Women's Support Center	Armenia	62	National Council for Gender Equality - NCGE	Macedonia
7	Austrian Women's Shelter Network - Information Centre against Violence AOF	Austria	63	National Network to End Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - Voice against Violence	Macedonia
8	Network of Austrian Counseling Centres for Women and Girls	Austria	64	Commission on Domestic Violence	Malta
9	Domestic Abuse Intervention Centre Vienna	Austria	65	Association Against Violence "Casa Marioarei"	Moldova
10	Clean World Social Union	Azerbaijan	66	Center for Support and Development of Civic Initiatives "Resonance"	Moldova
11	International Public Association "Gender Perspectives"	Belarus	67	Women's Law Centre	Moldova
12	Law Initiative - Commission on Women's Rights	Belarus	68	SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niksic	Montenegro
13	Collectif contre les Violences Familiales et l'Exclusion (CVFE)	Belgium	69	Federatie Opvang	Netherlands
14	Department of Health and Welfare, Violence Victims and Policy Coordination - Province of Antwerp	Belgium	70	MOVISIE	Netherlands
15	Garance ASBL	Belgium	71	Secretariat of the Shelter Movement	Norway
16	Steunpunt Algemeen Welzijnswerk	Belgium	72	Centrum Praw Kobiet	Poland
17	Foundation United Women Banja Luka	Bosnia and Herzegovina	73	AMCV- Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência	Portugal
18	Medica Zenica Information	Bosnia and Herzegovina	74	A.L.E.G Association for Liberty and Equality of Gender	Romania
19	Bulgarian Gender research Foundation	Bulgaria	75	ANAIS Association	Romania
20	Nadja Centre	Bulgaria	76	Artemis Counselling Centre against Sexual Abuse	Romania
21	Autonomous Women's House Zagreb	Croatia	77	CPE - Center Partnership and Equality	Romania
22	B.a.Be., Be active. Be emancipated.	Croatia	78	ANNA - National Center for Prevention of Violence	Russia
23	Women's Room - Center for Sexual Rights	Croatia	79	Crisis Centre Ekaterina	Russia
24	Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)	Cyprus	80	Autonomous Women's Center (AWC)	Serbia
25	Association of Women's support service Living (KAYAD)	Cyprus	81	Association Fenomena / SOS Kraljevo	Serbia
26	proFem - Central European Consulting Centre	Czech Republic	82	Alliance of women in Slovakia	Slovakia
27	ROSA - Centre for Battered and Lonely Women	Czech Republic	83	FENESTRA - Interest Association of Women	Slovakia
28	Kvinnuhusid	Denmark	84	Pro Familia Foundation	Slovakia
29	L.O.K.K- National Organisation of Women's Shelters in Denmark	Denmark	85	Association SOS Helpline for Women and Children	Slovenia
30	Estonian Women's Shelters Union	Estonia	86	Asociación de Mujeres Valdés Siglo XXI	Spain
31	Tartu Child Support Center	Estonia	87	Fundación para la Convivencia ASPACIA	Spain
32	Women's Shelter of Tartu	Estonia	88	Centro de Asistencia a Víctimas de Agresiones Sexuales - CAVAS	Spain
33	Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters	Finland	89	Directorate General for Gender-Based Violence, Youth Affairs and Juvenile Crime	Spain
34	Women's line Finland	Finland	90	Hèlia - Associació de suport a les dones que pateixen violència de gènere	Spain
35	Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes-FNSF	France	91	Oficina de Gestión, Preparación y Supervisión de Programas Europeos. Fundación para la Atención e Incorporación Social (FADAIS). Consejería para la Igualdad y Bienestar Social	Spain
36	Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi"	Georgia	92	Plataforma Unitària contra les Violències de Gènere	Spain
37	Sakhli - Advice Center for Women	Georgia	93	Roks - National Organisation for Women's and Girls' Shelters in Sweden	Sweden
38	Women's Information Center (WIC)	Georgia	94	UNIZON	Sweden
39	Anti-Violence Network of Georgia	Georgia	95	Dachorganisation der Frauenhäuser der Schweiz und Liechtenstein	Switzerland
40	BIG e.V. - Berliner Interventionsprojekt gegen häusliche Gewalt	Germany	96	Frauenhaus Biel	Switzerland
41	Frauenhauskoordination e.V.	Germany	97	Vivre sans Violence	Switzerland
42	Geschäftsstelle des Bundesverbandes Frauenberatungsstellen und Frauennotrufe - Frauen gegen Gewalt e.V.	Germany	98	Kadin Dayanisma Vakfi - The Foundation for Women's Solidarity	Turkey
43	GESINE-Netzwerk Gesundheit.EN	Germany	99	Mor Çati - Women Shelter's Foundation	Turkey
44	KOFRA - Kommunikationszentrum für Frauen zur Arbeits- und Lebenssituation	Germany	100	International Women's Rights Center La Strada - Ukraine	Ukraine
45	PAPATYA - Kriseneinrichtung für Junge Migrantinnen	Germany	101	Sumy Local Crisis Center (SLCC)	Ukraine
46	ZIF- Zentrale Informationsstelle der autonomen Frauenhäuser des BRD	Germany	102	Women's Information Consultative Center	Ukraine
47	European Anti-Violence Network	Greece	103	Haven Wolverhampton	UK
48	NaNE-Women's Rights association	Hungary	104	IMKAAN	UK
49	Stigamot - Counseling and Information Centre on Sexual Violence	Iceland	105	REFUGE	UK
50	Women's Shelter Organization in Iceland	Iceland	106	Scottish Women's Aid	UK
51	Sexual Violence Centre Cork	Ireland	107	Welsh Women's Aid	UK
52	Rape Crisis Network Ireland	Ireland	108	Women's Aid Federation of England	UK
53	Safe Ireland	Ireland	109	Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland	UK
54	Women's Aid Ireland	Ireland	110	WWA - Aberystwyth Women's Aid	UK
55	Associazione Nazionale D.i.Re contro la Violenza- D.i.Re Women's network against violence	Italy	111	Prof. Carol Hagemann-White (Honorary Member)	Germany
56	Associazione Nazionale Volontarie Telefono Rosa-Onlus	Italy	112	Dr. Marceline Naudi (Individual Member)	Malta

## Helplines in 46 European Countries 2015

The following is a table of the national women's helplines available in the 46 European countries. If there is no national helpline, a regional or general helpline is listed (these countries are marked with a \*). Women's national helplines are among the most vital services for women's survivors of violence, they are one of the first places women can turn to receive immediate counselling and advice. It is important to note that some of the following phone numbers cannot be called from abroad, as they are strictly national helplines and can only be used within the country. In such instances, we invite you to get in touch directly with the WAVE Members in relevant countries.

Country	Name	Phone number
Albania	Counselling Line for Women and Girls	+355 422 33408
Armenia	National Hotline on Domestic Violence	+374 105 428 28 0800 80 850
	Hotline of the Armenian Lighthouse Charitable Foundation	2080
Austria	Women's Helpline against Violence	0800 222 555
Azerbaijan	Clean World Social Union Aid to Women	+99 412 408 5696
Belarus*	National Hotline for survivors of domestic violence	8 801 100 8 801
	National Toll-free Children Helpline	8 801 100 16 11
	Hotline for Safe Migration	113
Belgium*	Hotline for all types of violence, domestic (any member of the family) sexual violence, honour related violence, and more, child abuse, elder abuse	1712 (Flemish)
	Ecoutes Violences Conjugales (for marital violence)	0800 30 030 (French)
	SOS Viol (for sexual violence)	+32 2 534 36 36 (French)
	Mon Mariage M'appartient (forced marriage helpline)	0800 90 901 (French)
	Crisis Situation Helpline (for persons in distress)	106 (Flemish) 107 (French) 108 (German)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	SOS Line for Help of Women and Children, victims of domestic violence	1264 (Republika Srpska) 1265 (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Bulgaria	Women's Helpline	+359 2 981 76 86
Croatia*	Autonomous Women's House Zagreb	0800 55 44
	Harbri Telephone (Children's Helpline)	116 111
	SOS Helpline for Victims of Trafficking	0800 77 99
Cyprus	Center for Emergency Assistance Helpline	1440
Czech Republic*	DONA Line	+420 251 51 13 13
	Safety Children's Line	116 111
Denmark	LOKK Hotline	+45 70 20 30 82
Estonia	Tugitefon	1492
Finland	Women's Line	+358 800 02400
France	Violences Femmes Info	3919
	Viols Femmes Information	0800 05 95 95
Georgia	National Domestic Violence Hotline	309 903
	Tbilisi Crisis Center of 'Sakhli' Advice Center for Women	+995 5952 32 101
Germany	National Women's Helpline	08000 116 016

Country	Name	Phone number
Greece	National Center for Social Solidarity (E.K.K.A.) (for persons in different crisis situations, including domestic violence)	197
	SOS Line	15 900
Hungary	NaNE Helpline for Battered Women and Children	06 80 505 101 +36 4 06 30 006 (for sexual violence)
Iceland	Kvennaathvarfið shelter helpline	561 1205
Ireland	National Freephone Helpline	1800 341 900
Italy	Antiviolenza Donne	1522
Kosovo	Direct Line for Victims of Violence	0800 11112
	SOS Linja	+381 39 033 00 98
Latvia*	Center Marta for Trafficking Victims	800 2012
	Crisis Helpline	67222922 27722292
	Children's Trust Helpline	116 111
Liechtenstein	Women's Helpline Frauenhaus Liechtenstein	+423 380 02 03
Lithuania*	Women's Line	8800 66 366
Luxembourg	Fraentelefon	12 344
Macedonia	National SOS Line	15 700
	National SOS Line – Phone of Trust	15 315
	SOS National Mobile Line	+389 75 141 700 +389 77 141 700 +389 70 141 700
Malta*	Appogg Agency Supportline	179
Moldova	Trust Line	8008 8008
Montenegro	SOS Helpline for Victims of Violence	080 111 111
Netherlands*	Veilig Thuis (for victims of domestic violence and child abuse)	0800 2000
Norway*	National Helpline for Survivors of Sexual Abuse	800 57 000
	Crisis Situation Helpline	800 40 008
Poland*	National Emergency Service for Survivors of Family Violence Blue Line	22 668 70 00
	National Emergency Service for Survivors of Family Violence	801 12 00 02
Portugal*	Serviço de Informação às Vítimas de Violência Doméstica	800 202 148
Romania*	Bucharest: Sensi Blu Foundation	021 311 46 36
	Bucharest: ADRA	021 25 25 117
	Lasi: CMSC	023 225 29 20
	Targu Mures: IEESR	026 521 16 99
	Sibiu: A.L.E.G.	075 389 35 31
	Biai Mare: Centru Artemis	0262 25 07 70
	Timisoara: APFR	0256 29 3183
	Helpline for specialist counselling	0800 500 333
Russia	ANNA (National Center for the Prevention of Violence)	08800 700 600



Country	Name	Phone number
Serbia*	Helpline for victims of domestic violence	0800 100 600
	Network of Women's Hotline in Vojvodina	0800 10 10 10
Slovakia	National Line for Women Surviving Violence	0800 212 212
Slovenia	SOS Helpline for Women and Children – Victims of Violence	080 11 55
Spain	Helpline for Information and Legal Advice on Gender Violence	016
Sweden	Terrafem	020 52 1010
	Kvinnofridslinjen	020 50 50 50
Switzerland*	Dargebotene Hand (crisis helpline)	143
Turkey	Hürriyet Emergency Domestic Violence Hotline	+90 212 656 9696
	Social Service Counseling Line for Family, Women, Children, and the Disabled	183
Ukraine	Domestic Violence Counteraction and Child Rights Protection Helpline	0800 500 335 0800 500 336
United Kingdom	ENGLAND: National Domestic Violence Free phone Helpline	0808 2000 247
	ENGLAND: Rape Crisis Helpline	0808 802 999
	NORTHERN IRELAND: 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline	0800 917 14 14
	SCOTLAND: Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline	0800 027 1234
	Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline	0808 88 01 03 02 0808 8010 302
	WALES: Live Fear Free Helpline	0800 8010 800
	Rape Crisis Helpline	0808 802 9999

