



A MAGAZINE PUBLISHED BY THE WAVE OFFICE

# fempower

## Tackling violence against women in Europe – achievements of the last 25 years and future challenges





© WAVE

# fempower

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Editorial** – Andrada Filip
- 4 Coming back from the margins: The second life of feminist self-defence**  
Irene Zeilinger
- 6 The invisible community in the Republic of Moldova**  
Nicoleta Hriplivii and Vadim Vieru
- 9 Preventing sexual violence by creating safe spaces for women**  
Karishma Wadhvani Chatlani
- 12 Moving forward: Gaps and opportunities in the UK policies to tackle Black and Minoritised homelessness due to gender-based violence**  
Rosa dos Ventos Lopes Heimer
- 17 Tackling domestic violence in an aging Europe**  
Hector Charles Pagan
- 20 Improved national legislation – the path taken by the Republic of Moldova’ to tackle violence against women and domestic violence**  
Natalia Vilcu
- 23 A quarter of a century against winds and tornados – stocktaking of main activities and achievements of NANE Association**  
Enikő Pap, Györgyi Tóth, and Judit Wirth
- 25 Can activism wake up Romania?**  
Monica Tudorache
- 27 Challenges of grass roots women’s organisations in terms of sustainability: Social enterprise and peer mentoring approaches**  
Beverley Gilbert and Elaine Compagno
- 28 Challenges to adopt domestic violence legislation in Ukraine and ensure its effective implementation**  
Kateryna Levchenko
- 30 Implementation of Immediate Protection Orders and Protection Orders in the Region of Elbasan, Albania**  
Shpresa Banja
- 23 Key outcomes of the advancement of women in the disputed territory of Transnistria in the Republic of Moldova**  
Juliana Abramova

### Imprint

Publisher: WAVE-Office / European Information Centre Against Violence, Bacherplatz 10/6, A-1050 Vienna  
 ZVR: 601608559  
 Phone: +43-1-5482720 E-mail: office@wave-network.org  
 Website: www.wave-network.org  
 Edit: Andrada Filip | Proofreading and Review: Claire Davis, Martina Fontana and Corinne Schoch  
 Graphic Design: Monika Medvey  
 Cover-images: © WAVE

Disclaimer: This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union. The contents of the magazine are the sole responsibility of the authors and Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

Financier: European Commission

With financial support from the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union



Co-Financier:

 **Federal Chancellery**  
 Federal Minister for Women, Families and Youth

 **Federal Ministry**  
 Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection



# Editorial

Andrada Filip<sup>1</sup>

WAVE

In 2019, the European network Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE), celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The year marks an important milestone on the path undertaken by WAVE and its members to promote and strengthen the human rights of women and children in general and to prevent violence against women and children in particular. Significant positive changes advancing women's rights and promoting gender equality have taken place in Europe and all across the world over the past 25 years.

The adoption of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence<sup>2</sup>, also known as the Istanbul Convention (IC), is by far one of the most important achievements in the fight for securing women's rights and tackling gender-based violence. The IC entered into force in 2014 and was signed by the EU in June 2017; as of December 2019, the IC was ratified by 34 states and signed by eleven other states. It is the first international instrument of its kind, because states that ratify it must follow comprehensive, legally binding standards to prevent gender-based violence, protect victims and punish perpetrators.

In spite of positive changes made nationally and internationally to advance and secure women's rights, achieve gender equality and tackle violence against women, many challenges lie ahead. Global estimates published by WHO indicate that about 1 in 3 (35%) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.<sup>3</sup> According to the 2014 Fundamental Rights Agency survey on violence against women, one in three women in the EU has experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15; 55% of women have been confronted with one or more forms of sexual harassment; 11% have been subjected to cyber harassment; and one in twenty have been raped.<sup>4</sup> A recent study published by the World Bank states that

around over one billion women lack any legal protection from domestic violence, one of the most pervasive forms of gender-based violence.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, serious backlash against women's rights occurred throughout this year in Europe and other regions, which helps normalize violence against women and erodes support systems and legal protections that had previously been implemented to protect women from gender-based violence. According to the Turkish advocacy group *We will stop femicides*, the number of femicides recorded in Turkey have nearly quadrupled between 2011 and 2018.<sup>6</sup> Russia partially decriminalized domestic violence after legal measures were adopted in 2017<sup>7</sup>, while in Hungary, the conservative Fidesz party cut state funding and restrained foreign funding, leading to the decline and even demise of women's organisations.<sup>8</sup>

The articles published in this year's issue of the *Fempower* magazine take stock of what has been done so far to advance women's rights and tackle gender-based violence in Europe, drawing attention to critical issues that have emerged in recent years and other challenges pertaining to the framework of tackling violence against women, which have remained unaddressed by policy makers. A total of twelve articles were submitted, each of these reflecting on and exploring specific topics related to violence against women and the work undertaken by women's organisations to protect and support survivors of gender-based violence.

Last but not least, WAVE is grateful to all contributing authors, hoping that the stories they shared will inspire all network members, women's organisations across the world and other actors in society to continue fighting for women's rights and tackling gender-based violence and discrimination.

1 See editor's biography on page 37.

2 Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e>

3 WHO, Violence against Women: Key facts, available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

4 Violence against Women: an EU-wide survey (2014), European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, available at: [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf)

5 Tavares, P. and Wodon, Q., Global and regional trends in women's legal protection against domestic violence and sexual harassment, the World Bank (2018), available at: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/679221517425064052/EndingViolenceAgainstWomenandGirls-GBVLaws-Feb2018.pdf>

6 <http://kadincinayetlerinidururacagiz.net/veriler/2882/2019-august-report-of-we-will-end-femicide-platform>

7 Gorbunova, Y., The Chilling Inaction on Domestic Violence in Russia is Endangering Women's Lives, Human Rights Watch (2019), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/07/29/chilling-inaction-domestic-violence-russia-endangering-womens-lives>

8 Krizsan, A. and Roggeband, C., 'Towards a Conceptual Framework for Struggles over Democracy in Backsliding States: Gender Equality Policy in Central Eastern Europe', *Politics and Governance*, vol. 6(3), pp. 90-100 (2018).

# Coming back from the margins: The second life of feminist self-defence

Irene Zeilinger

Garance (Belgium)

When the women's liberation movement of the 1970's stood for women and girls as a central issue of gender equality, activists developed practical tools of resistance. Best known today are women's shelters and rape crisis hotlines, but feminists did more than providing support to survivors. Feminist self-defence (FSD) allowed for women to anticipate violence and protect themselves against it by critically questioning gender stereotypes and opening the way towards gender-untypical experiences and practices. Initially, women flocked to the classes, and FSD providers struggled to meet the demand. FSD "came to symbolize the feminist quest for liberation".<sup>1</sup> Rape crisis centres integrated FSD classes in their list of services, and feminist resource books routinely included self-defence information. This enthusiasm for FSD continued throughout the 1980s, with specific classes developed for girls, women with disabilities, women of colour and older women, and the dissemination of FSD through international networks.

However, FSD never achieved (and in many instances did not seek) the same degree of public recognition and professionalization as its sister strategies of victim support. As a consequence, when the anti-feminist backlash of the 1990s slowed down, FSD was hit particularly hard. Several factors led to a decline in the demand and support for FSD, some of them impacting FSD from the outside of the feminist movement and others from the inside.

From the outside, the anti-feminist opposition to women-specific programmes also applied to FSD that typically organized itself in women-only groups. E.g. in 1993, the University of Stanford abolished a FSD class, in "voluntary compliance" to a discrimination complaint filed by a male student.<sup>2</sup> In other countries, FSD trainers were forced to work with boys<sup>3</sup>, diverting their meagre resources away from their primary target group. Meanwhile, the public conversation on violence against women and girls was successfully started by the women's

liberation movement, which made the topic accessible to mainstream actors such as martial arts schools and self-appointed safety experts. They capitalised on women's increased awareness of violence using a depoliticized language of empowerment. Their self-defence method is far less threatening to the gender order than FSD, and as these actors are not beholden to a political movement and profit from male and other privileges, they constitute an unfair competition.

Within the feminist anti-violence movement, critical voices emerged at the end of the 1980's and amplified in the 1990's, leading to FSD being "neglected and/or disparaged by many feminists".<sup>4</sup> Globally, three major reproaches were formulated: FSD was victim blaming; FSD meant individualizing/depoliticizing violence and resistance; FSD put the onus of violence prevention on women and failed to hold men accountable. Although each of these reproaches were repeatedly refuted<sup>5</sup>, the conflict resulted in the marginalization of FSD within the feminist movement.<sup>6</sup>

These developments had serious consequences for FSD provision.<sup>7</sup> In France, FSD became nearly extinct at the turn of the millennium, and activists had to go abroad to receive training and revive the practice. In Austria, FSD has been sidelined by free self-defence training provided by the police. The only Flemish FSD organisation had to close in 2003 because of funding limitations. A similar evolution has been noted in the US, where FSD organ-

1 Rouse, W. & Slutsky, B. (2014). Empowering the Physical and Political Self: Women and the Practice of Self-Defense, 1890-1920. *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 13(4), 470-499. P. 472.

2 von Lohmann, F. (1995): Single-Sex Courses, Title IX, and Equal Protection: The Case for Self-Defense for Women. *Stanford Law Review* 48(1), 177-216.

3 Seith, C. & Kelly, L. (2003): *Achievements Against the Grain: Self-Defence Training for Women and Girls in Europe*. London: London Metropolitan University.

4 Gavey, N. (2005). *Just Sex? The Cultural Scaffolding of Rape*. New York: Routledge. P. 220.

5 For example Brecklin, LA & Ullman, SE (2005), Self-Defense and Assertiveness Training and Women's Responses to Sexual Attacks, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 20(6), 738-72; Cahill, A. (2009), In Defense of Self-defense, *Philosophical Papers* 38(3), 363-80; Gavey, N. (2005), *Just Sex? The Cultural Scaffolding of Rape*. New York: Routledge; Hollander, JA (2009), The Roots of Resistance to Women's Self-Defense. *Violence Against Women* 15(5), 574-94; McCaughey, M. (1997), *Real Knockouts: The Physical Feminism of Women's Self-Defense*. New York and London: New York University Press; Senn, CY; Saunders, K. & Gee, S. (2008), *Walking the Tightrope: Providing Sexual Assault Resistance Education to University Women Without Victim Blame*, In Arcand, S., Damand, D., Gravel, S. & Harper, E. (eds.) : *Violence Against Women*. [original title: *Violences faites aux femmes*.] Québec: Presses de l'Université de Québec, 353 – 372.

6 McCaughey, M. (2013), Victim Vaginas: The V-Day Campaign and the Vagina as Symbol of Female Vulnerability. *Women's Studies* 42 923-935.

7 Seith, C. & Kelly, L. (2003): *Achievements Against the Grain*. Op. cit.



© Garance ASBL



isations and teachers experience difficulties to survive financially, and some had to stop their activities.<sup>8</sup>

In this context, FSD could not play a major role in the first years of WAVE. However, through the links between FSD practitioners and women's shelters, the topic occasionally crept back into the discourse and awareness-raising activities undertaken by WAVE.<sup>9</sup>

In the 2000s, a new generation of feminist activists, rooted in the do-it-yourself ethos of Riot Grrrl, demanded tools for resistance to violence and reinvested FSD. New professionals were trained, such as performance artists who promoted this new interest in FSD. At the same time, a new generation of feminist researchers became interested in FSD and developed a solid theoretical and empirical framework. In some countries, this renaissance led to a professionalization of FSD. For example, FSD in Belgium achieved basic funding for its prevention work and is mentioned in action plans to combat violence against women. A German Länder included at least partial provisions for FSD in their action plans, e.g. on FSD for women with disabilities.

But the most promising change occurred at the international level. FSD was included in relevant European policy documents, such as the Council of Europe Plan of Action for Combating Violence Against Women that calls for access to self-defence training for women and young girls, in particular those with disabilities.<sup>10</sup>

The FEMM committee of the European Parliament commissioned a study<sup>11</sup> which established that FSD contributes to implementing article 12 of the Istanbul Convention which encourages governments to promote profound social and cultural transformations of prejudice and practices which are root causes of violence against women and girls. A report by the European Parliament from 2011<sup>12</sup> and a resolution<sup>13</sup> from 2017 mentioned FSD for women and/or girls as means to fight violence.

FSD today has the scientific evidence base, the starting of a policy framework and the practical experience of several decades to make this effective prevention tool accessible to all women and girls across Europe. After 25 years, WAVE and its member organisations are at a crossroad where they can help translate these resources into substantial programming to allow for FSD to rise from the margins. ●

© Irene Zeilinger



**Irene Zeilinger** is the executive director of Garance, a Belgian NGO working for the primary prevention of gender-based violence. During the last 25 years, she trained more than 5,000 women and girls in Europe and Latin America in feminist self-defence. In addition to this practical experience, she holds a master in sociology as well as in woman and child abuse studies and is currently writing a PhD on masculinities and violence.

8 McCaughey, M. (2013), *Victim Vaginas*. op. cit.  
9 For example WAVE (2004), *Away from Violence. Guidelines for Setting up and Running a Women's Refuge*. Vienna, WAVE.  
10 Council of Europe (1997), *Council of Europe Final report of the activities of the EG-S-VL including a Plan of Action for Combating Violence Against Women*. Strasbourg, Council of Europe. Available at [http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/library/resource/IAV\\_ADL75183](http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/library/resource/IAV_ADL75183)

11 Kelly, L. & Sharp-Jeffs, N. (2016), *Knowledge and Know-How: the Role of Self-Defence in the Prevention of Violence Against Women*. Brussels, Directorate General for Internal Policies, Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Women's Rights & Gender Equality. Available from: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571385/IPOL\\_STU\(2016\)571385\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571385/IPOL_STU(2016)571385_EN.pdf)  
12 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2011-0065+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>  
13 [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0329\\_EN.html?redirect](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2017-0329_EN.html?redirect)

# The invisible community in the Republic of Moldova

Nicoleta Hriplivii and Vadim Vieru

Promo-LEX (Republic of Moldova)

The Republic of Moldova ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on July 1, 1994. By ratifying the CEDAW, Moldova has undertaken international and national commitments to ensure and protect the rights of every person, regardless of its status, and offered public and social goods for the citizens of the country. These rights must also be enjoyed by female sex workers and women who use drugs.

Female sex workers and women who use drugs are a significant, but extraordinarily marginalized and invisible community in the Republic of Moldova. They are highly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, harassment and violence due to multiple factors, including discrimination, social exclusion and criminalization. Despite their particular vulnerability, their specific needs are continuously ignored by the State, and they face systematic barriers in the realization of their fundamental rights, including the right to the highest attainable standard of health, reproductive and sexual rights, the right to decent treatment, and freedom from humiliation and violence.

Due to political, social and cultural norms prevalent in the Republic of Moldova, female sex workers and women who use drugs, endure discrimination and lack of equality, supposedly prohibited for all persons according to article 15 of CEDAW. These violations of the Convention are manifested through violence and misconduct from the side of state actors and citizens. The unfair treatment of those groups of people is expressed through impunity, a criminalized and/or stigmatized status that keeps sex workers contained in an isolated subgroup of society, and discriminatory funding restrictions that hinder access to health and other services. Police harassment, lack of access to life-saving information about their health (particularly reproductive and sexual health), and the general stigmatization continue to keep those women underground.

## THE AREAS OF CONCERN

### THE LACK OF STATE POLICIES TO RESPOND TO THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF WOMEN WHO USE DRUGS AND FEMALE SEX WORKERS.

**The policy framework for the elimination of discrimination towards women promoted by the State excludes female sex workers and women who use drugs.**

Besides the provision on the prohibition of discrimination, the State is obliged to take positive steps to ensure that any preventive measures are specifically aimed and take into account the needs of women belonging to vulnerable groups. There is a high prevalence of injecting drug use among women who engage in street-level sex work, with studies estimating that between 22–82% of sex workers are also IDU (Injection Drug Users). Estimates of female IDU involved in sex work range between 20–50% in Eastern Europe.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, in this context, it is imperative that a State policy fulfils the positive State obligation to protect these vulnerable groups of potential victims of discrimination.

## DRUG USE CRIMINALIZATION

**Moldovan drug laws that criminalize possession of small amounts of drugs fuel violence against women who use drugs.** Women who use drugs are systematically subjected to moral and sometimes physical abuse from law enforcement agencies responsible for drug law implementation. Laws prohibiting drug use and possession of drugs for personal use place female drug users outside the law, treating them as criminals rather than people who need healthcare, social support and other services.

## THE EXISTENCE OF STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICE

**The existence of administrative practices of stigmatization<sup>2</sup> and stereotypes in rape cases and other crimes against the sexual life of these people.** Lack of policies to remove the stereotypes from the society, in general, and to change the mentality of police officers and prosecutors, in particular, lead to improper attitudes on their behalf when investigating rape cases involving sex workers. Very often, these people do not even reach out to law-enforcement officers because they are afraid of being sanctioned for prostitution offences and would rather keep their activity a secret from their relatives.

**Discriminatory attitudes of police officers towards women who use drugs, are more commonly reported by female IDUs:** in the reference period, especially in

1 Roberts, A. and Mathers, B., *Women who use drugs: A review of their risks, experiences and needs* (2010), available at: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/hiv-aids/Women\\_who\\_inject\\_drugs.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/hiv-aids/Women_who_inject_drugs.pdf)

2 <http://uorn.md/caz-de-discriminare-pe-statut-hiv-castigat/>

2014, according to a Study on "Perceptions and Behavior of the Police Against Injecting Drug Users in the Republic of Moldova (IDU)",<sup>3</sup> it was found that about 70% of the police officers questioned thought that drug users were more likely to become offenders than victims, 63% associate drug users with criminals, 40% consider that most crimes committed in their towns are related to consumers of drugs. 1/3 of the police officers questioned were of the opinion that most drug-using women are commercial sex workers.

**Discriminatory practices of sanctioning the sex worker and the consumer of sex services.** In several countries, the law prohibits the purchase of sexual services, and the law does not punish prostitutes, but their clients. This is because it is not reasonable to punish people who offer sexual services, but on the contrary, they should be helped to give up this way of life. In Moldova, the current provision of Article 89 of the Contravention Code was amended on December 9, 2018.<sup>4</sup> Amendments include the definition of prostitution, as well as a new element regarding the punishment of the beneficiary who purchased paid sex services, maintaining the punishment for the person who provides such services. Compared with the penalties attributed to sex workers, penalties for clients are lower.

## NO ACCESS TO SHELTERS

**Lack of adequate protection of potential victims of discrimination such as female sex workers and women who use drugs.** Victims face challenges accessing services, including legal aid, shelters, and social services, and government funding for such services remains inadequate. Female sex workers and women who use drugs are trapped in a cycle of domestic violence and have difficulties seeking protection from government agencies, because there is no access to domestic violence shelters. The odds of intimate partner aggression are three times greater when drug use and drug abuse are involved. The failure to uphold the rights of vulnerable women who are dependent on drugs to shelter and support is the result of a range of structural inequalities: from the denial of access by shelter managers, to state policies that systematically ignore the needs of women who use drugs.

According to Government Decision no.1019 of 02.09.2008 for the approval of the Minimum Quality Standards regarding social services rendered in maternity centers: the mothers with children, who may harm other center beneficiaries (...) **who use drugs**, are not en-

titled to the services of the centre.<sup>5</sup> Government rehabilitation centers providing support to former sex workers are inexistent in Moldova. The State does not undertake any measures to rehabilitate these women psychologically, economically and socially.

## WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE IN DETENTION

In Moldova, women's rights in national prisons are the same as men's, but women seldom enjoy the implementation of their rights. Although women represent a small percentage of the total prison population, the number of women in detention is increasing – probably due to the impact of other negative phenomena prevalent in society, such as domestic violence, poverty, social inequality, etc.

National prison policies often overlook the special needs of women and their health problems. Issues arising from gender-specific health care needs and family responsibilities are also frequently neglected. Based on assisted and documented cases, many women in prison have as part of their medical history chronic diseases and severe consequences of sexual and physical abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, and drug or alcohol addiction. Many of them have chronic and precarious health conditions resulting from living in poverty, premature pregnancy, malnutrition and poor health care before detention. The prevalence of tuberculosis, hepatitis, toxemia, anemia, hypertension, diabetes, obesity and other diseases is higher among drug-dependent female inmates than among male inmates.

The national prison environment does not always take into account the specific needs of women. This includes the need for adequate nutrition, healthy life, fresh air and exercise for pregnant women and higher hygiene requirements such as regular showers and sanitary items.

In the NORLAM Mission study<sup>6</sup>, conducted in partnership with the Center for Qualitative Research in Anthropology of the Moldovan State University, it was stated that discussions with women detained in Rusca Prison revealed the following: the willingness of women victims of domestic violence to put an end to violence, their struggle to protect their children from abuse and the negative emotions these women had accumulated over the years, which were often triggering factors of the crimes for which they were imprisoned.

One of the study findings is that before going to prison, 129 of all the women surveyed (43%) were victims of domestic violence. All 129 interviewed women admitted →

3 <https://soros.md/files/publications/documents/Studiu%20Perceptii%20Consumatori%20de%20Droguri%20Injectabile.pdf>

4 [http://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc\\_id=108267&lang=ro#](http://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=108267&lang=ro#)

5 <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?action=view&view=doc&id=333826&lang=1&fbclid=IwAR2YBK7pb7vj9wjDg4oGVA1FEvhi8liiKBXf6sk6NKyrf6C1dOZFzE026Z0>

6 [https://nettsteder.regjeringen.no/norlam/files/2017/07/Anthropological\\_study.pdf](https://nettsteder.regjeringen.no/norlam/files/2017/07/Anthropological_study.pdf)

they had been victims of domestic violence, and also revealed that their husbands/cohabiting partners and parents had mistreated them in the past. Many also experienced violence in their childhood and adolescence. Due to a lack of confidence, 35.7% of women victims of domestic violence refused to talk about their situation with someone. 42.6 % of women called the police. Most of the 55 women who called the police said the aggressor was not punished and was detained only for a few days. 109 out of 129 women subjected to domestic violence have been convicted for violent crimes against either their husbands/cohabiting partners, one parent, or other people.

In conclusion, it has to be mentioned that, since its last review by CEDAW in 2013, the Republic of Moldova has taken some steps to tackle violence against women and fulfill its obligations under the Convention. However, problems concerning the most vulnerable groups of women in society, such as female sex workers and women who use drugs, remain unsolved and the government pays little attention to these issues. Female sex workers and women who use drugs remain the most discriminated social groups in the Republic of Moldova. In this regard, the Working Group of CEDAW formulated a list of issues<sup>7</sup> some of which having been previously raised by the Union for HIV Prevention and Harm Reduction (UORN)<sup>8</sup> and Promo-LEX Organization in the report submitted to CEDAW.<sup>9</sup> The upcoming review of Moldova by CEDAW (2020) will be guided by a list of issues developed by the Working Group in order to make some positive changes in the areas of concern listed in this article. ●

© Nicoleta Hriplivii



© Vadim Vieru

**Nicoleta Hriplivii** and **Vadim Vieru** are human rights lawyers from Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, members of the Promo-LEX organization; representatives of the applicants before the European Court of Human Rights; Council of Europe certified trainers for the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (*HELP*).

---

7 List of issues in relation to the sixth periodic report of the Republic of Moldova [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fM-DA%2fQ%2f6&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fM-DA%2fQ%2f6&Lang=en)

8 Is an umbrella structure that brings together public associations implementing the Harm Reduction Strategy of the Republic of Moldova. UORN Mission: Strengthening and Coordinating the Efforts of Member Organizations to Develop and Promote Harm Reduction Strategies as an Effective Approach to Protecting Public Health in Moldova <http://uorn.md/>

9 Is a non-governmental organization that aims to advance democracy in the Republic of Moldova, including in the Transnistrian region, by promoting and defending human rights, monitoring the democratic processes, and strengthening civil society (consultative status to ECOSOC granted by the Decision 2014/212) <https://promolex.md/?lang=ro>

# Preventing sexual violence by creating safe spaces for women

**Karishma Wadhvani Chatlani**

FAMAL (Spain)

**In July 2016 a woman and five men entered a building in the early hours of the morning in Pamplona, Spain. What occurred between the men and the 18-year-old woman led to them being accused of gang rape.** Everything was recorded on a mobile phone, so there was not much explanation needed, particularly when you are alone surrounded by five men. However, during the trial, the defence team based their case on the supposed “consent” given by the survivor through her silence. According to Spain’s current legislation addressing sexual assault and rape, force and violence must be proven in order to issue a ruling of “agresión sexual” (sexual aggression), which is not the same as “abuso sexual” (sexual abuse), in which there is no consent, but there is no use of force or violence. Each of these offences carry different sentences.

Most of you will have heard of this case that generated a large amount of media frenzy, in which the five men referred to themselves as “The Pack” (La Manada) in a WhatsApp group. In previous years, during the popular annual festival, known as “**San Fermín**”, **images of women being groped and sexually harassed by a large number of men had been circulated**, but there were also many unreported cases of rape, in which victims were too scared or ashamed to cry out for justice.

Protest against the sentencing of La Manada taking place in Tenerife, Canary Islands



© FAMAL

What really ignited society’s rage was when the defence team hired a private investigator to look into the life of the survivor. They presented pictures from her social media accounts as proof that she was not “too affected” and was not presenting the “symptoms” of a rape victim, concluding therefore that she had not been raped by the five men<sup>1</sup>.

Many women and feminist organizations went out to the streets demanding justice, with huge banners stating “**Sister, I do believe you**”, which ended up initiating our Spanish #MeToo movement. All of us were infuriated to see how sexual violence survivors were being slut-shamed and were subjected to victim blaming. The first sentence that was issued in this case was that it was sexual abuse (abuso sexual), instead of ruling it as rape (violación), which carries a more severe punishment, because the survivor’s silence was brought into question, and therefore considered as consent.

Throughout this ordeal, Spanish feminist organisations were inspired by female university students in other countries who were doing their own work to prevent sexual violence on campuses. They came up with “**Punto Violeta**” (Purple Point), which is a safe space for women created at large gatherings such as festivals, popular local celebrations, concerts, etc. At Federación de Asociaciones de Mujeres Arena y Laurisilva (FAMAL), this year we were in charge of creating this safe space at our popular Carnivals and during other festivities on the Canary Islands.

**At each “Punto Violeta” we have a specialized professional team that consists of a psychologist, a social worker and a gender equality specialist, all of whom are very familiar with sexual violence and gender-based violence.** Apart from the specialised team, we also have volunteers who have been previously trained and are present in the area where the event is taking place, making themselves accessible to any woman or girl who needs assistance or anybody wanting to inform about somebody else needing assistance. The Safe Space is →

1 There are many articles referring to this matter, as it sparked a huge controversy, in which everyone started debating whether a survivor of rape should have a certain behaviour. This article reflects on some of the comments made by the defense team. For further information see: [https://elpais.com/politica/2017/11/28/actualidad/1511856664\\_235408.html](https://elpais.com/politica/2017/11/28/actualidad/1511856664_235408.html). Periódico El País, 28th November 2017)



active as long as the event lasts, and it also has a helpline available. All the people working at the Safe Space wear a uniform, in order to be easily identified (purple T-shirt as seen in the picture above).

We were able to intervene in cases of gender-based violence at all events, to assist girls who were sexually harassed by older men and to inform the general public about sexual violence and how to react when experiencing or witnessing it. Our presence made it difficult for potential perpetrators to act. The general response from the public was extremely positive and youngsters perceived us to be more approachable, than the police or the *guardia civil*, as we were not considered an authoritative figure, but rather someone they could count on and confide in. Another important task we had was to raise awareness on taboos related to sexual harassment and bystander intervention.

FAMAL staff also went to nightlife establishments and gave personnel working there basic training on sexual violence, how to identify it, how to react when witnessing it and what to do at their workplace to support potential victims and prevent perpetrators from causing further victimization. After completing the basic training, each of these establishments received an adhesive emblem, categorising it as a safe space for women and informing people that the staff have knowledge of what to do in situations of sexual violence.

This summer turned out to be one of the worst regarding the prevalence of gender-based violence in Spain: **55 women have been murdered by their partners or ex-partners this year.**<sup>2</sup> Currently, the political climate is



© Photos: FAMAL



One of the bar owners posing after receiving her adhesive emblem

highly volatile because of far-right parties and their radical speeches against human rights (they have recently earned more votes in the last elections held in November). It seems like this is definitely having a negative impact on our society, as this year there have been 42 known cases of gang rape (Geoviolencia Sexual. <https://geoviolenciasexual.com/>) Sadly, it has become normal for us to wake up to hearing the news of a woman being raped or murdered.

This is precisely why it is so important to carry on with actions like "Punto Violeta", which not only help us prevent violence against women (VAW) and assist victims, but also to educate the public about sexual violence,

2 Estadística de Víctimas Mortales por Violencia de Género. Delegación del Gobierno para la Violencia de Género. Ministerio de la Presidencia, Relaciones con las Cortes e Igualdad. Updated on the 4th of November 2019 <http://www.violenciagenero.igualdad.mpr.gob.es/violenciaEnCifras/home>



consent and available resources for survivors. But most importantly, we send **a clear message to the rest of society: we are all responsible when it comes to VAW and we cannot look away.**

Last **20<sup>th</sup> of September** all feminist organizations in Spain declared a state of emergency, because of the high number of women being murdered and raped. Once again, we all joined forces to fight for our rights; to put pressure on authorities to implement more effective measures to prevent VAW; to force the judicial system to protect victims of gender-based violence; to stop victim blaming in courts...and we all know we still have a very long way ahead.

At FAMAL we are continuously working to offer **innovative projects, assist women in need, coordinate with public administrations and focus on feminist activism to influence political actors in all possible ways.** Our activism targets people of all ages, but we give special attention to educating our youth. We go out of our way to reach all the schools in remote areas on the islands and run workshops on gender equality and the prevention of VAW.

**This year we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary as well!**

We strive to carry on working to attain gender equality and empower women through our organization, in the hope of making the world a better place, because as Audre Lorde said: ***"I am not free while any woman is not free, even when her shackles are very different from my own."*** Over the past 25 years we have achieved many milestones, but we recognise that there is still a lot to be done, and in this age of social media and mass communications technology our work is not going to be easy. **We must carry on fighting** in honour of previous generations who fought for us, so we can offer the next generation a world in which gender equality prevails. ●



**Karishma Wadhvani Chatlani** is a psychologist with a master's degree in Humanistic Integrative Psychotherapy. She works at *Centro de Apoyo Integral a la Mujer in Fuerteventura* (Canary Islands) and is responsible for the psychological treatment of women victims of gender-based violence who seek support at the centre. In addition, she also works with youth, women and other specific groups, running workshops promoting equality, relationships based on non-violence, respect, solidarity, raising awareness on gender-based violence and sexual violence.

# Moving forward: Gaps and opportunities in the UK policies to tackle Black and Minoritised homelessness due to gender-based violence

**Rosa dos Ventos Lopes Heimer**

Policy Coordinator, Latin American Women's Aid (UK)

In the UK, statistics show that in 2018, an estimated 4.8 million (28.9%) women aged 16 to 59 years experienced some form of domestic abuse at some point in their life. 'One of the major causes of women's homelessness is relationship breakdown due to violence, with a disproportionate representation of homeless single mothers having reported experiences of abuse.'<sup>2</sup> Indeed, a 2014 study by Crisis has found that 61% of all homeless women had previously been subjected to domestic violence.<sup>3</sup> Research has shown that women from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds are generally trapped in violent relationships for a longer time than white British women.<sup>4</sup> In particular, factors such as immigration status, language ability, and racist discrimination often play a major role as additional barriers for BME survivors to exit violent relationships as well as present them with more difficulties in accessing safe, suitable and stable accommodation. This is not only due to increasing lack of appropriate refuge spaces and permanent, suitable and affordable houses to accommodate them, but also caused by pervasive institutional and systematic discrimination in homelessness assessments and housing allocations as well as insufficient provisions for women with insecure immigration status.

Although the past decades have seen important legislative advances to tackle violence against women in the UK, there is still a long way to go, many survivors of violence continue to be left behind, in unsafe and precarious situations. This is particularly evident in failures to ensure Black and minoritised women subjected to violence have access to safe and suitable short- and long-term accommodation – which is a stepping stone to protect them and prevent repeat victimization. This article addresses legislative advances in relation to tackling violence against women in the UK in the past 25 years,

particularly concerning homelessness related to violence, and identifies gaps and opportunities to further the implementation of current frameworks in this area. It draws on the first year findings of the Women Against Homelessness and Abuse (WAHA) project which aims to address Black and minority ethnic women's intersecting pressures of poverty, homelessness and gender-based violence through promoting changes in housing policy and practice in the UK using a rights-based approach. This is a 2 year project funded by Trust for London and jointly run by Latin American Women's Aid (LAWA) and the London Black Women's Project (LBWP), two specialist by and for Black and minoritised women's organisations with a longstanding history of more than 30 years running refuges and advice centres for women affected by different forms of gender violence.

## The Istanbul Convention: The missing steps towards the UK ratification and protection of all women

In 2012 the UK government signed the Istanbul convention, one of the most comprehensive frameworks to tackle violence against women, however, it is still in the process of ratifying it. In 2017, the announcement of a Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill in the Queen's Speech represented a renewed boost of commitment to ratifying the convention, although two years have passed and the bill has still not been made a reality. Although, a draft bill incorporated important measures, despite efforts by the 'Step Up Migrant Women' coalition, there remains a need to ensure that the bill does not leave migrant women behind by fully complying with the Istanbul Convention.

In particular, guaranteeing protection and access to housing to all migrant women subjected to violence on non-discriminatory grounds is an obligation of the UK under the Istanbul Convention Article 4(3) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. Therefore, there is an urgent need for reinforcement of Article 59 of the Istanbul Convention, granting all women subjected to VAWG with an autonomous resident status enabling them to access housing

1 ONS. 2018. 'Domestic Abuse in England and Wales: Year Ending March 2018'. ONS.

2 MHCLG (2019). *Causes of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping – Rapid Evidence Assessment*. London: MHCLG.

3 Crisis (2014). *Nations Apart? Experiences of single homeless people across Great Britain*. London: Crisis.

4 Imkaan (2010). *Vital Statistics*. London: Imkaan.

and other welfare benefits regardless of immigration status. In line with Southall Black Sisters campaign<sup>5</sup>, to comply with the Istanbul Convention the UK government must abolish the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Rule for all women subjected to VAWG, and has to access to safe refuge accommodation (through housing benefit) and move-on housing options. Currently, only women with NRPF who are on spousal visa are entitled to access the Destitution Domestic Violence Concession (DDVC) under the Domestic Violence Rule, whilst women with student visas, work permits, and undocumented migrant women are left unsupported and at risk. The options for these women are often limited to remaining in violent homes, often under a life-threatening situation, or becoming homeless and therefore exposed to other forms of violence.

However, in order to fulfil local authorities' extended homelessness duties towards survivors of violence who are NRPF (as recommended above), the government would also need to guarantee adequate levels of funding are allocated strictly for this purpose. This will ensure all survivors can be assisted through welfare support and are therefore protected from further victimization. In particular, this will ensure the UK fulfils its obligation under Article 8 of the Istanbul Convention, to provide appropriate financial and human resources to implement policies and measures to combat and prevent all forms of violence against women – in particular, on non-discriminatory grounds as prescribed in Article 4(3) of the convention. In addition, ensuring all victims of violence have adequate access to services facilitating their recovery, such as financial assistance and housing, is also an obligation of the UK under Article 20 (1) of the Convention.

Indeed, complying with the financial requirements of the Istanbul Convention might be the most challenging area where the UK government may be unwilling to take action on, particularly considering the catastrophic impacts of its austerity measures on survivors of violence – which would need to be overturned. Since 2010, government austerity has drastically affected benefits and services in ways that disproportionately impact the lives of Black and minority ethnic women directly and indirectly.<sup>6</sup> Central government funding to local councils has been reduced by half<sup>7</sup>, meaning that they have been operating under increasing financial pressures. This has also led to direct cuts to women's refuges and services, creating a context of increasing and unequal competition in local commissioning processes hitting BME

women's refuges the hardest. Indeed, in the past 10 years, 50% of BME specialist refuges have been forced to close or have been taken over by a larger provider due to lack of funding, whilst others continue to operate without any local government support.<sup>8</sup> This year Newham Council has decided to abruptly de-commission London Black Women's project, threatening the closure of its four life-saving refuges for BME women in East London. According to 2018 data, there are only 30 specialist by and for BME women's refuges for the whole of the UK, 15 of them being located in London.<sup>9</sup> This amounts to a total of merely 325 bed spaces for BME survivors, representing only 8.5% of the national provision (at 3,649 refuge bed spaces) which is in itself considerably below the minimum target recommendation by the Council of Europe (calculated at 5,562 for 2018).

By and for BME women's refuges are a vital emergency accommodation for BME survivors fleeing violence where they feel safer, their intersecting needs are adequately addressed and they are supported to move on to other more stable forms of housing. An appropriate level of provision of BME refuges is central to fulfil local authorities' duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Article 4 (3) of the Istanbul Convention, ensuring BME survivors fair and non-discriminatory access to adequate supported accommodation. The UK is failing to meet its legal obligations. In order to comply with Articles 20<sup>10</sup>, 22<sup>11</sup> and 23<sup>12</sup> of the Istanbul Convention, the government should allocate adequate financial resources to address VAWG and ensure access to general support services, specialist services and shelters on non-discriminatory grounds (as per the Equality Act 2010 public sector duty towards people with protected characteristics and Article 4 (3) of the Istanbul Convention – which includes migrant and refugee status as a non-discriminatory ground). Therefore, we call for a needs assessment of the national and local provision of specialist services and refuges – framed within equality principles – to →

5 See more information here: <https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/campaigns/immigration/abolish-no-recourse-to-public-funds-campaign/>

6 WBG & The Runnymede Trust (2017). *Intersecting inequalities: The impact of austerity on Black and Minority Ethnic women in the UK*.

7 WBG (2019). *Triple Whammy: the impact of local government cuts on women*. London: Women's Budget Group.

8 Imkaan (2016). 'Capital Losses'. London: Imkaan.

9 Women's Aid (2017) *Nowhere To Turn Findings from the first year of the No Woman Turned Away project*. Women's Aid: London.

10 Article 20 (1) on general support services states that 'Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims have access to services facilitating their recovery from violence. These measures should include, when necessary, services such as legal and psychological counselling, financial assistance, housing, education, training and assistance in finding employment.'

11 Article 22 (1 and 2) on specialist support services states that 'Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide or arrange for, in an adequate geographical distribution, immediate, short- and long-term specialist support services to any victim subjected to any of the acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. Parties shall provide or arrange for specialist women's support services to all women victims of violence and their children.'

12 Article 23 on shelters states that 'Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide for the setting-up of appropriate, easily accessible shelters in sufficient numbers to provide safe accommodation for and to reach out pro-actively to victims, especially women and their children.'

establish the level of ring-fenced funding to be allocated to BME women's refuges.

## The UK Homelessness legislations: Gaps in practice and provision to protect BME women

In the UK, homelessness is covered under a range of legislations, with the primary homelessness provisions being contained in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. Under the main homelessness duty of the act, local authorities have a statutory duty to provide settled accommodation to certain groups of homeless people. More recent homelessness legislation introduced amendments and expanded the 1996 Act. In particular, the Homelessness Act 2002 introduced the requirement for local authorities to formulate a homelessness strategy based on regular reviews of all levels and future levels of homelessness in their areas.

Since 2002,<sup>13</sup> priority need for accommodation under the main duty of the Housing Act 1996 was extended to explicitly include people who are vulnerable because they have fled their home due to violence. Nonetheless, local authorities may often fail BME survivors without children in their vulnerability test to assess whether someone faces a priority need for housing. Evidence from the WAHA project shows that the vulnerability test has a very high threshold and decisions are being made on an arbitrary basis. In particular BME women's vulnerability arising from structural and intersectional inequalities are not being properly considered, such as vulnerability arising from their mental health, language needs and the way this is exacerbated by racial and gender-based forms of discrimination. In line with Imkaan's Alternative Bill proposals, there is a need to advocate for a reconceptualization of "vulnerability as a wider category of oppression that affects all women, manifesting in their unequal representation and participation as a condition of the structures and institutions they come into contact with." (Alternative Bill, p.5). In fact, vulnerability assessments for survivors of violence should be completely abolished by automatically extending priority need to all survivors of domestic violence, as advocated by the 'Safe Home' campaign led by Crisis.

*"I spent the whole day in the council, and in the end I was told I was not eligible because I was not disabled, I spent two nights sleeping on the floor of a shop with all my luggage, they [Housing officers] didn't bother about where I would go. They said if I can cook, clean and look after myself then I am not vulnerable. They asked me to take my luggage but then didn't bother. They took no responsibility, I know I am not disabled but they knew I have PTSD and I'm taking medicine but didn't bother, if I*

*didn't have this space in this refuge where would I be?"*  
[Bangladeshi woman, survivor]

In 2003, the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order established that the use of Bed & Breakfast (B&B) accommodation is unsuitable for 16 and 17 year olds, pregnant women and families with dependent children, except when there is no other accommodation available, in which case it should only be used for a maximum of six weeks. Despite that, at the end of 2018, there were a total of 2,420 households in B&B with dependent children in England, making up 34.7% of all households in this type of accommodation and amounting to an 18% increase in relation to the previous year.<sup>14</sup> Around 33.4% of all households with children living in B&B had been living there for longer than the 6 weeks statutory limit.<sup>15</sup> Experiences from the WAHA project also show that BME women moving on from by and for BME women's refuges are often only being offered B&B style accommodation as an option, where they need to share facilities with strange men and adults with drug and alcohol problems. Unwillingness to accept is met with threats of being made intentionally homeless. This form of accommodation is not suitable to any survivors of domestic violence, it can considerably worsen the vulnerability and traumatic experiences of BME women and children, placing them at high risk of repeat victimization. The case below of a former BME refuge resident is illustrative of that, as explained by a BME refuge worker:

*"There was a mother with two young boys (10 and 2 years old) who were placed in a temporary accommodation which was a mixed gender hostel. There were people with a range of different vulnerable needs, drug and severe mental health problems, former prisoners. The rooms were full of dump, the oldest boy had asthma and it got worse when he was there. Showers were gender segregated but she had to go to the men's one with her son and often found drug utensils, such as needles and spoons. There were also cockroaches and mice. She could not use the kitchen as it was only for the staff so they had to buy meals from the hostel which was too expensive. She was only able to afford food for the children but not for her. We appealed the decision, got a letter from the GP, brought to Hackney council but they said she had to wait for at least 6 weeks more, she ended up staying 8 weeks more, 20 weeks in total. This women and her children were put at much greater risk, with people using drugs, being aggressive, stealing things, police would often show up. They were exposed to more violence."*  
[BME refuge worker]

The most recent and significant change in homeless-

13 The Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002

14 MHCLG (2019). *Statutory Homelessness, October to December (Q4) 2018: England*. London: MHCLG.

15 Ibid.

ness legislations have been introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which came into force in 2018. The new act has been widely welcomed for placing increased duties on local authorities to provide advisory services to prevent and relieve homelessness to all those affected (not just those who have 'priority need'); to intervene at an earlier stage, by incorporating duties to prevent/relieve homelessness for an extended period (from 28 days to 56 days); and to work with homeless applicants to develop a personalised housing plan that includes actions or 'reasonable steps' to be taken by both parties in order to try and prevent or relieve homelessness. Most importantly, the act also places a duty on certain public authorities to refer service users who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to a housing authority. Underpinning public authorities duties under homelessness legislation, there is a Public Sector Duty under the Equality Act 2010, requiring authorities to have due regard to people with relevant protected characteristics (e.g. Black and minoritised women) whilst carrying out their functions with views to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people.

There is also a comprehensive Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) providing statutory guidance on how to interpret and apply the homelessness legislation, with specific guidelines relating to cases of domestic violence. Although the code is not legally binding, local authorities are required to have regard to it and failure to do so can be used as a basis for a judicial review. However, evidence suggests significant inconsistencies in the ways in which local authorities are implementing these, raising specific concerns in relation to equality and discrimination when it comes to Black and minoritised survivors. Our on-going work identifies local housing authorities' practices that contradict procedures outlined in the code, however, these are sometimes extremely hard to challenge given the non-binding nature of the code of guidance.

For example, there several occasions were identified where victims are disbelieved and denied support if they fail to provide proof of a non-molestation order or police report. However, as stated in Section 21.20 of the Homelessness: "assessments must be based on the facts of the case and should be devoid of any value judgements about what an applicant should or should not do, or should or should not have done, to mitigate the risk of any violence and abuse." This is particularly concerning when it comes to BME survivors, as evidence show BME women may be less likely to report domestic violence to the police given mistrust and fears of further criminalization, particularly if they have an insecure immigration

status.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the code of guidance clearly states that "the housing authority should be particularly sensitive to an applicant's wishes and respectful of their judgement about the risk of abuse" (21.26). In other instances, victims are also having their experiences of abuse disbelieved or not taken seriously enough when the abuse they experience is not visibly physical, such as psychological or financial. This practice explicitly contradicts guidance contained in Section 21.19 of the Homelessness Code stating that "the term 'violence' should not be given a restrictive meaning, and 'domestic violence' should be understood to include physical violence, threatening or intimidating behaviour, and any other form of abuse which directly or indirectly may give rise to harm; between persons who are, or have been, intimate partners, family members or members of the same household, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation". In particular, the Code states that housing authorities must follow the cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse which includes, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse.

In light of that, one of the main recommendations made by the WAHA project is for the incorporation of a binding duty to be placed on Local Authorities, ensuring their internal guidance and practices comply with the MHCLG Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2018 in order to fulfill their legal duties towards survivors of violence under homelessness legislation. Crucially, however, these binding procedures should be incorporated together with a robust accountability structure inclusive of the by and for BME women's sector.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This article critically reviewed advances in the UK regarding national and international frameworks to tackle violence against women, particularly assessing how it relates to Black and minoritised women's homelessness related to violence. It reviewed steps towards the UK ratification of the Istanbul Convention, various homelessness legislations and the Equality Act 2010. Based on identified gaps in the implementation of these policies, the specific policy recommendations laid out below build on findings from the WAHA project. It proposes concrete ways to move forward to ensure the UK complies with its national and international obligations towards all women subjected to violence, regardless of race and immigration status, in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

1. All survivors of violence should be automatically considered eligible for safe housing/housing benefit regardless of their immigration status. →

16 McIlwaine, Cathy, Lucila Granada, and Illary Valenzuela-Oblitas. 2019. 'The right to be believed'. LAWRS and King's College London: London.

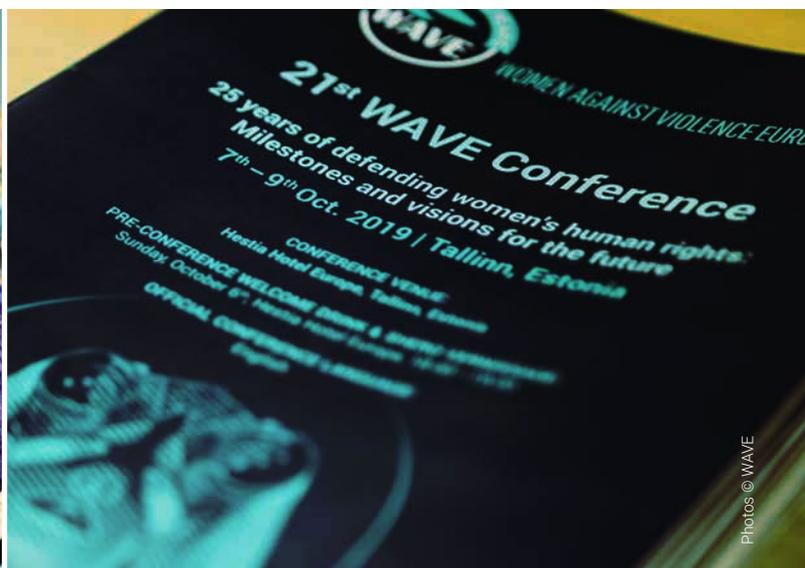
2. The central government should provide ring-fenced funding to by and for BME women's refuges.
  3. Local Authorities should refrain from using B&B style accommodation as a move on option for BME survivors, in particular women with dependent children.
  4. A binding duty should be placed on Local Authorities to ensure their internal guidance and practices comply with the MHCLG Homelessness *Code of Guidance for Local Authorities 2018* in order to fulfill their legal duties under the homelessness legislation – *Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017*. More specifically, they must ensure that:
    - Local Authorities must refrain from requiring survivors of domestic violence to provide further proof of violence in order to be believed and granted support.
    - Local Authorities must have equal regard to all forms of violence against women, regardless whether women have experienced physical violence.
- Local Authorities must refrain from requiring survivors of violence to prove a local connection in order to make a homelessness application.
  - When assessing vulnerability of BME women due to domestic violence, Housing Authorities must fully consider vulnerability arising from structural and intersectional inequalities in full compliance with their public sector duty under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to people with protected characteristics.



© Rosa dos Ventos Lopes Heimer

**Rosa dos Ventos Lopes Heimer** works as a Policy Coordinator at Latin American Women's Aid (LAWA) and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Geography at King's College London. Before joining LAWA, Rosa completed an MSc in Gender, Policy and Inequalities (LSE), and worked in research and policy, managing projects in the intersecting areas of gender equality, migration, violence against women and LGBTQI rights in the UK, India and Lithuania.

Participants attending the WAVE annual conference in Tallinn, Estonia in 2019.



Photos © WAVE



# Tackling domestic violence in an aging Europe

**Hector Charles Pagan**

MPA, Head of Project Writing Team, University of Tartu (Estonia)

As of 1 January 2018, 19.7% of the EU-28's population is over 65 years old, reflecting a steady increase that has occurred in the past two decades (it has risen by 2.6% in the past ten years). The share of the older population is increasing in every EU country and this trend will continue in the foreseeable future - the share of those over 80 in Europe is projected to increase twofold between 2018 and 2100, from 5.6 % to 14.6 %.<sup>1</sup>

This trend poses a challenge for those working in the field of combatting domestic violence (DV), as abuse of older women is a worldwide concern affecting human rights, gender equality and the ageing population. European surveys<sup>2</sup> have found that 19% of women over 60 had experienced partner violence since they were 15 and 3% in the past 12 months. The percentages were 17% and 3% with respect to non-partner violence. The survey also indicated that women over 50 are more worried about the possibility of physical or sexual assault in the private domain. WHO estimates that 15.7% of people 60 years and older are subjected to abuse<sup>3</sup>. And yet, it is widely understood that data on the prevalence of elder abuse/gender-based violence is inadequate and underreported. A major reason for this is that older female victims of abuse are often unwilling or unable to seek assistance. The Abuse and Violence against Older Women (AVOW) study interviewed nearly 3,000 older women (aged 60 and above) from five countries (AU, BG, FI, LT, PT) and found that 28.1% had suffered some form of abuse or neglect. Out of these, more than half (55.3%) did not talk about it with somebody they knew or reported it to an official agency.<sup>4</sup>

**Furthermore, older women as a group experience unique and compounded disadvantages because they are part of three different marginalized groups: the**

**elderly, abused and female.** Gender discrimination across the lifespan has a cumulative effect, and neglect, abuse and violence across the lifespan results in a high share of older suffering from lifetime abuse.

Healthcare providers are key actors working with and supporting this group, as they offer multiple entry points for identifying and supporting DV victims. For example, studies show that as many as 1/3 of emergency patients have experienced partner violence<sup>5</sup>. Primary medical providers also treat a high number of victims and can build trust that makes disclosure of abuse easier for a victim. Surveys have indicated that women would be more willing to first discuss violence with their primary carers, i.e. their doctor, as opposed to other service providers, such as social workers or the police.<sup>6</sup> Thus, healthcare settings could be used as excellent places to identify victims, encourage them to seek assistance and treat/document injuries for criminal proceedings. Evidence suggests that screening by health care providers can be effective in facilitating the disclosure of intimate partner violence and thus improving identification levels.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, because of frequent injuries, health care providers are often the first, and sometimes the only, helping professional to interact with victims. This makes the role of health care providers even more important in addressing domestic violence.

Thus, health care professionals should be able to identify signals of abuse and ensure privacy with patients to discuss difficult issues related to abuse and be able to make appropriate referrals to further advice and support<sup>8</sup>. Their ability to do so is diminished greatly by a series of connected factors. This includes prejudice, stereotyping and false beliefs pertaining to doctors and nurses which could affect their ability to identify abuse, such as the perspective that professionals should not →

---

1 Eurostat: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population\\_structure\\_and\\_ageing#The\\_share\\_of\\_elderly\\_people\\_continues\\_to\\_increase](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing#The_share_of_elderly_people_continues_to_increase)

2 According to the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) "Violence against women: an EU-wide survey" (2014)

3 WHO. Violence and Injury Prevention// Elder abuse/Global Health Observatory. GHO. URL: [https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/elder\\_abuse/en/](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/elder_abuse/en/) (accessed 07.06.2019).

4 Luoma, M. L., Koivusilta, M., Lang, G., Enzenhofer, E., Donder, L., Verté, D., & Penhale, B. Prevalence study of abuse and violence against older women: results of a multi-cultural survey conducted in Austria, Belgium, Finland, Lithuania, and Portugal/ National Institute for Health and Welfare. 2011. P 1-78.

---

5 Boyle A, Robinson S, Atkinson P, Domestic violence in emergency medicine patients/ Emergency Medicine Journal. 2004 №.21.P. 9-13.

6 Gielen, A. C. et al. Women's opinions about domestic violence screening and mandatory reporting/ American journal of preventive medicine. 2000. Vol.19 №. 4. P. 279-285.

7 McFarlane JM et al. Assessing for Abuse: Self report versus nurse interview // Public Health Nursing. 1991. №. 8. P. 245-250.

8 Zink T, Jeffrey Jacobson Jr C, Regan S, Pabst S. Hidden victims: The healthcare needs and experiences of older women in abusive relationships// Journal of Women's Health. 2004 Vol.13 №. 4. P:898-908.

intervene in DV cases as it represents a “private matter.”<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, many healthcare professionals have never been trained on the topic, so they lack the knowledge, confidence or understanding needed to identify abuse and its long-term effects. This is made harder due to inadequate screening procedures, professional time constraints and lack of knowledge of available community support services.<sup>10</sup> Specialized training for healthcare workers is also important because even when identified, older female victims often do not receive appropriate assistance due to their complex issues of long-term dependency, health problems or economic vulnerability.

With this in mind, the Working with Healthcare Organizations to Serve Elderly Female Victims of Abuse (WHOSEFVA) project was conceived. WHOSEFVA was a two-year project co-funded in 2016 by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the EU. The project conducted 19 focus groups in six countries with 157 women over the age of 65 (approximately one-third were identified as victims or possible victims). Participants indicated that the most frequently used services used were emergency services, police, health care and crises telephone numbers. However, an issue expressed by many was that they felt they were often not believed or ‘taken seriously’ by others when making complaints, which could greatly affect their ability to seek help in cases of abuse. Related to this, significant numbers of participants also admitted they were often made to feel ‘insignificant’ by others and were not treated as adults (‘infantilized’). These perceptions were especially true when health care providers were analyzed, whom many participants believed to be unwilling to help them in a situation of abuse due to a lack of time (‘doctors are too busy’) or interest (it is a ‘family conflict’ and ‘they would never ask’). Other factors identified that could prevent older people from seeking help included not having a mobile phone, lacking digital skills, language or physical barriers. Participants also expressed the idea that, in comparison to younger women, older women had less to look forward to, which can create a feeling of being “doomed.”

Partners also conducted mutual learning workshops with 364 healthcare professionals, social workers and domestic violence support workers on the topic. Before the workshops, only 35% of participants felt that they should pay attention to and ask older women about the possibility of violence. Furthermore, only 42% of participants considered themselves very familiar or moderately familiar with elder abuse. Those who had experience in matters related to DV indicated that victims themselves were often a barrier to offering help, as

they would not recognize violence as violence, denied the abuse and/or blamed themselves for it. Participants also believed that many victims did not want to change their lives, did not demand help or better treatment and were often in a dependent relationship with their abuser (as caretaker or caregiver). More than 2/3 of participants reported they had never received training in elder abuse prevention and indicated that health care workers required more training in identifying signs of elder abuse, provision of psychological first aid to victims, documentation of elder abuse cases and multi-agency cooperation in responding to abuse. Lectures and case studies were cited as the preferred teaching methods.

Based in part on the above, the WHOSEFVA team developed materials that were used to conduct trainings for 281 health care professionals on the prevalence of violence against older persons, assessing signs/markers of abuse and how to support older victims of violence. An additional 57 health care professionals in Finland, Greece and Latvia were trained on how to effectively implement screening protocols that can be used to identify elderly victims of violence, based on the Elder Abuse Suspicion Index (EASI). These protocols were tested in health care facilities in Finland and Greece over a two-month period, throughout which 64 patients over the age of 75 were screened and 19 (29.7%) cases of suspected abuse were identified. A training manual and online course were also produced by the project to support our efforts. These and other relevant information related to the project can be found at <http://whosefva-gbv.eu/>.

Finally, the complexity of elderly female abuse requires solutions that go beyond training and institutional-level change - policy structures should be put in place to ensure cooperation between the various agencies that may be relevant for any particular elder abuse case (social services department, DV organization, eldercare services, healthcare, criminal justice, etc.). With this in mind, the WHOSEFVA project identified a set of best practices/future goals that should be set throughout Europe to address this problem:

- ▶ **Improved methods for identifying victims of DV:** Countries like Austria have established reporting obligations for medical professionals to help victims disclose abuse and be supported.
- ▶ **Improved multi-agency cooperation:** Facilitation of cooperation and coordination of primary health care, long-term care and social services professionals who deal with elderly people by means of easier access to and sharing of information and systems of (mandatory) referrals, especially in cases of elder abuse.
- ▶ **Improved methods for assessing the outcomes of DV cases:** Better collection of data on the number and outcomes of cases of violence against women across different sectors must be developed – currently none

9 Gielen, A. C. et al. Women's opinions about domestic violence screening and mandatory reporting/ *American journal of preventive medicine*. 2000. Vol.19 №. 4. P. 279-285.

10 Rimmer Abi. Domestic violence is poorly covered in medical training// *BMJ*. 2017. P.359.

of the six WHOSEFVA countries are doing this adequately.

› **Train key actors working with elderly women:** Laws should provide for the training of all professionals who might get in contact with elderly victims of abuse, to help them recognize signs of abuse and provide required psychological and other assistance to victims. Funding to support such training should also be allocated.

› **Incorporate elder abuse in national strategies and involve civil society in reform efforts:** Inclusion of DV and elder abuse in relevant national frameworks and strategies elaborated by different ministries (e.g. crime prevention strategy, health care strategy, human rights strategy etc.) in order to ensure that these issues are properly addressed and dealt with in a comprehensive manner. Furthermore, funding should be allocated to national and/or municipal budgets for improving elder care services and enhancing capacity to fight elder abuse. This should include: funding of specialized shelters for elderly people or units within women's shelters that will work with elderly women; training of staff, working with elderly people on a regular basis; adequate funding for bodies that provide elder care, including sufficient salaries for employees etc.

› **Adoption of laws that deal with domestic violence to suit the needs of elderly women:** Inclusion of sections regarding elderly women's abuse within general laws (criminal, civil, general) on domestic violence or in specialized laws on abuse of elderly people/women (physical, financial, psychological.) For example, a provision that the police can evict perpetrators of violence from homes in cases where the perpetrator is the only carer and an elderly woman is unable to take care of herself should be complemented to ensure continuous provision of support. In such cases, depending on the situation, the law should provide for: a) other relatives who could take care of the victim should be notified; b) daily care and support could be provided by a trained person coming in for several hours; c) the victim should be placed in a suitable nursing home.

## PROJECT PARTNERS<sup>11</sup>

The WHOSEFVA project was conducted by a consortium of 8 partners, in 6 European countries. These were selected based on their competencies related to the project, including:

- › Extensive experience in the delivery of support services for DV victims, including elderly female victims;
- › Knowledge of working with health care professionals and/or in health care policy analysis/advocacy;
- › Track record of successful participation in projects implemented at the international level;
- › Ability and interest in establishing strong connections with health care providers;
- › Experience in dissemination at the national and/or EU level.

The following project partners fulfilled specific roles based on their expertise, abilities and interests:

**Women's Support and Information Centre (WSIC, EE)**  
**University of Tartu (UT, EE)**  
**Voimaa Vanhuuteen (VoiVa, FIN)**  
**Kilcooley Women's Centre (KWC, UK)**  
**Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture (UWAH, GR)**  
**Resource center for women MARTA (MARTA, LV)**  
**The Austrian Women's Shelter Network (AÖF, AT)**  
**Women against Violence Europe (WAVE, AT)**

The WHOSEFVA project was implemented with financial support from the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014–2020) of the European Union. The contents of the WHOSEFVA project are the sole responsibility of Women's Support and Information Center NPO and project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

With financial support from  
the Rights, Equality and  
Citizenship Programme  
of the European Union



© Hector Charles Pagan

**Hector Charles Pagan** has over twenty-five years of experience raising money for and working on various social issues, including affordable housing, ex-prisoner reintegration and women's issues in New York and Estonia. For the past thirteen years he has lectured at the University of Tartu on topics related to civil society and NGO/public management. He has also led applied research projects on topics related to domestic violence, especially concerning violence towards older women. These projects have been carried out in conjunction with Tartu Women's Shelter, for which he has consulted since 2013.

<sup>11</sup> Further information about project partners can be found at: <http://whosefva-gbv.eu/team-english>.

# Improved national legislation – the path taken by the Republic of Moldova to tackle violence against women and domestic violence

**Natalia Vilcu**

Executive Director, Women's Law Centre (Republic of Moldova)

Human rights are the inalienable rights of every human, including every girl and woman. Violence against women and domestic violence are severe violations of these human rights and a devastating problem around the world. Such violence leads to discrimination and is a violation of women's fundamental rights to equal protection before the law, liberty and security of the person, equality before the law and freedom from torture. Violence against women and domestic violence affect victims' health, family wellbeing and impact the economy in their community and in the country more broadly.

The Republic of Moldova is a small country located in Eastern Europe with a population of 2.8 million people<sup>1</sup>. The Republic of Moldova's transition to democracy and a market economy following the break-up of the Soviet Union resulted in economic and social difficulties that had a particularly adverse impact on women's status and gender relations. The decline of women's socio-economic status increased their vulnerability to exploitation, violence and ill-treatment.

Strong traditional patriarchal values and gender stereotypes which prevail in Moldovan society restrict women's opportunities in public life and also affect their private lives. According to a recent study<sup>2</sup>, 60,8% of men and 60,2% of women believe that when women are employed, they take away jobs meant for men, while 90,5% of men and 81,5% of women think that the most important role for a woman is taking care of the household and her family. With respect to attitudes towards violence, many Moldovan women suffer, usually in silence, from all forms of violence; 41,1% of men and 19,1% of women agree that there are instances where a woman should be beaten, while 27,7% of men and 17,5% of women think that a woman should tolerate violence to preserve the family.

The OSCE-led survey on violence against women<sup>3</sup> reveals that nearly three-quarters of women in Moldova (73%) who have ever had an intimate partner have experienced some form of intimate partner violence. The most common form of violence experienced at the hands of an intimate partner is psychological violence, which 71% of women say they have experienced (significantly higher than the EU average of 43%).<sup>4</sup> One-third (33%) stated they have experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner over the course of their lifetime.<sup>5</sup> Again, this is substantially higher than the EU average of 20%.

As a member of the United Nations since 1992 and of the Council of Europe since 1995, the Republic of Moldova committed itself to protecting the human rights of the people within its borders. The country must safeguard these rights, which are set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Moldova ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and is thus bound by the provisions of these agreements. As a member of the Council of Europe, the Republic of Moldova is a party to many European human rights treaties, such as the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, the European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the European Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.

1 <http://recensamant.statistica.md/ro>

2 Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova, Women's Law Centre, Sociopolis, 2015, [http://cdf.md/files/resources/125/Men%20and%20gender%20equality\\_2017%20\(1\).pdf](http://cdf.md/files/resources/125/Men%20and%20gender%20equality_2017%20(1).pdf)

3 Well-being and Safety of Women, Moldova Results Report, 2019, <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/424979>

4 Well-being and Safety of Women, Moldova Results Report, 2019.

5 Ibid.

The international treaties focus, among other things, on the positive obligation of state parties to prevent and protect women from violence, to prosecute and punish perpetrators and to compensate victims of violence.

The Republic of Moldova's commitment to ensure the effective implementation of the aforementioned international instruments, in general, as well as awareness of the seriousness of domestic violence as a phenomenon and its effects, in particular, resulted in the decision of the Moldovan authorities to take a significant step forward in addressing domestic violence. This was ensured by adopting the **Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence** (Law No. 45) in March 2007, which entered into force in 2008. Adoption of the national legal framework against domestic violence was an important achievement in terms of ensuring observance of and adherence to the international treaties in the field and, in fact, marked the beginning of the process of harmonising national legislation with international and European human rights standards.

Since the adoption of Law No. 45, the legal framework regulating the prevention and fight against domestic violence has been amended in 2010, 2016 and 2018.

The major amendments were made by Law No. 196, which was adopted in 2016. The objective was to adjust the national legislation in order to meet the provisions outlined in the Istanbul Convention. The amendments were determined, at least in part, by the recommendations made in the first analysis of the compatibility of Moldova's national legislation with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention developed by the Women's Law Centre. The amendments established criminal liability for forms of violence other than physical (which was already criminalized), including psychological and economic violence; introduced an emergency barring order issued by police as a temporary measure to protect victims of domestic violence by removing the aggressor from the house; introduced contravention liability for violation of the emergency barring order implying a sanction of fine or contravention arrest from three to ten days; introduced criminal liability for failure to execute measures in the protection order issued by the court implying a punishment in the form of community service or imprisonment for up to three years; extended the definition of family members to also include intimate partners and divorced couples living separately; exempted victims of domestic violence from the state fee for the application for a protection order; etc.

Domestic violence in most of its forms is recognised as a crime in Moldova's national legislation. The only exception is domestic violence contravention cases, which is when a victim of domestic violence suffers from bodily injuries which are not considered to be significant and harmful.

As it stands, Law No. 45 is a comprehensive legal act recognising that gender equality is a key element in preventing violence against women and that violence disproportionately affects women. The Law officially recognises five forms of family violence: physical, sexual, psychological, economic and spiritual. The provisions of the Law extend to family members living together as well as separately and provide victims with the right to:

- › request an emergency barring order issued by the police for a period of up to ten days;
- › request a protection order issued by the courts in civil or criminal proceedings for a period of up to three months;
- › receive primary and qualified free legal aid;
- › access free forensic examination;
- › financial compensation from the state to victims of domestic violence crimes;
- › protection of personal data and confidentiality of reported information, etc.

After all the efforts made to improve the legislative framework and adjust it to align with the most comprehensive European treaty on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, on 6 February 2017, the Republic of Moldova signed the Istanbul Convention, becoming the 44th member state of the Council of Europe to sign it. By signing the Convention, the state sent a clear message that violence against women and domestic violence must not be tolerated, as it is a crime and a violation of human rights which must be prevented, prosecuted and punished, and that victims have to be protected and supported, while comprehensive policies must be developed and implemented.

To reinforce its commitments and continue the process of preparing for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, the Government of the Republic of Moldova approved its first National Strategy to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women and Domestic Violence for 2018-2023 and an Action Plan to help implement the National Strategy. The national strategic document is aimed at ensuring a systemic approach to tackle violence against women and domestic violence and increase the efficiency of the response of corresponding institutions in cases of violence. National public institutions with support from non-governmental organisations make significant efforts to promote zero tolerance concerning violence against women and domestic violence, protect victims via a multisectoral approach to cases of violence, efficiently investigate cases of domestic violence and violence against women and eliminate impunity for perpetrators, establish a fatality →

review team, develop a uniform data collection system and monitor the implementation of policies and laws in the field.

In 2019, national public authorities, in partnership with civil society, initiated a new process of reviewing the current practices of response to cases of violence against women and domestic violence and started working on a new draft law to ensure legislation complies with the provisions outlined in the Istanbul Convention. These important measures are proof of the country's firm commitment to ratifying the Istanbul Convention.

All these accomplishments are a result of joint efforts between national public institutions and civil society to advance women's rights and ensure protection of and support to women who experience violence.

We strongly believe that the country will pursue ratification of the Istanbul Convention in the near future and will make sure to lay down a vision of a society in which women are not subordinated to men and gender equality is fully achieved. ●

Members of the WAVE Advisory Board, WAVE Office staff and the Executive Manager at the annual conference in 2017, held in Budapest, Hungary.



# A quarter of a century against winds and tornados – stocktaking of main activities and achievements of NANE Association

**Enikő Pap, Györgyi Tóth, and Judit Wirth**

NANE Women's Rights Association, Hungary

*"There was a time in my life when I owed my survival to NANE; I will be always grateful for that."*

Feedback from a survivor

## Introduction

NANE Women's Rights Association is a non-profit, non-governmental organization aiming to step up against violence against women and children. NANE was established in Hungary in 1994, and celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2019, together with the WAVE Network. In addition to WAVE membership, NANE is a member of the Hungarian Women's Lobby.

NANE has been operating in a climate where promotion of equality between women and men and elimination of violence against women was never high on the political agenda, especially not translated into decisive government actions. Difficulties mounted since 2013, when women's rights NGOs – among other – were sidelined, stigmatized or even harassed in different ways by state or close-to-state actors<sup>1</sup>. Hungary occupies the last place on the latest Gender Equality Index developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, research shows that nearly half of all Hungarians think that sexual intercourse without consent may be justified in certain situations.<sup>3</sup>

## Key achievements

NANE is active at individual, community, national and international levels.<sup>4</sup>

The association provides individual assistance mainly through its helpline operated by volunteers. The helpline for adult and child victims of domestic violence, and later on for sexual violence as well, has operated since the very beginning of the association. It has a toll-free num-

ber since 1997.<sup>5</sup> NANE has received during its existence close to 25,000 calls, lately approximately 1,000 calls yearly.

In the last decades, we introduced several groundbreaking and innovative initiatives in the field of individual assistance. An "integrated client service" model has been running since 2005 jointly with our sister-organization, PATENT Association, when capacity and resources allowed. The aim is to provide victims of violence all the needed support and assistance – legal, psychological and social counseling – in one place.

At the **community level** we provided training and prevention programs for different institutions, professionals and groups, covering several areas of violence against women. We successfully accredited and offered training programs for social sector practitioners and teachers, and specialized training programs for the police – unfortunately these are less, if at all, utilized nowadays. To date, NANE organized 120 trainings for professionals and for those providing assistance to victims.

Our unique "Power to Change" program was developed in international collaboration among WAVE member organizations to run and support self-help groups for victims/survivors of violence. In addition to facilitating such groups, we provide help for those who plan to organize similar groups.

NANE also has successful initiatives targeting young people. The popular "Heartbeat" training – developed also in international collaboration – aims at prevention of intimate partner violence. To date, close to 5,000 young people participated in our prevention programs.

NANE volunteers have always done an amazing job in →

1 See [https://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/Timeline\\_of\\_gov\\_attacks\\_against\\_HU\\_NGOs\\_17112017.pdf](https://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/Timeline_of_gov_attacks_against_HU_NGOs_17112017.pdf)

2 See <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019>

3 See <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/75837>

4 See more at [www.nane.hu/en](http://www.nane.hu/en)

5 Since 2010 the so-called 'KERET' helpline was available for victims of sexual violence (run by NANE volunteers, as contribution with the NGO coalition against sexual violence). From July 2019 this helpline was merged to NANE Helpline.

their crucial roles as helpline assistants and activists. The Association developed a comprehensive volunteer training, supervision and mentoring system, that is now based on more than two decades of experience.

At the **national level**, to date NANE published and translated 20 professional handbooks and other publications and developed 20 information leaflets. We also organized numerous awareness raising initiatives, independently or jointly with other organizations. To date, we were present at 435 awareness-raising events. Our emblematic action is the “Silent Witness” exhibition and march, which commemorates women murdered in the context of domestic violence and demands effective state intervention. We collect yearly cases of domestic violence related homicides, based on press and police reports. The exhibition was created in 1999 and has since been invited to numerous events. (The Silent Witnesses are red, life-sized female silhouettes, with the names of the deceased and the circumstances of their deaths.) Every year we open the 16 Days of Activism Campaign with the Silent Witness March.

NANE fulfilled a pioneering role and has a strong record in advocating for the improvement of policy, legal and institutional responses to violence against women. We had a groundbreaking role in introducing professional concepts in relation to violence against women that were unknown in the country; we have examined draft legislations and proposed bills, following relevant international standards. The success of these activities has been largely dependent on political will. Some of our proposals can be found in the legislation – e.g. the restraining orders in cases of domestic violence, and stalking and domestic violence as criminal offences –, although our expertise in finalizing the content of norms pertaining to violence against women has not always been utilized by lawmakers.

In partnership with other women's rights NGOs, NANE monitored state compliance with international human rights norms and standards on promotion and protection of women's rights, particularly regarding the elimination of VAW. We have prepared numerous reports, submissions and provided information to various international organizations and bodies (such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Council of Europe). Our concerns and recommendations have been echoed in the observations made by these bodies.

We can and will effectively continue our efforts to protect women and children from violence – even during difficult times –, if our volunteers, partner organizations, donors and others who support our work and its cause continue to be at our side.

Great appreciation and thanks go to all who contributed to NANE's 25 year-long activities. ●

© Enikő Pap



**Enikő Pap** is a legal expert at NANE Association. She is specialized in the application of international norms on elimination of violence against women. Among other related activities, she contributed to several NGO submissions to international bodies. Currently she is a member of the WAVE Advisory Board. She is also a secretary of the Hungarian Women's Lobby – an umbrella organisation of women's advocacy NGOs, and member of the European Women's Lobby's Observatory on Violence against Women.

© Györgyi Tóth



**Györgyi Tóth** has been a member and volunteer of NANE since 1997. From 2000 to 2016 Györgyi was a full-time staff member, fulfilling various roles as project coordinator, training coordinator, trainer, mostly developing and organising training programmes for professionals such as social workers, counsellors, police officers, as well as prevention programmes for young people. Györgyi was a member of the WAVE Advisory Board for several years, and for four years she was chair of the Hungarian Women's Lobby.

© Judit Wirth



**Judit Wirth** has been active as a volunteer, helpline-operator, project coordinator, researcher, advisor and victim-counsellor with NANE Women's Rights Association since 1998. She holds an MA in English Literature and Linguistics, a dr.juris diploma in Law and a Coaching Certificate. Currently, she is a member of the Advisory Committee of NANE and works with survivors of gender-based violence and childhood sexual abuse in individual and group settings.

# Can activism wake up Romania?

**Monica Tudorache**

Necuvinte Association (Romania)

Yes, it can. When the time comes, when the citizens of a State witness its failure to protect human lives, they are forced to react. Otherwise, they become accomplices to its dysfunctions. Now more than ever, the civil society in Romania has to speak up and act immediately in response to what had happened in the summer of 2019.

It was a regular, sunny Friday morning, when Romania was shocked by the news of two teenage girls who were kidnapped while hitchhiking on their way back home. The girls were Alexandra Măceșanu, 15 years old, and Luiza Melencu, 18 years old; both disappeared in the city of Caracal, Ilt County.

The case of these girls was rather shocking because Alexandra, the young girl mentioned above, called the national emergency line (112) three times before someone took notice of her call, in which she stated that she had been kidnapped, raped and tied up with metallic wires. She gave the operator and the police as many instructions as possible regarding her location. Unfortunately, it took 19 hours for the police to find her, since they had been looking for her in the wrong places. After finally arriving at the right location, they waited for three hours in front of the house to get a warrant that was unnecessary. When they entered, they only found the jewels of the girl in a barrel. After the investigation, the officials stated that Alexandra was dead. The most important details of the crime are still unknown to the public.

The citizens of Romania have been left wondering why it took so long for the girl, who called the national emergency line, to be found; why such an urgent intervention was postponed for three more hours. Furthermore, in Romania people are still wondering today about what had happened to Luiza, the other girl, who went missing in April 2019.

The Romanian society witnessed how State institutions failed to protect the life of its citizens and issued contradictory public statements. The initial statements issued by public institutions only pointed fingers at each other for having failed to intervene at the right time. After that, State institutions simply remained silent.

The institutional silence that followed in this case was unacceptable, but the intense media coverage ensured the crime and the failure of the State to intervene were subject to public scrutiny for a long time. The media revealed to the public that both girls were declared missing by their relatives, hours after their disappearances, but the responsible police officers did not launch an in-

vestigation, telling the parents that the girls were probably with their boyfriends. They failed to apply any legal measures to find the missing girls. The police refused to issue any public statements in this regard.

The Caracal case, given its injustice, caused public anger in Romania. It is our responsibility, as civil society, to have a strong reaction towards what had happened. It is unacceptable to live in a State which allows sexist tragedies to occur within its jurisdiction, three years after the ratification of the Istanbul Convention – or ever, for that matter.

Even though Necuvinte Association established a collaboration with the Romanian police shortly after it started to implement its projects and activities, and they collaborated on various projects throughout the years, the events of the summer of 2019 forced us to take action against the police, as it was one of the responsible institutions. Criticism towards their institutional de-professionalization was inevitable. In addition to this, we have been constantly putting pressure on the police system to create specialized units to tackle crimes related to gender-based violence.

Necuvinte Association also sent a letter to the Council of Europe, calling for immediate action to prevent further loss of human lives because of the deficiencies of the emergency response system and institutionalised sexism prevalent in Romania. We requested the urgent appointment of a Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly and a qualified opinion of the Commissioner for Human Rights. We believe that fundamental changes and immediate measures have to be undertaken because, according to a study conducted by the Ministry of Health, in Romania domestic and gender-based violence are one of the top 30 causes for women's deaths. The same study revealed that these factors are not related to men's deaths. Moreover, annually, there are around 40.000 complaints registered by the police concerning cases of domestic abuse, not to mention other related to human trafficking, disappearances and sexual assault. Out of this number, only 2% end up in a court of law, with convictions handed down to perpetrators. This is also due to the fact that in Romania, according to the existing Criminal Code, domestic and gender-based violence are not considered crimes that carry a high risk to society.

Another major problem is the lack of monitoring of protection orders issued by judicial courts. Even though these protection orders can be useful instruments that →

help protect victims of abuse, they are largely ineffective because of the high number of perpetrators who breach them without having to face any legal consequences. A legal proposal was made to monitor perpetrators with electronic bracelets, but this has not been implemented so far, thus endangering the safety and lives of women and girls in Romania.

Necuvinte Association sent a letter to the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs, drawing attention to the Caracal tragedy, which could have been avoided, if the system had been functioning properly. Moreover, we accused the serious lack of professionalism of police officers, who failed to adequately intervene on so many occasions. We complained about the institutional response to the Caracal case, because no one had the courage to publicly take responsibility for what had happened. The reply we received from the Ministry of Internal Affairs informed us that measures will be undertaken to address the situation, including making changes to psychological exams police officers need to pass, to ensure better supervision of their capabilities, and introducing gender-based violence classes in the curriculum of the Police Academy. If these, or other measures will be effective, remains to be seen.

As representatives of the civil society in Romania, we will not remain silent. Because turning a blind eye to-

wards what is happening around us, ignoring through a lack of reaction the State's failure to prevent the killing of women and girls, can only mean that we become accomplices as well. Silence can and will consolidate the illegitimate power of the State.

Romania needs fundamental changes; our anger targeted at these recent events has the purpose to make these changes happen. As Vaclav Havel simply put it, "there is a power of the powerless". Romanian activists will continue to put pressure on State institutions to effect change. ●

© Monica Tudorache



**Monica Tudorache** studied political science and is currently pursuing a master's degree in equal opportunities at the University of Bucharest. She is a member of *Necuvinte Association*, serving as gender equality expert and human rights activist, with an emphasis on the rights of victims of gender-based violence. The NGO she works at is specialised in intervention and prevention against gender-based violence, in all its forms and manifestations, awareness-raising campaigns, educational programs, lobbying and advocacy initiatives.

Group photo with staff from the WAVE Office, the Executive Manager and the President of the WAVE Network in Tallinn, at the 2019 annual conference.



© WAVE

# Challenges of grass roots women's organisations in terms of sustainability: Social Enterprise and Peer Mentoring approaches

**Beverley Gilbert**

Cohort 4 (UK)

**Elaine Compagno**

SOAR, St Jeanne Antide Foundation (Malta)

Women have been described as “the world’s most underutilised resource.”<sup>1</sup> Whilst this related to women as employees in enhancing business productivity, it could also be said for women coming together to support their peers. Small scale women’s groups bring the possibility for women to support each other after experiencing domestic violence. However, the challenge for small community women’s groups to be financially sustainable is problematic all over Europe. In Malta, localised funding opportunities that specifically prioritise work in the area of violence against women do not exist, and access to EU funding requires a strong administrative arm that small grassroots women’s organisations don’t always have. In the UK, small women’s groups often get overlooked when seeking funding. Long term financial austerity, competition for community or charitable funding, and unhelpful commissioning processes preclude such organisations from achieving sustainability. This results in women’s organisations continuously struggling to carry out their vital work in supporting survivors of violence and abuse.

## Grassroots women’s organisations

The term “grassroots women’s organisations” in this article relates principally to locally based, small scale, NGOs seeking to support and to empower women. These organisations often form to support women after experience of abuse or to advance women’s rights to equality. The level of local knowledge and expertise within these organisations can be significant. Such small organisations are often considered to be more responsive to specific needs of individual women, more agile in accomplishing development goals and more able to reach out to the most vulnerable women in any specific

community to find immediate and innovative solutions.<sup>2</sup> However, relatively few governmental, statutory or charitable funding institutions invest in them monetarily over sufficient time to enable longer term sustainability.

Two women’s peer support organisations, *SOAR*, St Jeanne Antide Foundation from Malta and *Cohort 4* from the UK, were both formed by survivors of domestic violence from their respective locality. They both formed with peer mentoring and support principles at the heart of the organisations. *SOAR* has been operating in Malta for the past 6 years and *Cohort 4*, in a relatively deprived ex coal mining area of Warwickshire in the UK, for the past 5 years. The small-scale level of funding for these two organisations has enabled women surviving domestic and sexual violence to find longer term peer support within their own communities. These organisations exemplify the longer-term approach to women being able to survive experiences of domestic and sexual violence, located where women live. They are run predominantly by voluntary peer mentoring positions.

## Women with multiple and additional support needs

Small grassroots women’s groups are increasingly supporting women with a range of needs in addition to surviving domestic and/or sexual violence. This overlaps with gender, ethnicity, immigration status, mental health, disability, socio-economic position and structural disadvantages. Social stigma was highlighted in a 2019 report regarding women with multiple and complex needs by AVA/Agenda<sup>3</sup> as well as lack of safe accommodation, social welfare issues and financial austerity policies. Surviving domestic violence can be →

1 “A Guide to Womenomics,” *The Economist*, April 12, 2006, <http://www.economist.com/node/6802551>

2 “Women’s NGOs are changing the world – and not getting credit for it,” *The Conversation*, December 2, 2017, <http://theconversation.com/womens-ngos-are-changing-the-world-and-not-getting-credit-for-it-88360>

3 AVA & Agenda (2019) *Breaking Down the Barriers: Findings of the National Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Multiple Disadvantage*. London: AVA & Agenda.

a non-linear, lifelong process. The impact of the experience of abuse frequently results in multiple issues and can be generational, affecting children and others within the family sphere. Survivors in Malta face multiple barriers to escaping domestic violence<sup>4</sup> and meeting their most immediate needs, resulting in a recent sharp increase in homelessness, socio-economic deprivation and revictimization.<sup>5</sup>

Government funded domestic abuse support, where it is provided, can frequently be both time constrained and financially limited to women accessing support. This can fail to meet the needs of women who may need considerable amounts of time to survive their experiences.

## Funding and sustainability

In the UK, there have been severe and sustained governmental cuts to local authorities and to communities. This represents what has been described as a 'triple whammy' for women where 1) the local government is responsible for many of the services on which women disproportionately depend, 2) women are increasing the amount of unpaid work they complete in the home and 3) women are more likely to work in local authority jobs. Therefore, the loss of jobs and pay cuts have had a disproportionate impact on women and their children.<sup>6</sup> This year, financial austerity has had a disastrous impact on all organisations working within the field of domestic violence support services.

In Malta, funding for SOAR came from small localised State-controlled funding grants and corporate sponsorships. Since there are no local grants that are focused on or prioritise work in the area of violence against women, SOAR and other small grassroots women's organisations find themselves competing with local men's band clubs and sports associations for the same grant. Small women's organisations must squeeze their services into the priorities of the available grants and the straitjacket of a project if they are to survive at all. The process of continually writing and applying for small project-based funding eats away at valuable and limited time and resources. Whilst writing for larger administration-heavy EU funding is not always a viable option for small organisations.

## Social enterprise

To address the issue of sustainability both SOAR and Cohort 4 have created their own social enterprise business

activities to help fund their operational goals. SOAR has developed their enterprise Meraki Soaps following suggestions from the survivors they support. Starting with a donation of €500 from a corporate partner, Meraki Soaps has been funding its own growth for the last year. Bath cosmetics are made and sold by women, including staff, service users and volunteers, as a non-formal and informal adult learning group activity. Women find this activity to be stress relieving and calming. In November 2018, SOAR won the national EPALE Award recognising the value of non-formal adult learning in creative peer-support group sessions.

Initially, the sale of the products was meant to replenish raw materials needed to keep the activity going. The demand for the product soon made the potential very clear for this initiative to grow into an enterprise that could sustain part of the service costs. In May 2019, SOAR won the ENISIE Inter-reg National Prize for Social Innovation with their idea of setting up a social enterprise that would not only make their group work sustainable, but would also offer jobs and work exposure to survivors to manufacture more products. The prize consisted of 40 hours of business mentoring to support the SOAR management team to develop the idea into a social enterprise. SOAR is in the process of competing for a grant to fill out a larger workspace to continue its creative peer-support group work and manufacture of bath cosmetics.

Cohort 4 was created when the founder was selected after a competitive process to join the School for Social Entrepreneurs in the Midlands region of the UK. A year long process assisted in developing the founder's business knowledge and planning process to ensure that funds created by Cohort 4 were ploughed back into the operational purpose of women supporting women to survive after experience of abuse. In the financial year 2017/18 some 16% of all income was self-generated by the small organisation, primarily as a result of delivering accredited training to statutory and community peer support groups both in the UK and in Europe. Another stream of income came from sales of fabric craft items, made by the women as a group including the directors, volunteers and women attending craft groups. This self-generated income seeks to keep the organisation alive within the small community of North Warwickshire, and additional funding from charitable funders such as the Lottery Community Fund, Heart of England Community Fund, Tampon Tax and other small charitable funders means that individual women-led projects can be added to the operational context of Cohort 4.

4 <https://meae.gov.mt/en/ZeroViolence/Documents/Full%20Cooperation%20-%20Zero%20Violence.pdf>

5 [https://www.antidemalta.org/store/p17/Phoenix\\_Rising.html](https://www.antidemalta.org/store/p17/Phoenix_Rising.html)

6 Women's Budget Group (2019) "Triple whammy: The impact of local government cuts on women," <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Triple-Whammy-the-impact-of-local-government-cuts-on-women-March-19.pdf>

## Women's Lives – Risk, need and our response

Globally, domestic violence is not reducing – in fact it is a persistent violation of human rights, disproportionately affecting women, given the level of inequality within societies.

**Violence against women undermines women's dignity and integrity and imposes serious harm on families, communities and societies. In the EU, estimates suggest that 1 in 3 women (or 61 million out of 185 million) have experienced physical or sexual violence, or both, since the age of 15.<sup>7</sup>**

In the UK alone, an estimated 2.0 million adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in 2018 (1.3 million women).<sup>8</sup>

The impact on communities, the risk of harm caused by domestic abuse and the need for responsive services is undiminishing. Community level women's organisations, more often without designated funding managers/departments, struggle to survive. SOAR and Cohort 4 continue as women-led, peer mentoring, support organisations making the most of social enterprise and self-funding processes, always searching for self-generated ways of sustainability in a difficult field of work. It is a continuous battle to survive as organisations, with synergies being pulled by working alongside women survivors and acquiring the necessary funding to continue such work.

The challenge of sustainability facing all domestic violence support agencies is huge, but for the smallest community groups, their slice of funding is literally to have the funding 'cake crumbs' compared to the larger national organisations who gain the largest share of funding. Yet the community level impact of such small grass roots groups can be huge, significantly responsive to the lives of individual women, and can be led by the very women they seek to support. ●

© Beverly Gilbert



### Beverly Gilbert

Founder, Risk & Operations Manager Cohort 4  
Senior Lecturer in Violence Prevention, Domestic & Sexual Violence  
MA in Ethics: Policing and Criminal Justice. MA The Dynamics of Domestic Violence.

Beverly is a PhD student at Anglia Ruskin, Cambridge. Her research examines peer mentoring with women who have multiple and complex needs. After over 30 years working in the UK criminal justice sector, specialising in working with perpetrators of domestic violence, Beverly is an academic at the University of Worcester teaching on the MA Understanding Domestic & Sexual Violence. She is the founder of Cohort 4, a survivor-led peer mentoring and peer support organisation in the Midlands area of UK. She is an individual member of WAVE.

© Elaine Compagno



### Elaine Compagno

Founder, SOAR Service Coordinator, St Jeanne Antide Foundation  
Diploma in Youth and Community. Diploma in Gender and Development.  
Co-author and editor: Phoenix Rising – Starting over after domestic violence (2015).

Elaine led the process to the setting up of Malta's only survivor-led peer support service under the auspices of St. Jeanne Antide Foundation. For 7 years, she has led the service and its growth taking it from a small informal support group to a fully licensed support service reaching over 450 women. SOAR is part of the Network Forum Malta, a member of WAVE.

7 Schonard, M. (2019) FEMM Mission to Spain - 28 February 1 March 2019, European Parliament Briefing. Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs Directorate-General for Internal Policies PE 608.865

8 Office for National Statistics (2018) Domestic Abuse in England and Wales: Year Ending March 2018. London: ONS. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>

# Challenges to adopt domestic violence legislation in Ukraine and ensure its effective implementation

## Kateryna Levchenko

Doctor of Law, PhD in Philosophy, Professor, Government Commissioner on Gender Equality Policy<sup>1</sup>  
President of NGO “La Strada-Ukraine” (1997–2018)

Domestic violence is a widespread phenomenon in Ukraine. Only in 2018, the National Police of Ukraine received 115,473 appeals related to domestic violence. Combating domestic violence and violence against women is an important pillar of the Gender Equality Policy and one of the priorities of the Ukrainian Government. This is reflected in the Action Plan on the Implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in October 2017. The Action Plan includes, among other, tasks such as supporting the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating of violence against women and domestic violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention (IC), para. 22, and the improvement of mechanisms and procedures for investigating and prosecuting human rights violations, in particular those related to domestic, gender and sexual violence, ensuring support to the Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to the Criminal and Criminal Procedural Codes of Ukraine in order to implement the provisions of the IC (para. 54).<sup>2</sup>

In December 2017, the Laws “On Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence” and “On Amendments to the Criminal and Criminal Procedural Codes of Ukraine to Implement the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence” were adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament. The Law ‘On Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence’ entered into force in January 2018. Changes to the Criminal and Criminal Procedural Code entered into force in January 2019, which provided an opportunity to implement crucial amendments. As result – the year 2018 became a year of intensive legislative activity, developing and conducting training courses for different groups of specialists, public discussions around some legislative innovations and informative campaigns aimed at raising awareness of different tar-

get groups and society as a whole. At the same time, the IC has not been ratified by Ukraine.

The following Cabinet of Ministries resolutions and orders were developed and adopted to enforce the legal rules in 2018:

- ▶ The Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine (CMU) Resolution ‘On approving the Procedure for liaison between entities implementing measures in the field of preventing and combat-ing domestic violence and gender-based violence’ (No. 658 dated 22/08/2018);
- ▶ The CMU Resolution ‘On approving the Standard Regulations for domestic violence and/or gender-based violence shelters’ (No. 655 dated 22/08/2018);
- ▶ The CMU Resolution ‘On approving the Standard Regulations for mobile psychosocial support teams to provide psychosocial assistance to victims of gender-based and/or domestic violence’ (No. 654 dated 22/08/2018);
- ▶ The Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs ‘On approving the Procedure for issuance of urgent restraining orders against offenders by the authorized sub-units of the National Police of Ukraine’ (No. 654 dated 01/08/2018);
- ▶ The CMU Order ‘On approving the Concept of state social programme for preventing and combating domestic violence and gender-based violence’ (No. 728-r dated 10/10/2018);
- ▶ The Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine ‘On approving the Regulations of psychological services in the educational system in the Ukraine’ (No. 509 dated 22/05/2018 and registered at the Ministry of Justice at No. 885/32337 on 31/07/2018);
- ▶ The Order on Risk Assessment in cases of Domestic Violence and other situations.

These documents are based on a holistic approach towards assistance provided to victims and on the principle of interagency cooperation between key actors, such

1 The Government Commissioner for Gender Policy is an official authorized by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, responsible for organization of exercise of powers on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of social life by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine Decree # 390, from June, 7, 2017).

2 [http://search.ligazakon.ua/L\\_doc2.nsf/link1/KP1711106.html](http://search.ligazakon.ua/L_doc2.nsf/link1/KP1711106.html)

as police, social workers, prosecutors, bar associations, educational, health protection and social institutions, judges, local authorities and NGOs. As a result of these developments, Ukraine already has a solid legislative foundation to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence. Developing the legislation is still an ongoing process and multidisciplinary working groups as well as specialists from different governmental institutions, international and non-governmental organizations continue their work.

As an example of the implementation of the Resolution on Mobile team regulations, the functioning of 49 mobile teams was organized in 12 Ukrainian oblasts by the Ministry of Social Policy together with the 'Ukrainian Foundation for Health Rights', and oblast state administrations, with support from the UNFPA Office in Ukraine. Each mobile team includes a social worker, two psychologists and was provided with vehicles to reach people in need. In case of necessity of a legal consultation, the free legal aid system and its Coordination Center for Legal Aid Provision play an important role in improving victim's access to justice. There are wide networks of such centers and bureaus in Ukraine.

In order to ensure better access to information and services for victims of domestic violence, the National Toll Free Hotline for prevention of domestic violence, human trafficking and gender discrimination was maintained 24/7 by the Civil Society Organisation "La Strada – Ukraine" with the support of international organizations, including UNFPA and other donors. All consultations provided by the hotline are anonymous and confidential. The hotline is part of the national referral mechanism providing assistance to people affected by domestic violence. In 2018 a total of 22,542 consultations were provided by the hotline. Among these, help requests regarding domestic violence amounted to 97,8% of the total number of calls received (81,9% of the callers were women, 18,1% men).

Psychological and legal support is very important for victims of violence. However, some of them ought to leave their houses to keep themselves and their children in a safe environment. In such cases, shelters are needed. It is not a secret that lack of places in shelters for victims of violence or the lack of such shelters in some regions was and still continues to be a big problem in Ukraine. To solve this problem, only in 2017-2018, seven shelters for women victims of violence were opened in Kharkiv, Kryvyi Rih, Berdyansk, Slovyansk, Mariupol, the Lozivsky District in the Kharkiv Oblast, and the Vinnytsia District with support from the government, international organizations and local authorities. Regionally, these shelters are located in the Eastern part of Ukraine – the region with a high number of internally displaced people affected by Russian military operations in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions and in Crimea.

One further example is "POLINA" – Police Mobile Groups against Violence, established by the Ministry of Interior in 2017 in three regions of Ukraine. The team includes police officers who have experience in combating domestic violence (from patrol police, district police officers, and juvenile inspectors). In 2018, the operations of the POLINA network expanded to 12 oblasts in Ukraine. The key objectives of the project include: introduction of new forms and current practice of responding to domestic violence, identification and elimination of drawbacks in cooperation with units of the National Police and other entities working in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence, development of response algorithms in these instances, development and introduction of training curricula for police officers to teach them the latest techniques and forms of preventing and combating domestic violence, improved technical capacity of the National Police units operating in this field, as well as providing informative materials on preventing and combating domestic violence to police officers. In the second half of 2019, it is planned to launch POLINA mobile groups in all regions in Ukraine. As result of this decision, 450 police officers were selected to work in 45 police mobile groups.

Against this backdrop of positive developments, it is important to stress current problems regarding the implementation process of legislation already adopted.

One of the main difficulties is connected to the lack of knowledge and understanding of the problem of domestic violence and violence against women, the lack of individual capacity, and persistence of gender stereotypes among different categories of professionals and society as a whole. The assessment conducted in 2017 by the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control on Armed Forces (DCAF), La Strada-Ukraine in cooperation with the National Police, the National Academy for Prosecutors and National School of Judges gives evidence for concluding, that gender stereotypes and negative attitudes towards victims of domestic violence and violence against women embedded in Ukrainian society are also embedded in the criminal justice system. Some of the tendencies observed included:

- to minimize the importance of the phenomenon of domestic violence and violence against women – 39% of the criminal justice practitioners surveyed in 2017 believe domestic violence is a private matter;
- to blame victims for their own victimization – 60% of the criminal justice practitioners surveyed believe victims of sexual assault are sometimes responsible for their own victimization;
- to approach cases of domestic violence and violence against women with skepticism and mistrust of victims – 58% of the criminal justice practitioners →

surveyed believe that, in most cases, domestic violence reports made to police are false<sup>3</sup>.

The authors' assessment concluded, "these attitudes, built on stereotypes, not only mitigate the willingness of police officers, prosecutors, and judges to address domestic violence and violence against women, but impact criminal justice practice generally and taint court decisions". That is why intensive trainings for different groups of specialists from different spheres, including the criminal justice system, are so important for ensuring effective implementation of adopted legislation. Some examples are provided below:

Preventing and combating domestic violence were included in the function of practicing psychologists and social care teachers in educational institutions.

Thematic trainings on situations of domestic and gender-based violence were conducted for representatives of the free legal aid system, for 102 police hotline operators, patrol police and district police inspectors.

The lecture and manual 'The role of public prosecutors in combating domestic violence' was developed by the National Prosecution Academy of Ukraine in cooperation with DCAF, La Strada-Ukraine, EU Advisory Mission for Ukraine and the Governmental Commissioner on Gender Equality Policy. This topic is to be integrated into permanent training curricula.

The National School of Judges (NSJ) developed and implemented a training course for judges – "Peculiarities of cases related to domestic violence". This activity was conducted also in cooperation with DCAF and La Strada-Ukraine and supported by USAID (New Justice Project). 25 trainer-judges – representing all regional divisions of the NSJ – were instructed during the training of trainers seminars held in 2018. More than 260 judges passed this training course in 2018. As of 2019, this course is planned to be mandatory for judges and candidates applying for such positions. Thanks to the Council of Europe Regional Project "Strengthening Access to

Justice for Women Victims of Violence in the Six Eastern Partnership Countries' an online e-learning course on women's access to justice for judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and civil society advocates was developed and promoted in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus.

Between September 2018 and April 2019, selected police officers underwent specialized trainings supported by the OSCE and UNFPA. The importance of training became more prescient after legislative changes and the criminalization of domestic violence in January 2019. Trainings became important not only for police officers, but for all key actors in the field of prevention and combating domestic violence. With financial support from the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine and the European Union Advisory Mission (the 'EUAM'), trainings on the topic of 'Ways of preventing and combating domestic violence' were organized for members of these mobile teams.

Implementing such training courses will strengthen the capacities of different actors involved in prevention work and combating domestic violence and ensure the effective use of the new legal provisions. ●



© Kateryna Levchenko

**Kateryna Levchenko's** professional activities include: being appointed as Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy in Ukraine, member of the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) (2012–2018), the President of Civil Society Organization "La Strada-Ukraine" (1998–2018), Chairperson of the Board of the International La Strada Association (2004–2006, 2015–2017), member of the Ukrainian Parliament (2006–2007), member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE (2006–2007), and advisor of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine on Human Rights and Gender Issues (2004–2006, 2008–2010).

3 K. Cherepakha, A.Laferté, K.Levchenko, M.Legenka, M.Socquet-Juglard, H.Huhtanen Assessment of the Readiness of the Ukrainian Criminal Justice System to Implement the Principles of the Istanbul Convention. – Geneva, DCAF, 2017. – 73 p. – p.8.

# Implementation of Immediate Protection Orders (IPO) and Protection Orders (PO) in the Region of Elbasan, Albania

**Shpresa Banja**<sup>1</sup>

President Woman Forum Elbasan (Albania)

The Woman Forum Elbasan (WFE) has a 20-year long experience in providing free social/psychological/ legal services through the Counselling Center, Advocate Studio and Day Care Center, as well as other awareness and capacity building activities tackling DV and GBV through international donor funding.

In the frame of the UN Trust Fund (UNTF) supported project "Improved access for women and girls survivors of violence in Elbasan Region", the Woman Forum Elbasan (WFE) is monitoring 7 Municipalities included in the Region of Elbasan in their implementation of legal obligations for domestic violence survivors provided with IPO / PO by the Judicial District Court of Elbasan. The period monitored was from September 2018 to March 2019. The legal basis underlying it is law no. 47/2018 on some additions and amendments to Law no. 9669, dated 18.12.2006, "On measures against violence in family relations", as amended.

Albania is one of the countries that signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence on 19/12/2011, ratified 04/02/2013 and entered into force on 01/08/2014. Based on this convention, the Albanian state should compensate a survivor of domestic violence with 3000 ALL Albanian Lek (nearly 25 Euro) /per month as long as he/she is equipped with an IPO / PO. Not only is the financial compensation low, but we aim to highlight the failure of the local government to give that compensation in the region of Elbasan Region.

The results showed that:

- None of the women who have received an IPO are being compensated. An IPO is legally granted for a period of up to 20 days. Once a PO is issued, it can be provided for a period of up to 12 months.
- In over 95% of cases women do not receive compensation for the full validity period of the PO for the following reasons:

1. The system of delivering the IPO / PO Decision does not work properly from the Court to the respective municipalities, in consequence municipalities start the execution of the decision with delay; in turn survivors lose the compensation for several months;
2. A large proportion of women are unaware that they have access to an IPO / PO in addition to protection from the abuser. Due to this lack of information, they do not personally submit a copy of the Court's decision to local government structures;
3. If an IPO / PO is received after the period from the 1st to 10th of each month, she will have to wait until the 1st to 10th of the following month to start receiving the PO;
4. Women who are in a state-led economic aid scheme and are equipped with a PO, are obliged to choose between receiving 3000 ALL per month as a survivor of domestic violence or continue to receive economic assistance.
5. In this regard, we believe it is the duty of the WFE and other NGOs in Albania who work on gender issues and lobby the Albanian state to:
6. Give a survivor of violence all the value in money corresponding to the validity of the IPO / PO regardless of whether she is in the scheme of economic assistance, and regardless of when she submits the Court decision to local institutions. Local government structures should act according to the law and not expect survivors to reach out and to report on their own;
7. Increase the amount of compensation a survivor of domestic violence is entitled to, since the current value (3000 ALL / month) does not provide the sufficient amount for survival.

---

<sup>1</sup> See author's biography on page 37.

# Key outcomes of the advancement of women in the disputed territory of Transnistria in the Republic of Moldova

**Juliana Abramova**

NGO Centre "Resonance" (Transnistria)

The protection of women's rights and the elimination of violence against women and children is at the forefront of the agenda of European Union member states and other neighbouring countries. The adoption of special laws, policies, institutional mechanisms and practices at the national level create the conditions for the state and specialised organisations to be more aware of latent unreported cases of violence. It also improves preventive campaigns and encourages the society and professionals to curb such violence. Many states submit periodic reports to international and regional organisations to track the progress achieved and identify gaps for future intervention and improvements. International organisations and international development partners push governments to fulfil the commitments they made in the framework of international treaties and conventions. This is the case for recognized states and territories; however, there are some territories in Europe called conflict, post conflict or "frozen conflict" zones, where the situation concerning women's human rights differs from that which exists in other territories with an internationally recognized status.

Since 2005, the NGO Center "Resonance" (WAVE member since 2014) has contributed to the protection of human rights and as of 2009 it has centred its efforts specifically on women's rights by running different women's empowerment programs in the Transnistrian region in the Republic of Moldova (in some international documents the territory is also called "the left bank" of the river Dniester). It is a common basic value of the organisation that people who are living in conflict affected territories should enjoy the same human rights and freedoms as other people living in internationally recognized states and have the same level of protection and access to mechanisms to exercise their rights. This position was expressed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms. Navi Pillay during and after her visit in Moldova in 2011. The commissioner stated that "*human rights do not have any borders. It is vital to address*

*underlying human rights issues in disputed territories, regardless of the political recognition or the legal status of a territory. We should neither forget nor neglect the human rights of people who live in areas which are controlled by de facto authorities.*"<sup>1</sup> Thus, in 2011 the High Commissioner for Human Rights officially recognized the need for a special focus on the protection of human rights (including women's human rights) in territories that, for various reasons, are controlled by the de facto authorities such as Transnistria (18th session of HRC in September 2011 and press conference during Ms. Navanethem Pillay visit to Moldova and Transdniestria in November 2011). Following this position, UN Senior expert on human rights Mr. Thomas Hammarberg made 3 field visits to Moldova and Transnistria in 2012 and provided a comprehensive report on the situation on Human Rights in the Transnistrian Region of the Republic of Moldova on February 2013. His analysis of the situation of domestic violence as a human right issue is produced for the first time at the international level and provide some core recommendations about improvements in the field of domestic violence and trafficking in human beings.<sup>2</sup>

Following this position and belief, management, staff and volunteers of the NGO Center "Resonance" contributed since 2009 to the implementation of international standards and practices in the field of prevention and protection of women and children living in the Transnistrian region of Moldova with the support of international development partners, such as the Swedish International Development Agency, UNDP, the government of Lichtenstein, the OSCE Mission to Moldova, UNFPA and others. After 10 years of Women's Rights Program implementation, it is a good opportunity to summarise some key achievements and progress achieved.

As a baseline for women's rights situation in the region several data from population surveys reflect how the people from Transnistria see the issue of domestic violence (the survey was conducted in 2009 and 2011):

---

1 <https://news.un.org/en/story/2013/02/431992-un-rights-chief-urges-action-disputed-areas-first-report-transnistrian-region>

2 [https://www.undp.org/content/dam/unct/moldova/docs/pub/Senior\\_Expert\\_Hammarberg\\_Report\\_TN\\_Human\\_Rights.pdf](https://www.undp.org/content/dam/unct/moldova/docs/pub/Senior_Expert_Hammarberg_Report_TN_Human_Rights.pdf)

1. The Transnistrian population perceives that women and children are primarily exposed to domestic violence and harsh treatment in the family (44,5% and 45,3% accordingly);
2. 22,3% of women in Transnistria who are married or have an intimate partner are exposed to different types of domestic violence;
3. up to 60% of women living in a marriage or in a partnership suffered from different forms of psychological violence;
4. More than 17% of the population consider that the physical violence against women is justified in cases of adultery, more than 8% think that this is normal even when the husband only suspects his had committed adultery;
5. The problem of domestic violence is very latent: according to the results of the surveys, women are most vulnerable to all types domestic violence from the age of 20 to 24, but analysis of domestic violence cases presented by clients who applied for support at Resonance Center (more than 1, 240 clients applied for support between 2009–2013) shows that the average age of victims of domestic violence is between 30 to 35 years. This means that women victims of domestic violence suffer for about 5–10 years before they seek support from specialised services;
6. On average, about 82% of victims of DV never applied for support at social institutions (hospitals, psychologists, police stations, NGOs, relatives and other).

In 2011, there was no special domestic violence legislation nor institutional mechanism to prevent and respond to violence against women enforced on the territory (Moldovan legislation is not enforced on the territory). Specialised services are provided by several NGOs, however de-facto public authorities argue that men are even more discriminated against.

Several Transnistrian NGOs (Center “Resonance” took the leading role) decided to submit the first alternative report concerning the situation of women’s human rights in the Transnistrian region<sup>3</sup> to the CEDAW Committee during Moldova’s review in 2013. Before this, the Committee never received information or data about the situation in the Transnistrian region, neither from the Moldovan government (through the state report), nor from NGOs. The submitted shadow report submitted in 2013 contained information about the abuse of women’s rights in Transnistria in four particular areas:

3 [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/MDA/INT\\_CEDAW\\_NGO\\_MDA\\_15200\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/MDA/INT_CEDAW_NGO_MDA_15200_E.pdf)

domestic violence, discrimination of women in the labour market, reproductive rights of women, vulnerable situation with single mothers. Considering that prior to this, the CEDAW Committee did not provide any specific recommendations to the improvement of the situation of women in the Transnistrian region, it was important to ensure the presence of NGO representatives, who were involved during the elaboration of the shadow report on the 56th CEDAW Session. As a result, the CEDAW Committee in its final document (Concluding observation from CEDAW Committee to Moldova) focused and expressed its concern about some specific areas concerning the achievement of women’s in the Transnistrian region, which are the following:

1. The Committee remains concerned that women in Transnistria do not enjoy the same legal protection for gender equality as women in the Republic of Moldova;
2. The Committee recommends the Moldovan Government to initiate cooperation with the de facto authorities in Transnistria and other relevant stakeholders to offer women in Transnistria greater protection and enjoyment of their human rights;
3. It expressed concerns about the lack of sufficient support services for victims in Transnistria, including availability of shelters;
4. The Committee is further concerned about insufficient rehabilitation and reintegration services for women and girls who are victims of trafficking, particularly in Transnistria;
5. The Committee is concerned about the high rate of abortion and the low use, availability, affordability and accessibility of modern forms of contraception, particularly in the Transnistrian region and rural areas, which indicate that abortion is used as a method of birth control;
6. The Committee urges the State to expand the availability of medically safe modern methods of birth control in Transnistria and in rural areas in the Republic of Moldova.

CEDAW Concluding observations to Moldova in 2013 established the basis and provided opportunities at the international level to further substantiate on the existing gaps and especially on the issue of absence of any shelter for victims of domestic violence in the region.

As a result of advocacy and fundraising campaigns, “Resonance” Center with the support of the government of Lichtenstein and under the administration of UNDP established the first shelter for women affected by domestic violence and human being trafficking in the break-away Transnistrian region of Moldova in 2015. →

The shelter is one of the specialised services provided for women and children and offers comprehensive support in the form of social support, psychological and legal assistance with an individual approach to every woman. It was initially located in a rented house and accommodated maximum 5 women and 3 children. In July 2019, the shelter and Resonance Women's Crisis Center moved to a permanent location, which was provided by local authorities and reconstructed from the UNDP Confidence Building Programme supported by the EU and the Swedish International Development Agency. Now the permanent shelter accommodates 12 women and children, in addition to 3 small children coming from different places in Transnistria. It is also equipped with modern facilities including a common kitchen, a children's room and a laundry room. In the future, it should also be equipped with safety measures, such as a fence and gates. Since 2015, the Women's Crisis Center managed to provide services to 507 women and children (91% managed to change their lives for the better), which included 98 beneficiaries accommodated at the shelter.

The presence of the shelter in a disputed territory like the Transnistrian region, where no special law against domestic violence or any institutionalised mechanism existed, created not only the unique and a first-ever service for women subjected to violence but could be considered as a baseline for establishing conditions for multi-agency cooperation and response to the violence against women.

10 years of achievements in the advancement of women's rights allowed to reach outstanding outcomes, such as: better cooperation with local de-facto police authorities; the first trainings for police officers on primary responses to domestic violence; approval of the first-ever mechanism to prevent and respond to domestic violence cases by law enforcement on behalf of de-facto authorities ; joining the European-wide WAVE Step Up campaign and conducting awareness-raising activities to sensitise public opinion about the problem. We can also mention the Women's Platform in Trans-

nistria as an advocacy tool to promote change and organise public actions and outreach, targeting more than 10,000 people in the last three years. More than 500 media reports about violence against women were issued. In 2019, nearly 73% of the population supported the need for implementing a specific anti-domestic violence law in the region.

Additional efforts should be taken in the future to create more sustainable results in ensuring gender equality and zero tolerance to violence against women in the region. Efforts made by NGOs, international development partners in cooperation with local and national authorities definitely created conditions and opportunities for women and children find a safe haven away from violence in the disputed territories in Transnistria. ●

© Juliana Abramova



**Juliana Abramova** from Moldova (Transnistria) is a human rights lawyer by education and personal belief. She has been the executive director of the NGO Center for support and development of civic initiatives for the last 12 years.

RESONANCE's main activities are centred on women's rights protection and developing sustainable mechanisms to protect and respond to violence against women. Mrs. Abramova has extensive experience of working as a team-leader and a member of different expert groups in projects run by international organisations. Thanks to her legal background, Juliana along with other colleagues, contributed to the elaboration and submission of the first report about the status of women in Transnistria to the UN CEDAW Committee in 2013. Mrs. Abramova was a member of the Civil Society Advisory Group of UN Women Moldova Country Office (2014-2017), Consultative Council on cooperation with NGOs within de-facto Transnistrian Government (as of 2018) and other public council bodies.

E-mail: [juliana.abramov@gmail.com](mailto:juliana.abramov@gmail.com)

EDITOR (see page 3)



© Khushita Vasant

**Andrada Filip** joined the WAVE office in September 2015. She did her BA in International Politics at the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom, and her MA in Political Science at the University of Vienna in Austria. Andrada joined the WAVE Office in 2015. As part of her work, she is responsible for

data collection on specialist women's support services and publications. Andrada can be contacted at:  
[Andrada.filip@wave-network.org](mailto:Andrada.filip@wave-network.org)



### Information Centre for Cross-Border-Support

One important task of the WAVE Office and its Information Centre is to deal with cross-border requests from women in need. Each month, WAVE receives cross-border requests for support from women survivors of violence, from family members of survivors, from women's support services, or from different institutions. The requests are often received when women have not been able to find sufficient support in their countries, or when they find themselves in dangerous and high risk situations, are unaware of the support provided in their countries, or the situation is especially complex and involves cross-border assistance. In such cases, WAVE can refer survivors to appropriate services in their respective countries or may even provide support directly to survivors, whenever possible.

### WAVE Network and European Information Centre against Violence (ZVR: 601608559)

Bacherplatz 10/6 1050 Vienna, Austria  
Phone: +49 (0) 1 5482720  
Fax +43 (0) 1 5482720 27  
E-mail: [office@wave-network.org](mailto:office@wave-network.org)  
[www.wave-network.org](http://www.wave-network.org)

AUTHOR (see page 33)



© Shpresa Banja

**Shpresa Banja** graduated from the University of Tirana on 1977 in the field of Industrial Chemistry. In 1994, she was engaged in the establishment of the Regional Environmental Agency in Elbasan, an institution she led until 2006.

In 1999 she founded the Woman Forum Elbasan, an organization dedicated to protecting the rights of women and girls, with a particular focus on survivors of domestic violence. Since then, she has written and coordinated a multitude of projects in the field of service provision for survivors of violence, awareness raising and media campaigns on domestic violence and gender-based violence prevention.

She has twenty years of experience in the area of project management, administration, maintaining contacts with donors, local actors and partners in the social work area, staff management, training, advocacy, counselling and research. She is well-known in the community for her work on raising awareness against domestic violence and gender-based violence, through the Woman Forum Elbasan.

In April 2019 she was recognized and celebrated by the Embassy of Sweden in Albania for her efforts and contribution towards achieving gender equality in all fields in society.

Group photo taken at the WAVE Advisory Board meeting in Vienna, Austria, in 2015.



Photos © WAVE



## WAVE Members

	NAME OF ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	NAME OF ORGANISATION	COUNTRY	
1	Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC)	Albania	40	Pärnu Women's Support Center	Estonia
2	Counselling Line for Women and Girls	Albania	41	Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters	Finland
3	Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC)	Albania	42	Women's Line Finland	Finland
4	Women's Association Refleksione	Albania	43	FNSF - Federation National Solidarite Femmes	France
5	Woman Forum Elbasan	Albania	44	Cultural Humanitarian Fund 'Sukhumi'	Georgia
6	Albania Women Empowerment Network (AWEN)	Albania	45	Sakhli Advice Center for Women	Georgia
7	Woman to Woman	Albania	46	Women's Information Center (WIC)	Georgia
8	Psycho-Social Centre Vatra	Albania	47	Anti-Violence Network of Georgia	Georgia
9	Center for Legal Civic Initiatives	Albania	48	Democrat Women's Organization fo Samtskhe-Javakheti	Georgia
10	Women's Rights Center	Armenia	49	BIG e.V. – Berliner Interventionsprojekt gegen häusliche Gewalt	Germany
11	Women's Support Center	Armenia	50	Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V.	Germany
12	Sexual Assault Crisis Center	Armenia	51	Bff. Bundesverband Frauenberatungsstellen und Frauennotrufe – Frauen gegen Gewalt e.V.	Germany
13	Austrian Women's Shelter Network – Information Centre against Violence AÖF	Austria	52	GESINE – Netzwerk Gesundheit.EN	Germany
14	Domestic Abuse Intervention Centre Vienna	Austria	53	Prof. Carol Hagemann-White (Honorary Member)	Germany
15	Network of Austrian Counselling Centres for Women and Girls	Austria	54	KOFRA – Kommunikationszentrum für Frauen zur Arbeits und Lebenssituation	Germany
16	Renate Egger (Individual Member)	Austria	55	PAPATYA – Kriseneinrichtung für Junge Migrantinnen	Germany
17	Clean World Social Union	Azerbaijan	56	ZIF – Zentrale Informationsstelle der autonomen Fraunhäuser der BRD	Germany
18	International Public Association „Gender Perspectives“	Belarus	57	Karin Heisecke (Individual Member)	Germany
19	Law Initiative – Commission on Women's Rights	Belarus	58	Alina Kuhl (Individual Member)	Germany
20	Collectif contre les Violences Familiales et l'Exclusion (CVFE)	Belgium	59	European Anti-Violence Network	Greece
21	Department of Health and Welfare, Violence Victims and Policy Coordination – Province of Antwerp	Belgium	60	Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture	Greece
22	Garance ASBL	Belgium	61	NANE – Women's Rights Association	Hungary
23	Foundation United Women Banja Luka	Bosnia and Herzegovina	62	Stigamot – Counselling and Information Centre on Sexual Violence	Iceland
24	Medica Zenica Information	Bosnia and Herzegovina	63	Women's Shelter Organization in Iceland	Iceland
25	Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation	Bulgaria	64	Sexual Violence Centre Cork	Ireland
26	Nadja Centre	Bulgaria	65	Rape Crisis Network	Ireland
27	Alliance for Protection against Gender-Based Violence	Bulgaria	66	Safe Ireland	Ireland
28	Autonomous Women's House Zagreb	Croatia	67	Women's Aid Ireland	Ireland
29	B.a.B.e, Be active, Be emancipated	Croatia	68	Associazione Nazionale D.i.R.e contro la Violenza	Italy
30	Women's Room – Center for Sexual Rights	Croatia	69	Associazione Nazionale Volontarie Telefono Rosa-Onlus	Italy
31	Centre for Women War Victims ROSA	Croatia	70	Cristina Gamberi (Individual Member)	Italy
32	Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)	Cyprus	71	Silvia Menecalli (Individual Member)	Italy
33	Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family	Cyprus	72	Women's Wellness Centre	Kosovo
34	Association of Women to Support Living	Northern Cyprus	73	Kosovo Kosovar Gender Studies Center	Kosovo
35	ProFem – Central European Consulting Centre	Czech Republic	74	Krizu un Konsultaciju Centrs Skalbes	Latvia
36	ROSA – Centre for Battered and Lonely Women	Czech Republic	75	Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein	Liechtenstein
37	L.O.K.K National Organisation of Women's Shelters in Denmark	Denmark	76	Vilnius Moteru Namai – Intervention Centre	Lithuania
38	Tartu Child Support Center	Estonia	77	Femmes en Detresse asbl	Luxembourg
39	Women's Support and Information Centre	Estonia	78	Commission on Domestic Violence	Malta
			79	Network Forum Malta	Malta
			80	Dr. Marceline Naudi (Individual Member)	Malta

	NAME OF ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
81	Association against Violence 'Casa Marioarei'	Moldova
82	Center for Support and Development of Civic Initiatives 'Resonance'	Moldova
83	Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims "Memoria"	Moldova
84	Women's Law Centre	Moldova
85	National Coalition Life without Violence	Moldova
86	SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niskic	Montenegro
87	Federatie Opvang	Netherlands
88	MOVISIE	Netherlands
89	National Council for Gender Equality – NCGE	North Macedonia
90	National Network to end Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – Voice against Violence	North Macedonia
91	Secretariat of the Shelter Movement	Norway
92	Centrum Praw Kobiet	Poland
93	Autonomy	Poland
94	AMCV – Associacao de Mulheres Contra a Violencia Portugal	Portugal
95	A.L.E.G Association for Liberty and Equality of Gender	Romania
96	ANAIAS Association	Romania
97	Artemis Counselling Centre against Sexual Abuse	Romania
98	CPE – Center Partnership and Equality	Romania
99	Necuvinte Association	Romania
100	ANNA – National Center for Prevention of Violence	Russia
101	Crisis Centre Ekaterina	Russia
102	Nizhny Novgorod Women Crisis Center	Russia
103	Interregional nongovernmental organization for the support of family, motherhood and childhood 'Doctors to Children'	Russia
104	St. Petersburg Regional Public Organisation Institute of Nondiscriminative Gender Interrelations – Crisis Center for Women	Russia
105	Autonomous Women's Center (AWC)	Serbia
106	Association Fenomena / SOS Kraljevo	Serbia
107	Oasis of Safety/Oaza Sigurnisti	Serbia
108	Association of Women Sandglass	Serbia
109	Roma Center for Women and Children Daje	Serbia
110	Alliance of Women in Slovakia	Slovakia
111	FENESTRA – Interest Association of Women	Slovakia
112	Association SOS Helpline for Women and Children	Slovenia
113	Association for Nonviolent Communication	Slovenia
114	Asociacion de Mujeres Valdes Siglo XXI	Spain
115	Fundacion para la Convivencia ASPACIA	Spain
116	Centro de Asistencia a Victimas de Agresiones Sexuales CAVAS	Spain
117	Directorate General for Gender-Based Violence, Youth Affairs and Juvenile Crime	Spain
118	Helia – Asociacio de support a les dones que pateixen violencia de genere	Spain

	NAME OF ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
119	Oficina de Gestion, Preparacion y Supervision de Programas Europeos. Fundacion para la Atencion e Incorporacion Social (FADAIS). Consejeria para la Igualdad y Bienestar Social	Spain
120	Plataforma Unitaria contra les Violencias de Genere	Spain
121	Asociacion Otro Tiempo	Spain
122	Federacion de Asociaciones de Mujeres Arena y Laurisilva	Spain
123	Roks – National Organisation for Women's and Girls' Shelters in Sweden	Sweden
124	UNIZON	Sweden
125	Dachorganisation der Frauenhäuser der Schweiz und Liechtenstein	Switzerland
126	Violence que Faire	Switzerland
127	Terre des Femmes	Switzerland
128	Kadin Dayanisma Vakfi – The Foundation for Women's Solidarity	Turkey
129	Mor Cati – Women Shelters Foundation	Turkey
130	Mor Salkim Women's Solidarity Association	Turkey
131	Kadriye Bakirci (Individual Member)	Turkey
132	International Women's Rights Center la Strada	Ukraine
133	Sumy Local Crisis Center (SLCC)	Ukraine
134	Women's Information Consultative Center	Ukraine
135	Center Women's Perspectives	Ukraine
136	IMKAAN	United Kingdom
137	Latin American Women's Aid	United Kingdom
138	REFUGE	United Kingdom
139	Scottish Women's Aid	United Kingdom
140	Welsh Women's Aid	United Kingdom
141	Women's Aid Federation of England	United Kingdom
142	Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland	United Kingdom
143	Latin American Women's Rights Service	United Kingdom
144	Solace Women's Aid	United Kingdom
145	Standing Together against Domestic Abuse (STADV)	United Kingdom
146	Melanie McCarry (Individual Member)	United Kingdom
147	Kathleen Rees (Individual Member)	United Kingdom
148	WWA – Aberystwyth Women's Aid	United Kingdom
149	Greta Squire (Individual Member)	United Kingdom
150	London Black Women's Project	United Kingdom
151	Zero Tolerance	United Kingdom
152	Shazia Choudhry (Individual Member)	United Kingdom
153	Beverley Gilbert (Individual Member)	United Kingdom

**25 YEARS**

**WAVE**

