



A MAGAZINE PUBLISHED BY THE WAVE OFFICE

# fempower

## Institutional violence and its impact on women's human rights across Europe



# fempower 2023

## Imprint

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## Editorial

Beverly Mtui, WAVE Office

**W**omen Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network is the largest European network of Women’s Specialist Services<sup>1</sup> representing more than 1,600 women’s organisations through over 170 members based in 46 European countries, and the only network dedicated solely to the prevention and combatting of violence against women. Since its foundation in 1994, WAVE has been working to promote and strengthen the human rights of women and children. WAVE’s mission is to enable women and their children to live free from violence, by strengthening and sustaining a network of women’s specialist services, experts, and survivors.

This year’s edition of the WAVE FEMPOWER Magazine focuses on the pervasive impact of institutional violence on women and girls, the different forms in which it manifests, and the key role women’s specialist services have in denouncing and undoing this type of violence. A total of nine articles were submitted to us by our WAVE members, each of these shedding light from different angles on this form of oppression and abuse of power that limit women & girls’ access to rights while at the same time highlighting the experiences, efforts, and engagement of women’s specialist services to protect and support survivors affected by institutional violence.

Thank you to all contributing authors for their efforts, dedication and work that will hopefully continue to be an inspiration for our readers. We wish you an informative and eye-opening read. ●



**Beverly Mtui** has over five years of experience in different feminist civil society organisations working to end violence against women at national and European level. Since February 2021, she is the WAVE Communications Coordinator and thus responsible for ensuring and strengthening

the visibility and presence of the network and its projects. Besides being passionate about intersectional feminism and gender equality, she is also a freelance journalist focusing on the empowerment of people of African descent.

<sup>1</sup> Women’s Specialist Services is a collective term used to define feminist services that support women and their children experiencing violence against women and domestic violence. These services include but are not limited to women’s support centres, shelters, helplines, rape crisis or sexual violence referral centres, and prevention services.

## What is institutional violence?

**V**iolence against women and girls (VAWG) is a pervasive form of violence. Globally, an estimated 736 million women have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both in their lifetime. In the EU, 1 in 10 women has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 15, and 1 in 20 women has been raped (FRA). Information on the full prevalence of these and other forms of overt violence, such as sexual violence, femicide, domestic violence etc., although insufficient, is collected and acknowledged as a form of violence against women and girls in most contexts. In contrast, covert violence may be more difficult to identify and perceive, yet, its damage is no less real. Institutional violence is one form of covert violence.

Institutional violence refers to violence emanating from institutions which exercise power and can use that power to cause harm, or to further enforce



structural oppression (i.e. public officials performing some type of discriminatory, humiliating or prejudiced action or delay, hinder, prevent the exercise of rights). It is a form of violence experienced through the relation people have in their interactions with public institutions and/or with people within such institutions. As a general criterion, the victims of this institutional violence in the context of VAWG are mainly minoritised women, women in a situation of social exclusion, or other groups considered as “inferior” by the system.

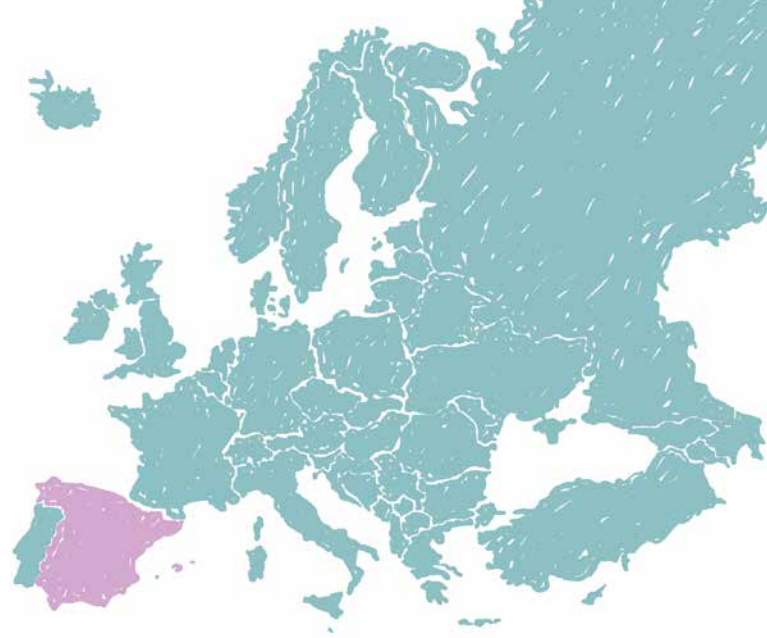
Institutional violence can be committed by state actors, and is further maintained not only through acts or omissions of public servants, such as not fulfilling their due diligence obligation, but also by implementing norms or specific institutional practices. The interplay between different forms of discrimination and maintaining patriarchal structures, that have both a conscious and subconscious influence on the way societies behave, is at the core of institutional violence, and can manifest as oneoff acts or as a pattern.

While progress has been made in a number of areas, and the status of women in Europe has improved during recent decades, such progress cannot be taken for granted, as some of the rights established are vanishing faster than they were acquired and a life free from violence is still not ensured to all women across Europe. Furthermore, the rise of illiberal democracies<sup>1</sup> and its consequent crackdown on citizens' rights has had a direct impact on women's' full and equal enjoyment of their rights. ●

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<sup>1</sup> An illiberal democracy describes a governing system that hides its “nondemocratic practices behind formally democratic institutions and procedures”. More on the concept here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/dpaer/-/timothy-snyder-oncurrent-illiberal-trends-in-europe-lessons-from-history>





# “Veïnes per Veïnes”: feminist strategies for reporting institutional violence

**Liliana Aragón Castro** and **Marina Oliva Seguro**, Hèlia Association, for the support of women experiencing gender-based violence, Spain

**F**requently, women who experience gender-based violence, once they decide to report or seek support from an institutional service, encounter barriers and rights violations, especially those who for reasons of origin, ethnicity, or legal status, among others, encounter multiple discriminations.

When the State, represented by its service operators or providers, in each of the State’s institutions or entities, commits omissions, bad practices, or presents weaknesses and insufficiency in the prevention, detection, protection, and reparation of gender-based violence, it is understood that it does not act adequately and does not comply with due diligence. Therefore, it engages in institutional violence. Since the 1990s, international normative instruments have made it clear that the State, through its agents, can directly commit institutionalised gender-based violence.

Indeed, the perpetration of institutional violence is a critical issue and is highly normalised. Moreover, its impact and consequences are severe, causing a lack of trust in the system, anxiety, discomfort, and confusion, as well as an increased sense of vulnerability, and thus causing more emotional damage to survivors. Moreover, suffering from institutional violence perpetuates the chronification of psychological sequelae, which derives directly from the clash between the victim’s expectations and the institutional reality

they encounter. Violence against women is a serious violation of human rights on a global scale.

This article sheds light on the community project “Veïnes per Veïnes” (Women Neighbours for Women Neighbours), which is about the accompaniment of women survivors of gender-based violence by trained volunteers. These accompaniments represent a feminist response for women to not having to go alone to courts, to public administration offices, or health centres and more; all of which relate to the process of recovery from the violence they have experienced. Throughout these accompaniments, the volunteers are witnesses of institutional violence, or are even victims themselves of this kind of violence just because they accompany the survivors.

“Veïnes per Veïnes” is a community network of groups of professional and volunteer women who are active agents in the development of neighbourhoods and territories free of violence against women. The project promotes the training and coordination of women’s groups to raise awareness and at the same time support women affected by gender-based violence in their recovery process. We have established links with various organisations in Catalonia to replicate this good practice and extend this network of support for women through volunteer groups. At present, 170 volunteers are involved in the project. These volunteers provide one-to-one support. The profile of the →

volunteers is very diverse. It shows the rich diversity of women and the contribution they all make from an inclusive perspective. There are students and professionals from different fields, but also women with no previous training on the issue, retired women, disabled women, and migrant women, all of whom want to play an active part in the fight for women's rights. The team of volunteers plays a key role in the organisation. In addition to accompanying women who are experiencing gender-based violence, they also play an important role in awareness-raising and prevention. They receive initial and ongoing training to become active in the fight against violence against women within communities.

Through the personal and emotional accompaniment provided by our volunteers, we meet the need for specialised and quality community-based accompaniment for women who have suffered from gender-based violence and we therefore create solidarity between women.

Based on our experiences in accompanying women to several institutions, we noticed that volunteers have frequently informed us about cases involving institutional violence. Perhaps they did not refer to it as such, as the concept of institutional violence has not been quite developed as a common concept, but despite that, institutional violence exists in different forms. Pilar, a trained volunteer, explains:

*“The women we support are faced with insensitive people who represent the institutions and do not take charge of the situation. They need help and empathy, but they do not always find it in the justice and health services”<sup>1</sup>.*

So far, a large proportion of the cases of institutional violence that we have reported occurred in the judicial sector (61%), followed by public administrations (25%) and others, such as the security and health sectors.

Nevertheless, when the accompaniment report is made, volunteers frequently highlight situations in which women's rights were violated, and cases of re-victimisation faced by women in the judicial system. Among the rights that are frequently violated are the right to not be discriminated against, the right to be protected, and the right to receive and understand information.

They usually share their frustration about the ineffectiveness of the system that they have felt when accompanying the women (the overwhelming majority of whom are migrant women, with language barriers and other barriers). This is the testimony of Bedani, another trained volunteer who accompanies women:

*“The extent to which violence is normalised in institutions is worrying, because if a person who has just arrived in the territory finds herself in a vulnerable position and is alone, she may suffer and think that this is how the system works, that she is helpless”.*

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<sup>1</sup> Pilar's testimony, and the testimonies of 15 other volunteers, are collected in the book "Neighbours for Neighbours": Experiences of Accompaniment in Catalonia and Palestine. You can consult the publication here: <https://heliadones.org/veinesperveines/>



Therefore, in this project, the volunteers are witnesses to the journeys and visits of women who have lived or live through gender-based violence and are seeking support from institutions. They are testimonies to the barriers and violations of rights that women experience in institutions, especially those who, for reasons of origin, ethnicity, legal status, and language barriers, among others, are subject to multiple forms of discrimination. Among the cases that we have identified and documented as institutional violence so far this year (January to August 2023), 79% of the women affected have been migrant women. This data highlights the structural racism that women face, even in their processes of recovery from the violence they have experienced.

The strategies to deal with institutional violence have started to develop. For instance, an initiative by a group of volunteers led to the drafting of a document addressed to the Ministry of Justice of the Catalan Government asking to improve the waiting area at the specialised court which handles cases of gender-based violence. Volunteers realised that when they were accompanying the women to court, the waiting area was not at all welcoming and it did not make it easier for women who spent long waiting periods there to relax properly. The complaint was successful, and several pictures and plants were placed in the room. On a symbolic scale, space could reproduce institutional violence, and volunteers were able to identify and help transform this issue. As a result, the volunteers realised that, collectively, they could transform the reality they witness every day and impact such hostile spaces as the courts.

We are aware that accompaniment is an important feminist instrument in the recovery process of women, and the fact that you have somebody by your side who provides emotional support, without judging you, in a horizontal way, and who puts your needs at the centre, is crucial. Nevertheless, we are aiming to take a step further in dealing with all the institutional violence that we are encountering. Taking this reality into account, together with Almena Cooperativa Feminista, we have started a social and political advocacy project: the Observatory of Institutional Violence against Women (OVIM). This project aims to have a feminist instrument driven by civil society to confront and make visible the institutional violence that affects women who live or have lived through gender-based violence and who, when they go to a public service, experience a violation of their rights by agents of the public administration. The main idea is to develop an advocacy strategy that is based on collective strength and is focused on producing high-impact structural changes.

From the very beginning, it became clear to us that the project needed a collective effort in partnership with the main feminist organisations of Spain, as well as migrant women and mothers who fight against this vicarious form of violence. For these reasons, along with Almena Cooperativa Feminista, and over 20 organisations, we have initiated this project of political and social advocacy.

To conclude, it is essential to highlight the value of accompaniment of women survivors of gender-based violence in institutions from a feminist, anti-racist, and horizontal perspective, and acknowledge it as a strategy of observation and monitoring of the institutions. ●



**Liliana Aragón Castro** is a PhD candidate in Gender Studies: Cultures, Societies and Politics and has a Master's in Gender Studies in the line of research on gender and memory from a decolonial feminist epistemology. She is a consultant and technical specialist

with international experience in the conceptualisation and evaluation of projects with a feminist, human rights, and intercultural perspective. She currently coordinates the "Neighbours for Neighbours" project in Barcelona and promotes its deployment throughout the territory. She is committed to the feminist and anti-racist struggle through education and activism.



**Marina Oliva Seguro** is a Graduate of Social and Cultural Gender Studies and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Psychosocial Research and Intervention. She has started to build her experience from her participation in educational, social

and community intervention projects, with a special focus on gender issues. She is currently in charge of advocacy at Hèlia and works on the basis of her ethical, social and political commitment to the eradication of the multiple manifestations of gender-based violence.

# Immigration control as institutional violence affecting migrant women in the UK

Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS), England

In 2012 in a bid to reduce irregular migration, the UK government devised what was then termed the 'hostile environment'<sup>1</sup>, which is a set of administrative and legislative measures aimed at limiting access for undocumented migrants to day-to-day activities and services, by turning service providers into de facto border guards. The hostile environment<sup>2</sup> affects multiple areas including housing, banking, healthcare, policing, schooling, and employment, among others. The way it works is that anyone who is deemed a migrant will be required to prove their immigration status for example to rent a house, access healthcare services, or to find or retain employment. The main complication of this is that although immigration regulation is highly complex<sup>3</sup> because of multiple laws, policies, and regulations, it is expected that non-immigration professionals will apply it with very little or no guidance from the government. This has resulted in an increasing number of cases of discriminatory treatment by employers, landlords and others who in the absence of a clear understanding of what they need

to review, refuse services altogether to people based on their race<sup>4</sup>, name, accent, etc. More importantly, the same onus has been placed on public services including healthcare, police, social services, etc. with similar results. This has had a significant impact on migrant women's vulnerability to and ability to escape from violence against women and girls (VAWG).

The harms of this government policy are best exemplified in the following case study:

*Lucia<sup>5</sup> is from Latin America and came to the UK on a visitor visa. In 2019, she met her partner online, and after some months, he proposed and convinced her to stay in the UK by telling her he would marry her before her visa expired. However, as time passed, he became aggressive and began isolating her from friends and family. When the pandemic hit, he increased his control over her. As a result of that she ended the relationship. After that, he would send her messages and emails insulting and threatening her.*

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1 In May 2012, the then Home Secretary Theresa May said in a Telegraph interview: "The aim is to create here in Britain a really hostile environment for illegal migration... What we don't want is a situation where people think that they can come here and overstay because they're able to access everything they need."

2 Rebranded as 'compliant environment' since 2018 because of the Windrush scandal.

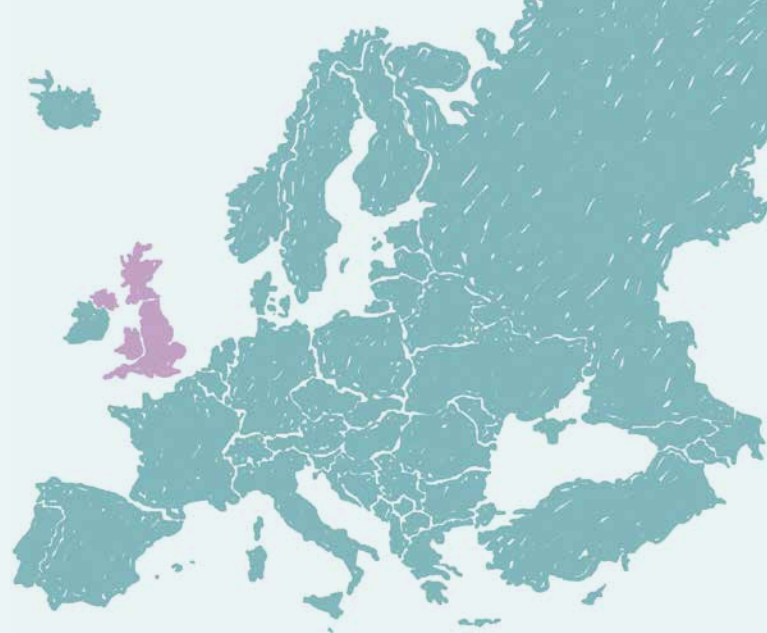
3 It was criticised by the Court of Appeal in *Hoque & Ors v SSHD* in 2020 in the following terms: "This Court has very frequently in recent years had to deal with appeals arising out of difficulties in understanding the Immigration Rules. This is partly a result of their labyrinthine structure and idiosyncratic drafting conventions but sometimes it is a simple matter of the confused language and/or structure of particular provisions. This case is a particularly egregious example." The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, 'Our response to the Independent Review of Administrative Law', available from: <https://www.jcwi.org.uk/our-response-to-the-independent-review-of-administrative-law>

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4 According to the Institute of Public Policy Research "This shift of responsibility from officials to citizens can facilitate discrimination against people from minority ethnic backgrounds by leading to new forms of racial profiling." Institute of Public Policy Research, 'Hostile environment' has fostered racist practices across society, not just by immigration officials, says IPPR', available from: <https://www.ippr.org/news-and-media/press-releases/hostile-environment-has-fostered-racist-practices-across-society-not-just-by-immigration-officials-says-ippr>

5 Not her real name





*She sought support from LAWRS. She was experiencing a high-risk case of abuse and stalking, which led to a deterioration of her mental health and the development of suicidal thoughts. Despite the risk, Lucia was fearful of contacting the police due to her lack of legal status, but as the threats and stalking grew worse, her caseworker supported her to report him to the police. They filed an online report asking for an interpreter.*

*When the police came to her home, no interpreter was provided. Lucia felt that her case and evidence were undermined. She felt embarrassed and blamed as police officers asked her if she did not know that meeting people online was not safe. Later, when the police asked for an ID and looked through her passport and expired visa, they called Immigration Enforcement in front of her and told her that she should be ready to leave at any moment. The officers did not want to leave her place until she gave them a date for her return to her home country. Before leaving, one of the officers told her that he didn't want to call the Home Office but had no other alternative.*

*Regarding the abuse case, the police told Lucia that she was not a victim of crime as her perpetrator was not threatening her. The only recommendation was that she change her contact details. Lucia was not provided with the crime reference number or any commitment that her abuser would be investigated. This*

*was the first time Lucia sought support from the police after three years of being in an abusive relationship. She felt let down by the police and fearful of removal from the country as a consequence of having reported the crime. Meanwhile, her perpetrator continued to harass her, sending her emails with threats to come to her house.*

*The police report to Immigration Enforcement filled Lucia with terror. She contacted her caseworker extremely distressed, saying she did not want to have any contact with the police. As abuse escalated again, her caseworker tried to convince her to make another report, which Lucia opposed as she was more afraid of deportation. Eight days after the police report, Lucia got an immigration enforcement letter. The letter exacerbated Lucia's fear and made her decide to disengage from LAWRS' support altogether. She told her caseworker that she did not believe there would be a way to obtain any justice. Despite being a victim, she felt she was treated as a criminal facing negative consequences due to her immigration status.*

## **| Immigration Abuse**

The introduction of the hostile environment policy led to the prioritisation of immigration control and enforcement over the protection of survivors of VAWG. The consequence of this was that it created a new form of power and control targeted specifically at →

migrant women based on their lack of or insecure immigration status<sup>6</sup>. The Independent Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales defined this as immigration abuse which is “a form of abuse that is compounded by immigration legislation, policy, and practice.”<sup>7</sup>

This abuse can take different forms, for example women can be asked to migrate to the UK on a visitor visa with the understanding that once in the UK their partners will regularise their status through marriage, but the application for a spouse visa never materialises, or women are lied to regarding visa applications, or they have their documents destroyed, or they are reported of breaching their visa conditions on the basis of the breakdown of the relationship.

As Lucia’s case exemplifies, this makes migrant women ideal targets for violence and abuse as the statutory institutions, instead of protecting them, turn the full power of the state towards the control of immigration, regardless of the harm and crimes committed against migrant survivors of violence and abuse.

## | Data Sharing

As Lucia’s case exemplifies, the UK government has established multiple data sharing arrangements between statutory services including the police, healthcare, social services, housing authorities, and others, and immigration enforcement with the purpose of immigration control. For example, in the case of the police, a recent Freedom of Information request showed that between May 2020 and September 2022, the police shared the details of over 2,000 vulnerable victims with Immigration Enforcement after victims reported

a crime<sup>8</sup>. This creates a powerful deterrent effect on survivors of VAWG who are prevented from reporting violence and abuse to the police and accessing justice.<sup>9</sup> For those who come forward, as Lucia did, the consequences can be devastating.

However, despite the evidence of the harmful effects of data sharing arrangements on migrant survivors, the government has doubled down on maintaining this policy in place. In December 2020 the findings of the first super-complaint<sup>10</sup> investigation in the UK concluded that data sharing arrangements significantly harm not only victims of crime but also the public interest, as crimes are not reported and therefore remain unpunished. It recommended a review of the policy and legal framework of data sharing led by the Home Office, and the introduction of safe reporting mechanisms for all migrant victims and witnesses of crime. Yet, the government rejected the recommendations, and instead proposed introducing an Immigration Enforcement Migrant Victims Protocol arguing that immigration enforcement can perform a function of pursuing enforcement actions against migrant victims while simultaneously seeking to safeguard them<sup>11</sup>.

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6 LAWRS defines insecure immigration status as that that is dependent on others such as partners, family members, or employers for its continuation. McIlwaine et al., 2019, ‘The Right to be Believed: Migrant women facing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in the ‘hostile immigration environment’ in London’, Latin American Women’s Rights Service and King’s College London, available from <https://stepupmigrantwomenuk.files.wordpress.com/2019/05/the-right-to-be-believed-key-findings-final-1.pdf>

7 Domestic Abuse Commissioner, ‘Safety Before Status: Improving pathways to support for migrant victims of domestic abuse’, Domestic Abuse Commissioner, available from <https://domesticabusecommissioner.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Safety-Before-Status-Report-2021.pdf>

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8 Luke Butterly, 2023, ‘UK police referred sexually exploited children and victims of domestic abuse to immigration authorities’, thedetail, available from <https://www.thedetail.tv/articles/uk-police-forces-referred-thousands-of-migrant-victims-of-crime-to-immigration-authorities>

9 McIlwaine et. al., Op. Cit.

10 A super-complaint is a mechanism designed to “provide a voice for designated bodies to raise concerns on behalf of the public about patterns or trends in policing that are, or appear to be, significantly harming the interests of the public.” Safe to share? Report on Liberty and Southall Black Sisters’ super-complaint on policing and immigration status. Available from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/945314/safe-to-share-liberty-southall-black-sisters-super-complaint-policing-immigration-status.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945314/safe-to-share-liberty-southall-black-sisters-super-complaint-policing-immigration-status.pdf)

11 Home Office, ‘Home Office and Police data sharing arrangements on migrant victims and witnesses of crime with insecure immigration status’, 2021, available from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1041124/HO\\_Review\\_Police\\_and\\_HO\\_data\\_sharing\\_migrant\\_victims.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1041124/HO_Review_Police_and_HO_data_sharing_migrant_victims.pdf)

## No Recourse to Public Funds

If a migrant survivor manages to overcome the first hurdles to report the abuse and seek help, often, she will find herself ineligible for specific forms of support because of a visa condition called No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). NRPF excludes migrants from the protections afforded by the social welfare net, which is essential for accessing certain forms of assistance such as access to refuge accommodation.<sup>12</sup> This also affects children, who although protected by the Children's Act, often receive inconsistent or indifferent responses from social services. In some cases, women are deterred from seeking their help as social services threaten to take children into care or return them to an abusive father or family member.

This in effect leaves migrant survivors of violence and abuse having to choose between destitution, homelessness, and further risk of harm or return to the perpetrators, which contributes to their endurance of violent or abusive situations for far longer than other groups.

## The Istanbul Convention

In July 2022, the Government ratified the Istanbul Convention, but placed a reservation on Article 59 which gives residency rights to migrant women who face abuse from a spouse or partner. Whilst this is an important step in the right direction, the reservation has the effect of restricting the rights of migrant women to secure their immigration status independently from perpetrators, further differentiating them from other survivors.

## Conclusion

The introduction of the hostile environment with its prioritisation of immigration control over the protection

12 Given their inability to pay rent or subsistence, income that is used by refugees to survive, victim-survivors with NRPF are frequently prevented from accessing women's refuges unless refugees make exceptions (Women's Aid, 2017)" R.K.Thiara, 2020, 'Safe and Secure; The No Recourse Fund. Report of Findings', Southall Black Sisters, available from <https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/news/safe-and-secure-the-no-recourse-fund-report-of-findings/>

of victims had the effect of fragmenting the rights of survivors of VAWG by creating two distinct categories of victims based on their immigration status. Women in the first category, citizens, are deemed worthy of protection, support, and access to justice, but women in the second category, migrants like Lucia, are deemed as suspect, untrustworthy, and subject to institutional violence based on official government policy. This fragmentation leads to vastly different outcomes for victims of VAWG, in turn weakening the whole system of protection as it has lost its universality.

Moreover, violence against women and girls cannot be eradicated when perpetrators are allowed to be unaccountable based on the identity of their victim, and authorities cannot be effective when they are allowed to support some but not others. Suspicion of migrant survivors has allowed pernicious narratives to re-emerge, such as who do we believe or do not, or that we only protect survivors if we deem them worthy.

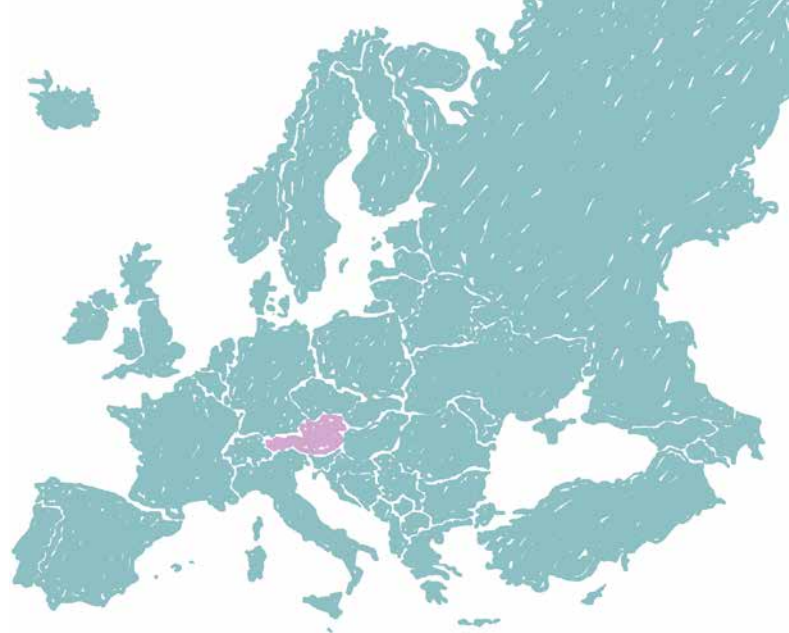
But we cannot win the fight for women's rights unless we place them on a firm universality footing. In the same vein the Istanbul Convention will fall short of a golden standard unless it protects all women. This means that migrant women need to be brought into the conversation and their needs, rights, and exclusion need to be part of wider women's rights campaigns. The fight for migrant women's rights is the fight for all women's rights. ●



### About the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS)

LAWRS is a by-and-for, feminist and human rights organisation focused on addressing the practical and strategic needs of Latin

American migrant women living in the UK. We directly support more than 2,000 women annually through culturally and linguistically specialist advice, information, counselling and psychotherapy, advocacy, development programmes, and workshops. We are active in evidence-based campaigning and policy work in the areas of VAWG and Employment Rights. Since 2017 we are leading the Step-Up Migrant Women campaign.



# Institutional violence against women and children in child custody proceedings

Jutta Mailänder, FEM.A – Association of Feminist Single Mothers, Austria

In 2023, Austria was shaken by a particularly egregious case of deadly susceptible institutional violence: A five-year-old boy was found dead after visiting his father, both drowned in the Danube. Although a restraining order against the father had previously been issued due to domestic violence, the boy was ordered by court to unaccompanied visitations with his father.<sup>1</sup> According to Article 31 of the Istanbul Convention which Austria ratified, the court is obliged to take all necessary measures to ensure that the exercise of the visitation rights does not jeopardise the safety of the child. In this case, the judge clearly failed to meet this duty of care and exposed the boy to deadly danger through unaccompanied contact. This case is just the tip of the iceberg of institutional violence against mothers and children in custody proceedings in Austria.

Given that custody proceedings are non-public in Austria, there are no formal statistics on the number of cases of misjudgements that led to institutional violence. However, we remain under the impression that it is a widespread phenomenon rather than an exception in the Austrian court system.

Two years after the German association “Mütterinitiative für Alleinerziehende” [Mothers’ Initiative for Single Parents] launched an awareness campaign about

institutional violence against mothers and children in courtrooms, FEM.A, the Association of Feminist Single Mothers took up the initiative and established it in Austria. The focus of the initiative was the interpersonal, overt and covert violence by agents of institutions involved in custody proceedings, their victims being mothers and children. Since the latest reform in family law in 2013, the number of different actors in custody proceedings has steeply increased. Amongst the agents interfering with the families in custody proceedings, we count judges, judicial officers, family court assistants, children’s assistants, child protection services, expert witnesses, and many others.

While some mothers had previously opened up on social media about the harmful and sexist statements they had to endure by the above agents, they were often not believed, were framed as mentally ill and therefore untrustworthy, and were ultimately silenced. Before FEM.A took the decision to collect testimonies and repost them anonymised on social media, there had never been a structured way of gathering their experiences. The awareness campaign unleashed a torrent of testimonies and troubling experiences of single mothers in Austria. It seems that it not only struck a nerve, but also lifted a prevailing taboo on this topic. For the first time, victims found themselves in a community of women who had gone through similar ordeals.

The high number of testimonials on institutional violence reported to FEM.A has pushed us to delve

<sup>1</sup> Steinmaurer, Tobias; APA: „Nach Hammerangriff weitere Leiche in Neuer Donau entdeckt“; APA, 14.08.2023 <https://apa.at/news/nach-hammerangriff-weitere-leiche-in-neuer-donau-entdeckt-4/>





In December 2022 FEM.A met Austrian justice minister Alma Zadić along with other women's rights organisations in order to raise awareness about institutional violence in custody proceedings in Austria. FEM.A's main call was the full implementation of the Istanbul Convention and the protection of children from violent fathers.

deeper into the issue. Institutional violence is generally not formally recognised as a form of violence. During our research we were surprised to find that there was a lack, if not to say an absence of academic literature and public discourse on the term "institutional violence" in the German language. While some sources in the area of care work for elderly people, people with disabilities, or even pupils in schools could be found (e.g. in standard operating procedures), there seems to be no formal definition of "institutional violence". The only sources available on the subject rather refer to a related concept, namely "structural violence". Structural violence as a form of discrimination seems to be most frequently used, covering but not wholly capturing the concept of institutional violence, as the latter term is understood in English. Structural violence which was first defined by Johan Galtung, founder of the Peace Research Institute Oslo, refers to a form of violence that lacks a particular beginning as well as an actor<sup>2</sup>. In other languages "institutional violence" is a well-established term and concrete definitions can be found. Cersele and Haecht published a study in 1980 in French about institutional violence, where they state:

*"Institutional violence is an established form of interpersonal violence resulting from the existence of such institutions as the police and prisons and from the practices of repressive justice."<sup>3</sup>*

Joseph C. Kunkel wrote in 1999 in "Institutional Violence", a book composed mostly of writings from philosophers:

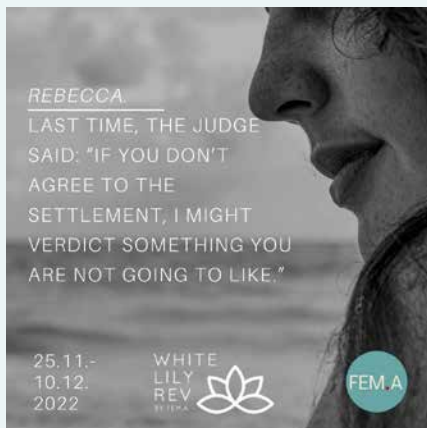
*"Institutional violence is violence made possible and facilitated by social organisations having relatively explicit rules and formal status within a culture. Examples are the educational system, the military, the police force and the judicial system."<sup>4</sup>*

The lack of sources and academic contributions in German points to a critical death of public discourse, analysis, and policy in German-speaking countries. While the cause of institutional violence against mothers →

2 Galtung, Johan: "The Specific Contribution of Peace Research to the Study of the Causes of Violence: Typologies," UNESCO Interdisciplinary Expert Meeting on the Study of the Causes of Violence, Paris, 1975 <https://www.transcend.org/galtung/papers/The%20Specific%20Contribution%20of%20Peace%20Research%20to%20the%20Study%20of%20the%20Causes%20of%20Violence%20-%20Typologies.pdf>, accessed on 24. August 2023

3 Cersele, S. C.; Haecht, A. V.: "Institutionalized Violence", Center of Sociology of Law and Justice (Institute of Sociology - Free University of Brussels), Canada, 1980 <https://ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/institutionalized-violence#:~:text=Institutional%20violence%20is%20an%20established,the%20practices%20of%20repressive%20justice.,> accessed on 24. August 2023

4 Kunkel, Joseph C. in: "Institutional Violence", ed. Deane Curtin, Robert Litke; Amsterdam, Atlanta, 1999



and children in custody proceedings may be rooted in a deep and engrained misogynistic and patriarchal belief system, the lack of language to label this form of violence maintains and reinforces the problem. What cannot be named, cannot be known. While the true magnitude of the problem remains in the dark, we believe that the reason could be the lack of codification of the concept. We have therefore decided to provide a first definition of institutional violence in German, as well as many examples of this form of violence in custody proceedings. The goal is to empower women not only to recognise the violence they face in diverse institutions during child custody proceedings, but also to speak up about it. Furthermore, we hope to sensitise institutions, politics, and the society about this form of violence. We will publish our findings in form of a free and downloadable brochure during the upcoming 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (25 November – 10 December 2023).

Amongst different forms of institutional violence in custody proceedings reported to us, we found the following to be most present:

- Gatekeeping of information,
- Using pressure,
- Gaslighting, and
- Shaming.

Furthermore, we received testimonials of women experiencing different forms of institutional violence in custody proceedings:

## | Gatekeeping of information

Child Protection Services maintain records of their supervision of a mother and her children. However, the mother is denied access to records of her own information. This not only violates the right to participation and information, but also denies her the opportunity to comment on any untruthful reports.

## | Using pressure

A judge pressures a mother to agree to a disadvantageous settlement: “[...]either you agree to the settlement, or I will issue an order that I have already prepared. And I can tell you: it is extremely disadvantageous for you.”

## | Gaslighting

A mother reported to the court that the father of her children had threatened to kill her, which she recorded. The judge decided to not investigate the death threat, but rather ignored it and even defended the father by saying: “The father just wanted to see the children. There should be understanding for his situation.”

## | Shaming

When a mother claimed child support for her child, as they were in a precarious financial situation because the child’s father did not pay any child support, the judge told the mother that she should have thought about how she would make ends meet financially before separating. ●



**Jutta Mailänder** is a feminist activist for the rights of single mothers. As an economist, she worked in project management and technical assistant in Spain, France, Italy, Mali and Cameroon. Becoming a single mother in

Austria, she decided to fight against structural discrimination against single mothers in Austria and currently works as an advocacy specialist for FEM.A – Association of Feminist Single Mothers in Vienna.



# Institutional violence in the absence of rule of law and in times of crisis: the earthquake region in Türkiye

Selime Büyükgöze, Leyla Soydiç and Elif Ege, Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation, Türkiye

In Türkiye, the diminishing rule of law and the widening gap between the law and its implementation have been the main concern, especially in the last decade, for the women's organisations that fight against male violence. Non-implementation of laws becomes ordinary practice and women who apply to institutions for protection and support experience institutional violence. They cannot even access their basic rights while trying to get away from violence. In addition to this, the institutional violence that women experience at the hands of public mechanisms particularly intensifies in times of crisis – such as the recent major earthquake in the Southeastern regions of Türkiye – and especially for migrant women and minority women.

After the earthquakes, which happened on 6 February 2023 and affected 10 provinces, we as Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation visited the earthquake zone in February and April, in an effort to monitor the mechanisms for combating violence against women and the situation of women and children who are exposed to or at risk of violence. During our visits, we observed the current situation, support mechanisms, and the needs of women and their children in the affected region. We also contacted some public institutions and municipalities that provide services in the region as well as women's organisations, NGOs, and other civic initiatives to hear their experiences. This

visit demonstrated to us an example of multi-layered institutional violence, showcasing a significant lack of planning and coordination in meeting basic needs, including continued issues with the mechanisms addressing violence against women. In this input, we can only touch upon a limited number of examples that manifest the effects of institutional violence on women; however, a more detailed analysis can be found in our monitoring report.<sup>1</sup>

## Lack of information

Women are not provided with the necessary information about their rights, including where to and how to apply to support mechanisms. This is an issue that women in Türkiye experience in general, not specific to the earthquake region or period. However, this situation has intensified with the earthquake crisis. We observed that, in the affected region, it has become more difficult to reach the mechanisms available for combating violence. We saw that people in charge of the tent areas, who are possibly the main authorities that a woman exposed to male violence should be able to access easily, have no knowledge of how to reach an institution that provides immediate assistance to →

<sup>1</sup> <https://en.morcati.org.tr/reports/experiences-of-women-in-the-earthquake-affected-region-in-support-mechanisms-and-in-their-attempts-to-distance-themselves-from-violence/>



the woman exposed to male violence or where to direct the woman. While some officials, in line with their personal interest and knowledge, voiced some suggestions as to where to direct women in the event of violence, others did not know what to do. In fact, a public official found it strange that we even asked these questions and stated his conviction that there would be no male violence at times like these. Considering the language barrier, this lack of information among practitioners results in additional difficulties for migrant women. While there have already been issues with translation services for migrant women who apply for support mechanisms, in the earthquake region this concern is sidelined altogether. Thus, the current situation revealed that there had not been a substantial coordination effort on which needs might arise before, during, and after the disaster, or how these needs can be met and that such measures were not thought of, or planned since the earthquake. We observed that all institutions, including social service institutions that provide services in the earthquake zone, are still very much focused on providing tents, food and covering travel expenses, hence they do not sufficiently work on psychosocial and economic needs despite the time that passed.

## Lack of standardisation

One of the fundamental problems in combating violence in Türkiye is the lack of service standardisation within the mechanisms. We have seen that this issue deepens and has more destructive effects during disasters such as earthquakes, just as it did during the COVID-19 pandemic. Units for preventing violence, law enforcement agencies, and social services in different provinces rely on personal initiatives, leading to inconsistent practices. This, in turn, results in poor implementation. For example, due to evacuations of shelter facilities after the earthquakes, shelter support is directed to nearby cities. In some cities, women are quickly moved to these shelters by the State, while in others, they were told to go to other cities on their own without any guidance or financial support for transportation. Especially considering the prevalent discriminatory discourses and policies against migrant women, the lack of standardisation puts them in a more vulnerable position vis-à-vis the practitioners.

## Protection orders and coordination

Another significant issue is the implementation of protection orders. We frequently report about the issues with the granting and ordering of protection orders by law enforcement and the coordination and monitoring

by the Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers<sup>2</sup> (ŞÖNİMs). This current problem leads to women taking the initiative themselves and conducting coordination among institutions on their own, as they simultaneously try to get away from violence. However, in the earthquake region, these failures and the effect of this institutional violence on women exacerbate. During our visit, we observed that law enforcement agencies in tent cities, in particular, did not provide solutions to the physical difficulties in enforcing restraining orders. In addition to this, the protection orders were not monitored nor coordinated due to a lack of technical infrastructure, and the flow of information across different mechanisms was not ensured. Besides revealing the lack of standardisation mentioned above, with respect to implementing confidentiality decisions and restraining orders, we saw that the practice varied depending on the initiative of Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers (ŞÖNİM) staff.

In conclusion, our visit demonstrated that in the absence of an urgent action plan considering that the potential difficulties have not been identified and resolved beforehand, institutional violence emerges in the form of the mistreatment of women seeking help from institutions or in the form of institutions failing to address their problems. ●



Selime Büyükgöze

### Selime Büyükgöze, Leyla Soydinç and Elif Ege

are volunteers of Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation. Selime Büyükgöze and Elif Ege conduct the communication work of Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation and Leyla Soydinç coordinates the psychological support work of the Foundation.



Leyla Soydinç



Elif Ege

<sup>2</sup> institutions responsible for inter-institutional coordination of support services





# Institutional violence against Roma women in Serbia in the areas of criminal, social and health protection

Maja Škorić, Jelena Marinković and Stanka Janković, Roma Center for women and children Daje, Serbia

Institutional violence against Roma women is a major issue in Serbia, and the prevalence and consequences of this issue are severe. In 2002, Serbia adopted a law on the protection of rights and freedoms of national minorities, and at that time this was perceived as a major breakthrough in fighting against racism and prejudices, especially against Roma. Racism accompanied by sexism in Serbia has been present in almost all areas of social life affecting the human rights of Roma women at multiple levels in our country. This kind of institutional violence against Roma women is noticeable in the process of obtaining social and healthcare protection, but also in the area of criminal protection.

Institutional violence that Roma women experience cannot be quantitatively measured since information concerning the nationality of the persons requesting the support is not generated by the institutions themselves. In Serbia, based on legislation, record of belonging to a national minority is entirely on a voluntary basis, and when we want to access this data from relevant institutions, the usual response is that they do not aggregate this data. Justification for such an attitude is Article 47 of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, which states that a person is not obligated to declare national and religious affiliation, but this does not exclude the collection of such data from persons declaring themselves their national and/or religious affiliation.

By systematic discouragement of Roma to declare their national affiliation, and by institutions refusing to disaggregate data by nationality of their beneficiaries, we face the obstacle that the official number of Roma in Serbia is much smaller than the actual number, which makes it impossible to determine their actual situation and define the priorities and needs of this national minority in our country. This fact was also identified by the State in the process of the EU pre-accession and a road map was made to achieve significant change. However, it seems that progress has been slowed down, if not almost stopped, since the government gave priority to other issues.

The behaviour of the responsible institutions in situations where Roma women report gender-based violence and domestic violence is of particular concern. Police officers often refuse to go to the location where the incident is reported from, when they receive a report of violence that has occurred in Roma settlements. They justify their refusal with prejudices against Roma. Furthermore, Roma women are often faced with particularly dangerous prejudices by police officers and the employees of social work centres as they accuse women of lying to misuse institutions and obtain benefits. This type of institutional violence leads to secondary victimisation and the complete discouragement of women to seek help and support.



According to the testimonies of our beneficiaries, a significant number of Roma women who are experiencing gender-based violence or are in need of social support, refuse to turn to social protection institutions for help, because they are afraid of the possibility that their children could be taken away from them and placed in shelters or foster families. The existence of the practice that representatives of social work centres observe the challenging living conditions in Roma settlements and then put children from Roma families into the system of foster care, instead of providing support to and strengthening the primary family's living conditions on the substandard minimum to get out of poverty, is very worrying.

Child and forced marriages affect a large number of Roma women and girls – every 2<sup>nd</sup> Roma woman in Serbia entered marriage before the age of 18, and every 3<sup>rd</sup> gave birth to their first child before reaching adulthood.<sup>1</sup> Although child and forced marriages represent a serious violation of human and children's rights, the police, centres for social work, prosecutor's offices and courts interpret this harmful practice as part of the cultural heritage, customs and traditions of Roma. Thus, based on this interpretation, adequate criminal and legal protection of victims is lacking. The national legislation of Serbia aimed at protecting children who are at risk of or are married in childhood is aligned with international norms and standards. Forced marriage is criminalised by Article 187a of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia, and early marriage as well as extramarital union with a minor is criminalised by Article 190. However, the implementation of the law is still insufficient. The GREVIO Baseline Evaluation Report Serbia (2019) states that early and customary marriages are common in our country, and especially widespread among the Roma population. The GREVIO report expresses concern over the identified tendency of the authorities to relate the issues of customary and forced marriages to the Roma community and to consider both types of marriages as an inevitable consequence of the characteristics of the Roma culture, and for this reason, abandon the application of the criminal law.

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1 Roma center for women and children Daje (2019). Gender-based violence against Roma women and availability of support services in Serbia. Roma center for women and children Daje, Belgrade.

According to data between 2020 and 2021, not a single criminal complaint on forced marriage was submitted to the General public prosecutor's offices in Serbia, and consequently, not a single criminal proceeding was initiated. When it comes to the criminal offense of extramarital union with a minor, a small number of criminal complaints were filed during the mentioned period (in 2020, 110 complaints, and in 2021, a total of 126 criminal complaints), and of the total number of reports, less than half were further processed.<sup>2</sup>

In 2020, The Roma Center for Women and Children Daje started a research targeting social work centres in Serbia, with the aim of obtaining specific data on whether the centres keep records of persons who are at risk of child marriage or were in child marriage. Furthermore, the research aimed to discover whether they operate in accordance with the Instruction on activities that the Centre for Social Work, as a guardianship authority, undertakes in the protection of children from child marriage. The Instruction was developed and adopted by the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs on 20 May 2019. During 2022, we sent requests to 50 centres for social work throughout the Republic of Serbia to access information of public importance, namely whether the centres keep the above records. It is worrying that less than 50 % of social work centres keep such records, that is, some of the centres answered that they were not even aware of the Instruction they must act on, even though it was issued by the Ministry as the highest authority in the social protection system.

All the above indicates that when it comes to the prevention and elimination of child and forced marriages in Serbia, the situation does not improve from one year to another. In fact, there is no interest or sensitivity from the competent guardianship authorities to actively participate in reducing the frequency of such a harmful social phenomenon.

The experiences of our beneficiaries show that Roma women experience discrimination when they approach institutions. Furthermore, the information they receive from officials is scattered and insufficient, as well as

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2 Roma center for women and children Daje (2022). Criminal prosecution in cases of child and forced marriage in Serbia – data for 2020 and 2021. Belgrade. <http://romadaje.org/?p=7723&lang=en>

without detailed explanation of the rights that belong to them by law and the procedures for realising them. In a certain number of cases, the workers of social work centres refuse to initially accept and submit the requests of the beneficiaries, thereby losing any possibility of realising their guaranteed right, which especially refers to the right to material social assistance. The situation is in many respects different when members of our organisation go with the beneficiaries to the institutions to submit a request or subsequently submit an emergency request due to non-action. The aforementioned practice of the institutions is another indicator of the deep-rooted discrimination and disrespect for the rights of Roma women, who, when they do not have the support of non-governmental organisations, are ignored. As a result of such discrimination, they often give up their demands and remain in a vicious circle of poverty and legal invisibility.

When it comes to placement in safe houses, Roma women are also exposed to discrimination. Only one-third of Roma women in need of accommodation in a safe house receive accommodation service. In order to receive this accommodation service in a safe house, it is necessary for the woman to have personal documents (except for emergency admission). Not having personal documents is a big obstacle when it comes to exercising the right to housing, which is faced by a number of Roma women. Women who have received the service of accommodation in a safe house, in large numbers, report discriminatory actions from the staff during their stay.<sup>3</sup>

Discrimination against Roma women is also present in primary healthcare institutions. According to the experiences we collected from the previous and current year, in health centres in Serbia, it often happens that health workers refuse to admit Roma patients, creating discriminatory conditions for admission, which are deeply rooted in racist attitudes. Thus, it happens that Roma women are rejected for examination because the staff of the institution assesses that their level of personal hygiene is not at an adequate level for them to be examined.

3 Roma center for women and children Daje (2019). Gender-based violence against Roma women and availability of support services in Serbia. Roma center for women and children Daje, Belgrade.

Furthermore, Roma women face discrimination when registering their residence at the address of the Centre for Social Work. There is no clearly coordinated procedure for reporting the residence of persons without permanent residence, although the Law on Residence of Citizens from 2011 introduced the possibility for persons without permanent residence, in certain cases, to register at the address of the Centre for Social Work. Practice shows that the social work centre workers refuse to certify the permanent residence application form filled out by the police officer, even though they are obligated to do so. They do not have the option of not giving "consent", considering that the request is submitted to the police station. This illegality complicates the procedure of registering residence at the address of the Centre for Social Work, which ultimately means that many Roma women and children remain without a registered permanent residence and, as a result, personal documents. Therefore, they remain legally invisible and without the opportunity to exercise the rights necessary for a dignified life. ●



**Maja Škorić** graduated from the Faculty of Law in Belgrade. She currently lives and works in Belgrade, Serbia, and has been a lawyer at the Roma Center for Women and Children Daje since 2016.



**Jelena Marinković** is a psychologist at the Roma Center for Women and Children Daje, a transactional analysis trainee and is specialised in providing psychological counselling to women experiencing gender-based violence.



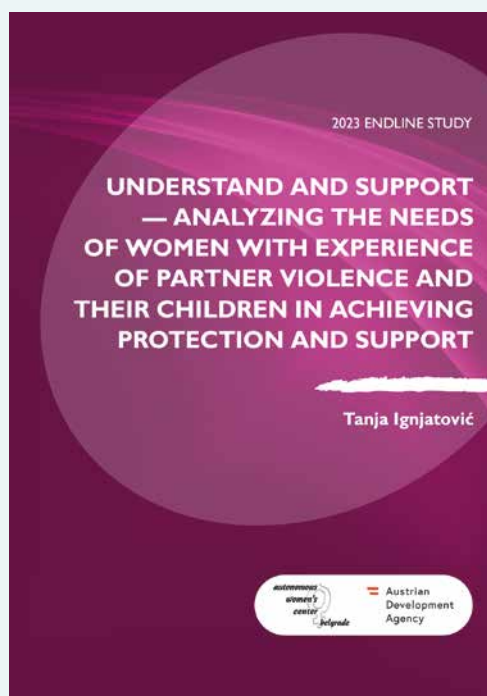
**Stanka Janković** is the manager of communication and advocacy at the Roma Center for Women and Children Daje, and has been a feminist and women's rights activist for the last 20 years.

# Understand and support

## Analyzing the needs of women with experience of partner violence and their children in achieving protection and support

Tanja Ignjatović, Autonomous Women's Centre, Belgrade

In Serbia, about 26,600 events of domestic violence are registered annually, and more than 15,900 women are victims of such acts, committed by more than 14,700 men. 60.1 % of these acts are committed by the women's partners. Serbia still faces challenges when it comes to systematically regulating and ensuring the provision of general and specialised support services to women who have experienced violence. An analysis was conducted to investigate the perception of women who have experienced violence in a partner relationship regarding the information, protection, and support services they received from institutions. In addition, their satisfaction with the relationship of acting experts was analysed. The aim of this was to formulate recommendations for institutions' responses and public policies. The convenience sample of respondents consisted of 49 women who applied for support to the Autonomous Women's Centre in 2022 and 59 who requested support in 2020. The results show that between the two observed years, there was no improvement in women's perception of security and that measures of protection for their children were unacceptably absent, while the responsible services poorly understood that physical security does not equal emotional safety. Although improved awareness of the rights was registered, women's participation in the planning of measures and services for their own protection and support, as well as in the assessment of their effects, remained minimal. A whole range of support services in various domains of the lives of women and their children is either missing or unavailable. It should be highlighted that most dissatisfaction is caused by an inappropriate relationship reflecting mistrust, misunderstanding, distance, or passivity of experts, most often related to issues of parenting, not recognising the abuser's manipulation, favouring fatherhood and contact, rather than safety, and lacking support for the victim. In view of the fact that the sample is small, these results cannot be generalised to all survivors of violence. Nevertheless, they have important practical implications such as the necessity of improving access to information for survivors, security, support services, human and financial resources, as well as the inclusion of specialised women's organisations in those processes. ●



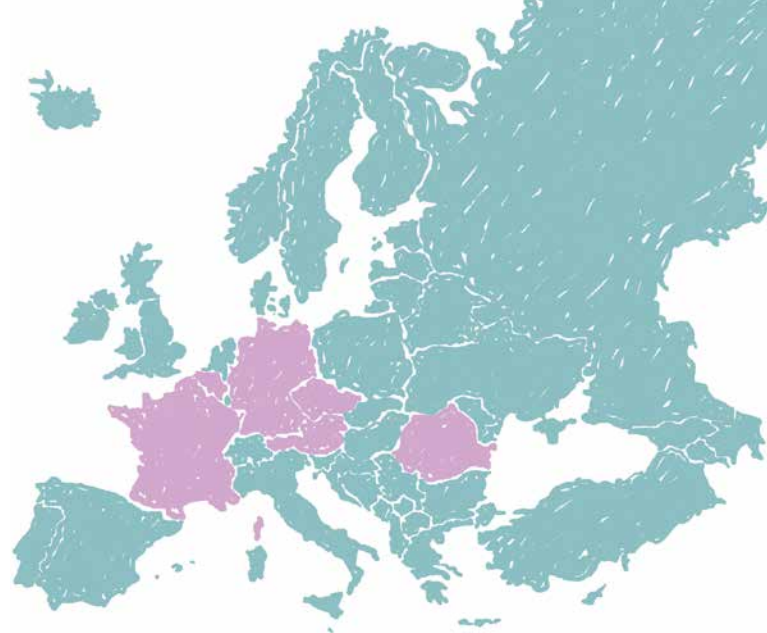
**Tanja Ignjatović** is a psychologist, PhD Political Science, and member of the Autonomous Women's Centre (Belgrade, Serbia) since 2001. She also coordinates programmes for knowledge development, educational programmes, public advocacy, analysis of public policies and research projects. Furthermore, she is the author of accredited programmes for professionals, with the largest number of performances in Serbia. She has specific research interest in coordinated institutional response to violence against women and parenthood.





**StoP** Domestic violence

Community matters!



# StoP Domestic violence! Community response to institutional violence

## Institutional failure to support women victims of violence

This article is based on StoP material, created by the inventor of StoP, **Sabine Stövesand**. It was collated by **Alicja Świtoń** (Association AÖF, Austria) in collaboration with **Mathilde Sengoelge** (Psytel, France) and **Ola Kurowicka** (WWP EN, Germany).

**W**omen experience various forms of direct/interpersonal violence (such as physical violence, psychological and verbal violence, sexual/sexualised violence, economical/financial violence, cyberviolence and violence on the internet) and indirect/structural violence (socio-political violence and power relations, unequal distribution of power in gender relations, and finally institutional violence).<sup>1</sup> Violence perpetrated by institutions can have many faces and penetrates the lives of women in many ways. In recent decades, many measures have been taken to support victims of violence through various institutions and specialised women's support services: women's shelters, public campaigns, training, men's projects around awareness-raising and engagement, work with perpetrators, federal action plans, and legislative amendments. However, what has been neglected so far is a crucial variable: the socio-spatial environment of victims and perpetrators. The current prevention programmes focus mainly either on victims or offenders. **A third system variable is usually neglected in the institutional practice – the position of bystanders, the resources and relevance of the local community.** Strategies for prevention of

violence and social change must increasingly start where the violence takes place, i.e., directly in the immediate sphere of people's lives. Root causes of domestic violence are embedded in societal structures and social norms, which are upheld and conveyed in institutions and the communities we live in. Awareness, civil society mechanisms and community accountability must be developed to offer protection to those affected. Police or social workers do not guard or support people around the clock. State law enforcement and professional help are always part of institutional support systems which often fail women when they are victims of institutional violence themselves, when they encounter barriers in order to reach help, or when the police create further obstacles on the path out of violence or they perpetrate violence themselves.

### | Community response

What is needed is an approach to action that aims to build up or stabilise social ties and networks and to support them so that victims can make full use of their rights. Members of the local community – neighbours, friends, shop keepers, who are not directly involved but very often see, hear, or know something can often positively support the victims. They can help prevent escalations or stop the violence by displaying civil courage, one of the main principles of the StoP® project. →

<sup>1</sup> Verein AÖF, Formen von Gewalt gegen Frauen, 2022 [Link: [https://www.aeof.at/images/06\\_infoshop/6-2\\_infomaterial\\_zum\\_downloaden/Infoblaetter\\_zu\\_gewalt/Formen-von-Gewalt-gegen-Frauen.pdf](https://www.aeof.at/images/06_infoshop/6-2_infomaterial_zum_downloaden/Infoblaetter_zu_gewalt/Formen-von-Gewalt-gegen-Frauen.pdf) from 21.08.2023]

StoP® stands for **Stadtteile ohne Partnergewalt** (German) which translated means **Neighbourhoods without partner violence**. The innovative StoP model was created by Prof. Sabine Stövesand in Germany in 2010 by combining issues, practices, and research-based insights from the fields of social work and community organisation. StoP is based on the idea that communities have the potential to bring change within themselves. The goal of the StoP model is to build community networks so that partner violence is no longer tolerated, concealed, or ignored. StoP has been initiated to adequately address domestic violence where and when it happens, by unlocking the potential of social networks and local communities. StoP® is a well thought-out, high-quality, scientifically researched and sustainable concept based on the "Community Organising" method in partner violence and domestic violence in the social sector. Therefore, StoP is protected by copyright to ensure quality and responsible implementation.

The spectrum of response StoP offers to victims of violence is wide. On the one hand, the StoP projects ensure increased knowledge on the matter of violence, and spread the word on the different ways each and every community member can get involved to prevent violence. On the other hand, StoP does not separate itself from the institutions but invites the local stakeholders, such as representatives of local social services, churches, schools and the police, to join StoP and show their active commitment to combat violence against women.

The StoP model has already been implemented in approx. 15 districts in Germany and in 29 locations in Austria and tries to bring about fundamental change in society. The aim of the newly initiated EU Project "StoP – Community Matters" is to adapt the StoP model for use in other European countries. Thus, the project StoP will be tested in Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, and Romania. The project partners will identify barriers and facilitators to upscale the StoP model in these countries. These initial steps will be followed by the adaptation of the StoP guidelines and training curricula, to match the needs of the country partners and can thus also be of added value in the future in other EU countries and beyond for those who want to implement the StoP program. This will result in the creation of a digital StoP Toolbox harmonised across the partner countries, created through an innovative participatory design process by leading European experts. The

StoP project is co-financed by the CERV programme of the European Commission and will last until March 2025. ●

The StoP project is developed by an international, interdisciplinary team consisting of:

- Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters (Verein AÖF), Project Coordinator, Austria
- Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW) – Department Social Work, Germany
- Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW) – Centre for design research, Germany
- Association for Liberty and Equality of Gender – A.L.E.G, Romania
- Garance ASBL, Belgium
- SC Psytel, France
- Rosa Centrum Pro Zeny ZS, Czech Republic
- WWP EN, the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, Germany
- Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network, Associate Partner

For more information, please visit the StoP websites:

- Current EU project: [www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/stop](http://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/stop)
- StoP in Austria: [stop-partnergewalt.at](http://stop-partnergewalt.at)
- StoP in Germany: [stop-partnergewalt.org](http://stop-partnergewalt.org)

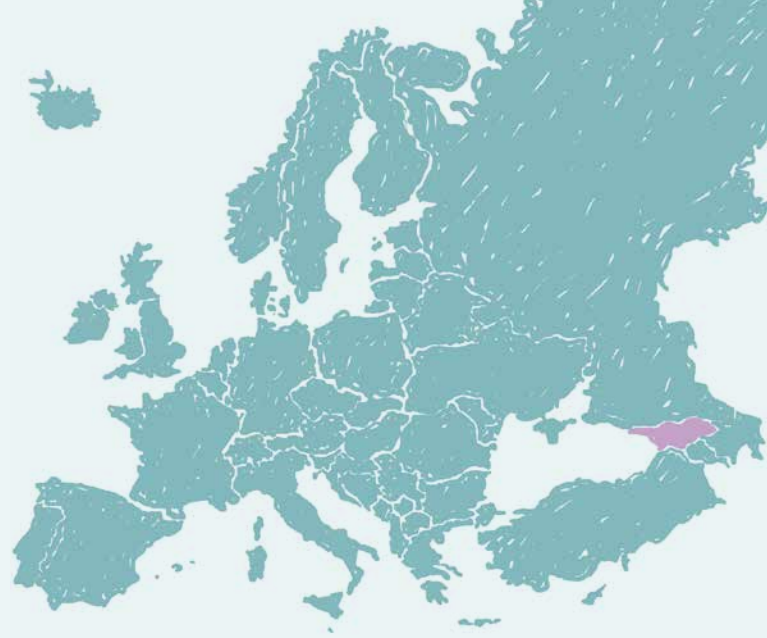


**Prof. Dr. Sabine Stövesand**

has been active in social work practice for 14 years (women's shelter, community work) and has been a professor of social work at the University for Applied Sciences Hamburg since 2006. She was chairwoman of the

German Society for Social Work and spokeswoman of the community work section. The community-based concept she developed for prevention and intervention in the context of domestic violence: "StoP: Neighbourhoods without Partner Violence," is now being implemented in 40 cities and neighbourhoods in Germany and Austria.





# Legal response to rape as a systemic issue in Georgia

Tamta Kakhaberidze and Salome Nikoleishvili, Sapari, Georgia

**A**t present, the law in Georgia pertaining to crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability is contained in Chapter 22 of the Criminal Code. The chapter commences with the definition of rape, which states:

*"Rape is the act of penetrating a person's body in a sexual manner through the use of force, threat, or by exploiting the victim's helplessness. This act may be accomplished using any body part or object."*

However, critics argue that the current legal provisions only consider rape as a criminal offense if it involves explicit violence, threat, or the exploitation of the victim's helplessness. Those working closely with survivors of sexual abuse, such as human rights activists and lawyers, contend that this narrow interpretation of rape excludes many instances that should be rightfully classified as such. For example, Baia Pataraiia, the Executive Director of Sapari, recalls a case where a 17-year-old girl was forcibly kidnapped for marriage. Although the girl cried throughout the ordeal, she did not physically resist her abuser. Regrettably, this case was not deemed as rape by Georgian law enforcement since it did not meet the specific criteria outlined in the law—specifically, the involvement of violence, threat, or the victim's helplessness.

## Which specific aspects of the existing law should be modified or revised?

Rape is defined internationally as non-consensual sexual activity. Consent is crucial in determining whether an act is rape or not, as it must be given explicitly and freely. Silence cannot be equated with consent. Georgia, which has ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2017, recognises the significance of consent in combating sexual crimes. The Convention mandates the criminalisation of non-consensual sexual acts, including penetration without consent, as well as coercing someone into engaging in sexual activity against their will.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) also recommends that crimes of a sexual nature, including marital and intimate partner or date rape, should be defined based on the absence of freely given consent and should include considerations of coercion of the victim.

Based on these international recommendations and practices, a draft law was developed by the Georgian non-governmental sector, which defines rape as the penetration of a person's body in any form of a sexual nature using any body part or object without their consent. →





Rally in front of the Parliament (November 25, 2022). Protesters demanded significant changes to the existing laws on rape

The draft law also proposes that the use of violence (both physical and psychological), threats of violence, and the victim's helplessness should be considered as aggravating circumstances, leading to more severe punishments for the perpetrators. By recognising these factors, the legal system would emphasise the gravity of such acts and ensure that victims of rape are adequately protected and that those responsible are held accountable.

## What activities are currently occurring?

Baia Pataraiia discusses the process and current situation of the civil sector's advocacy for changes in Georgia's rape law. The conversation about the need for amendments to the law began a few years ago, but legislators initially objected, citing resource limitations for implementing the new law. Pataraiia explains that the civil sector then worked to gather knowledge and tailor it to the Georgian context in preparation for the law's implementation.

Various steps were taken, including the development of a manual on crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability, the translation of European Court of Human Rights precedent decisions, and the creation of guidelines for investigators and prosecutors. Employees of the Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Internal

Affairs were also retrained. After more than a year, the prosecutor's office now expresses no issues with commencing investigations or prosecutions if the legislation is changed.

Despite the dismantling of the main objection put forth by legislators, the amendment of the rape law has not been prioritised by the Georgian Parliament. Pataraiia believes that the delay is deliberate, suggesting a lack of political will to adopt the draft law.

Human rights defenders and lawyers working with survivors of violence also criticise the current legislation, arguing that law enforcement structures place an unnecessarily high burden of evidence on victims of sexual violence and rape crimes. This often results in delayed victim status, hindered legal prosecutions, and high acquittal rates due to low gender sensitivity.

Tamar Lukava, a sexual crimes specialist at "Sapari," shares an example that underscores the challenges faced by rape victims. She recounts that there was a case in which it took three years for the victim to be recognised as such, despite ample evidence supporting her claims. Lukava highlights delays and the unsupportive attitude of law enforcement as factors that discourage victims from cooperating with investigations. Ultimately, charges were brought against the





Baia Pataria at the rally in front of the parliament (photos © Shalika Studio)

alleged perpetrator only after the involvement of the European Court of Human Rights. However, the man was released on bail, while decisions from both the city court in Georgia and the European Court are pending.

Crimes of sexual violence and rape are considered the most hidden and unpunished form of violence, as they are seldomly reported to the police, particularly in the deeply patriarchal Georgian society. This, coupled with flawed legislation and law enforcement officers' insensitivity, contributes to a systemic problem that silences numerous women victims of violence. ●

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ISSUE:**

The fight against rape and the pursuit of justice for survivors in Georgia remains a crucial endeavour. The main objective of these efforts is to establish a deep-rooted culture of consent in sexual relationships and to raise awareness about its importance. Since 2020, the feminist non-profit organisation "Sapari" has been operating an online platform called "Ask Me first", providing a platform for women to anonymously share their experiences of sexual violence. Over the years, several campaigns have also been conducted to educate the public and enhance gender sensitivity. On 25 November 2022, which marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, a large-scale rally took place in front of the Parliament in the

capital city of Georgia, Tbilisi. Protesters demanded significant changes to the existing laws on rape. This event, supported by the Women's Movement—a coalition of feminist activists and human rights organisations— drew the participation of hundreds of individuals.



**Tamta Kakhaberidze** is a dedicated journalist who exhibits a strong commitment to advancing women's rights. She currently holds the role of communication manager at Sapari, a feminist NGO focused on women's rights, located in Tbilisi, Georgia.



**Salome Nikoleishvili** is an influential human rights activist who passionately fights for freedom and equality. Currently serving as the marketing manager at Sapari, Salome contributes actively to the organisation's mission to promote women's rights.



# Conscientious objection to abortion services in Armenia

Anna Hovhannisyan, Women's Resource Center, Armenia

## Definition and international human rights scope

In the realm of abortion care, conscientious objection occurs when a healthcare professional or institution declines to provide abortion services or related information due to personal beliefs or religious convictions. When conscientious objection lacks proper regulation, it can have severe consequences on the accessibility of abortion services. Unfortunately, in the aftermath of the 2020 war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh, women's rights organisations in Armenia have reported a significant increase in these practices.

From a women's rights perspective, this rise in conscientious objection poses a substantial challenge for many women in the country. Access to safe and legal abortion services is a fundamental aspect of reproductive rights and healthcare, allowing women to make informed choices about their bodies and reproductive futures.

The situation with conscientious objection is ambiguous. A number of countries that permit conscientious objection have put in place strong measures to ensure it does not obstruct access to abortion services, ensuring a strong referral process to a health care provider who will perform abortion services. When conscientious objection is not regulated, it can significantly

undermine access to abortion services<sup>1</sup>. In Armenia conscientious objection is not regulated by the law.

The European Court of Human Rights has recognised that if States choose to allow conscientious objection in healthcare settings, they have a positive obligation under the European Convention on Human Rights to organise their health services in such a way as to ensure that it does not prevent patients from accessing lawful abortion services<sup>2</sup>. The European Social Charter does not require States to permit conscientious objection for health care workers, nor does it confer a right to conscientious objection on the staff of the health system of a state party<sup>3</sup>.

Where a state party chooses to allow medical professionals to refuse to provide legal abortions, it must take effective measures to ensure such refusals do

- <https://reproductiverights.org/maps/worlds-abortion-laws/law-and-policy-guide-conscientious-objection/>
- R.R. v. Poland, App. No. 27617/04, Eur. Ct. H.R., (2011), para. 206. The Court stated "[s]tates are obliged to organise the health services system in such a way as to ensure that an effective exercise of the freedom of conscience of health professionals in the professional context does not prevent patients from obtaining access to services to which they are entitled under the applicable legislation."
- FAFCE v. Sweden, Compl. No. 99/2013, Eur. Comm. Soc. R. The Committee stated that it "considers that Article 11 of the Charter [the right to protection of health] does not impose on states a positive obligation to provide a right to conscientious objection for healthcare workers."

not jeopardise women's timely and effective access to such services<sup>4</sup>.

Global health organisations, such as the World Health Organization and the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics have unequivocally recognised the obligation of health professionals to provide appropriate referrals to other health practitioners if they refuse to provide particular services due to personal beliefs<sup>5</sup>. They further recognise that health professionals may not invoke conscientious objection in emergency situations, such as when the woman's life or health is in danger<sup>6</sup>.

## The situation around abortions in Armenia

According to state data from the Ministry of Health, 47 % of pregnancies in Armenia result in an abortion. 37 % of women have had at least one abortion, 63 % of those women have had more than two abortions.

Many abortions are also done at home in Armenia, however, there is no data on how often. Hence, it can be deduced that the real number of abortions is much higher than what official data is telling us<sup>7</sup>.

Even though abortions are legal on women's request up to 12 weeks of pregnancy, the State inhibits women's right to seek abortions by requiring a mandatory three-day waiting period from the moment the woman first approaches the doctor requesting an abortion, and also defines several preconditions for the termination of the pregnancy, most particularly, receiving free of charge counselling by the doctor explaining possible negative effects of the termination of the pregnancy. Regardless of international and national principles that regulate the realisation of secure and accessible abortion rights of women, in Armenia there are still various impediments to women's access to safe and legal

abortion services, particularly for women living in rural areas who have difficulty accessing medical services due to a lack of medical institutions and transport facilities in those areas.

Pronatalist healthcare workers as well as antiquated methods with which doctors perform abortions in addition to the three-day mandatory waiting period constitute an issue to the accessibility of abortions in Armenia. In addition, a significant problem is the issue of anaesthesia which some clinics include in their service fees while others request additional money for it. This results in disparities and puts additional economic pressure on women seeking abortion services.

With regards to sex-selective abortions of which Armenia is in the top three in the world, anti-abortion NGOs and campaigns have successfully co-opted the issue to make it about abortion accessibility and legality. They have started doing massive campaigns with celebrities and social influencers both offline and online with pro-natalist language to advocate for abortion criminalisation<sup>8</sup>.

Conscientious objection to abortion among health workers is another reality which many women face while seeking abortion services and the State does not regulate this harmful practice. As conscientious objection is not regulated in Armenia, it significantly undermines access to abortion services.

The State policy in Armenia is actively promoting larger families, aiming to encourage households to have more than three children. To achieve this objective, the government annually introduces various programmes, primarily providing financial assistance to families with three or more children. Concurrently, while abortions are legally permitted in Armenia, the prevailing narrative surrounding this practice within the country, whether among medical professionals or the general public, characterises abortion as "a form of murder". The discourse, which promotes the idea of having many children, is not limited to just public figures or individuals in the social networks; it also finds its way into the medical community. Many doctors, including those working within public healthcare systems, actively engage in discussions about the importance of having a large number of children. While this message might appear harmless on the surface, it can have far-reaching consequences, influencing the behaviour of other healthcare professionals and impacting the overall healthcare landscape. This issue has been particularly exacerbated in Armenian society in the aftermath of the 2020 war. Following this conflict, →

4 In IPPF-EN v. Italy Complaint No. 87/2012, Eur. Comm. Soc.R and CGIL v. Italy Complaint No. 91/2013, Eur. Comm. Soc. R., the Committee specified that if, under its domestic law, a state party to the Charter chooses to allow medical professionals to refuse to provide legal abortion care, it must take effective measures to ensure that such refusals do not jeopardize women's timely and effective access.

5 World Health Organization, Safe Abortion: Technical and Policy Guidance for Health Systems 69 (2d ed. 2012) [hereinafter "Safe Abortion Guidelines"]; FIGO Committee for the Study of Ethical Aspects of Human Reproduction and Women's Health, Ethical Guidelines on Conscientious Objection, in Ethical Issues in Obstetrics and Gynecology, 27 (2012) [hereinafter "Ethical Guidelines on Conscientious Objection"].

6 WHO, Safe Abortion Guidelines 69 (2d ed. 2012); FIGO, Ethical Guidelines on Conscientious Objection 27 (2012).

7 <https://evnreport.com/raw-unfiltered/sexual-discourse-speaking-about-the-unspeakeable-2/>

8 "The History of Abortion in the Armenian Context" Research. Available in Armenian: <https://bitly.ws/SVeC>



which resulted in a significant loss of 18- to 20-year-old young men, the promotion of fertility has taken on even greater prominence and urgency.

The experience of the Women's Resource Center in collaborating with healthcare professionals, particularly gynaecologists in local communities, reveals a concerning trend. It has been observed that, in the last 2 years, some gynaecologists who used to provide abortion services have begun refusing to perform them, citing moral objections and viewing the procedure as equivalent to "murder". Consequently, they have chosen to distance themselves from this practice.

This trend is deeply concerning, as it creates an alarming situation. On the one hand, with gynaecologists refusing to provide abortion services and stigmatising the procedure, many women feel compelled to seek clandestine, unsafe abortions at home. On the other hand, this can be seen as a manifestation of systemic and institutional violence against women, as it deprives them of the ability to exercise their right to abortion, a right safeguarded by both national and international legal norms. Furthermore, this situation is exacerbated when the State pursues pro-natalist policies, potentially leading to a deliberate lack of response to conscientious objection to abortion. As a consequence of all these factors, a woman finds herself isolated and alone in confronting this form of institutional violence. Her only recourse, in the case of an unwanted pregnancy, becomes terminating it at the potential risk of her own life. While a woman residing in urban areas may have better access to information and services for abortion, one can only imagine the ordeal faced by a rural woman who undertakes a long and arduous journey to reach a major city for the procedure, only to encounter judgmental attitudes that question her decision with comments like, "are you killing your child?". Continuing to examine the plight of this same woman, who is already experiencing multiple forms of discrimination within a patriarchal society, her only perceived solution may be to return to her own community and seek an unsafe abortion due to the lack of access to safer means.

The battle against institutional violence is a vital issue that necessitates comprehensive regulation within the framework of State policies. Particularly in patriarchal societies where women continually face various systematic forms of discrimination and violence in their daily lives, there is a pressing need for robust mechanisms to prevent the perpetuation of this form of violence. When considering the right to abortion, it is evident that this right is under severe threat worldwide, primarily due to the influence of right-wing political forces and anti-gender movements. Within the broader feminist struggle, it is imperative that we do not permit



The representative of the Women's Resource Center interviewing a medical professional about the access to abortion in one of the regions of Armenia.

women to be deprived of their fundamental right to access abortion services freely.

Governments should establish comprehensive policies and legal frameworks that protect women from institutional violence, including violence related to reproductive rights. These policies should encompass awareness campaigns, support services, and stringent consequences for those who perpetrate such violence. Empowering women with knowledge about their rights, including the right to abortion, is crucial. Education and awareness campaigns should be a fundamental part of any strategy to combat institutional violence. The feminist movement, along with allies in civil society, should continue to advocate for reproductive rights and the right to abortion.

In conclusion, the fight against institutional violence, particularly concerning reproductive rights such as abortion, is an essential aspect of the broader struggle for gender equality. Through strong policies, education, advocacy, and international cooperation, we can work toward a world where women are not only protected from institutional violence but also have full control over their reproductive choices. ●



**Anna Hovhannisyan** is employed at the Women's Resource Center Armenia, as the head of the advocacy and policy development team. She is a passionate women's rights activist and intersectional feminist who is committed to advocating for gender equality and promoting the

feminist agenda. Anna works diligently to unite the voices of various marginalised groups of women in Armenia. Within her role at the Women's Resource Center Armenia, Anna specialises in analysing the policy landscape related to women's rights, with a focus on issues such as sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender-based violence, and the feminist agenda in Armenia.





# Institutional violence against women experiencing homelessness

Elena Founargiotaki and Nicholas M. Spetsidis, Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture (UWAH), Greece

**W**omen experiencing homelessness face a combination of intersecting vulnerabilities that make them more susceptible to institutional violence. They often come from backgrounds marked by prolonged incidents of violence that may even began in childhood<sup>1</sup> and their homelessness is usually a direct consequence<sup>2</sup>. Thus, these women may find themselves caught in a vicious cycle of dependency on violent partners<sup>3</sup> to avoid homelessness and at the same time often suffer from Problematic Substance Use<sup>4</sup>, making it challenging to break free.

The Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture is taking action to mitigate this issue by examining the situation in Greece and engaging involved stakeholders to facilitate an open dialogue with the aim to create interdisciplinary inclusive actions that

respond to the needs of homeless women. In more detail, the organisation contacted 10 public and private entities in Greece, working in the correlated fields of homelessness, substance abuse and supporting vulnerable women. This endeavour offered valuable in-depth understanding of the situation in Greece. More precisely, insights from various organisations reveal that approximately 20% of the homeless population in Greece are women. However, when examining the individuals who receive support services, this rate averages out to around 10%. This inconsistency could be explained by the lack of gender-informed and specialised support mechanisms. The current support provisions discourage women to seek help and further expose them to harm within the very system designed to support them and provide meaningful assistance.

For instance, non-segregated homeless shelters and services could be highly demotivating for women, especially survivors of violence, and could evoke feelings of anxiety, fear, and insecurity. Women find themselves without a fitting accommodation option which addresses their unique requirements and situations. In certain instances, the shelter management might make arbitrary decisions to establish a dedicated space exclusively for women within the shelter. However, this provision is not always dependable or assured.

Furthermore, homeless women with Problematic Substance Use issues are denied entry or turned away from both shelter for persons experiencing homelessness →

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- 1 <https://nursing.usc.edu/blog/how-to-help-homeless-women/>
  - 2 <https://www.feantsa.org/public/user/Resources/resources/Guide%20supporting%20and%20solutions%20for%20women.pdf>
  - 3 <https://nursing.usc.edu/blog/how-to-help-homeless-women/>, <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/causes-homelessness> <https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12905-021-01353-x.pdf>
  - 4 <https://nursing.usc.edu/blog/how-to-help-homeless-women/>, <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/causes-homelessness> <https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12905-021-01353-x.pdf>

and shelters for women due to their addiction. These actions are guided by policies that emphasise rehabilitating the individual over offering immediate housing, as well as perceiving accommodation provisions as potentially enabling the addiction. This challenge is exacerbated by the generally limited availability of specialised resources within these shelters. Additionally, the therapeutic model in one of the major public sector's rehabilitation institution in Greece, includes confrontational group therapy<sup>5</sup>, where participants can verbally express themselves without constraints. This technique offers a platform for individuals to articulate emotions like anger, animosity, and frustration without reservation. However, this environment may prove significantly distressing and traumatising for women who have encountered violence, especially when they are the recipients of these feelings. As one stakeholder remarks "the rehabilitation programmes in Greece, established in the early 90s, primarily focus on young unmarried men. There is a major need for an approach more inclusive and sensitive to gender and trauma." All the above, result in a lack of suitable options for women which further results in the perpetuation of their homelessness and exposes them to additional risks on the streets.

In partnership with the University of Iceland and the organisation "Roots"<sup>6</sup>, the Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture seeks to bring expertise and technical know-how in fulfilling the needs of homeless women. Notably, the Icelandic framework operates based on principles such as harm-reduction<sup>7</sup>, trauma-informed care<sup>8</sup>, gender-responsive strategies<sup>9</sup>, and intersectionality<sup>10</sup>. This offers a positive paradigm of gender-segregated shelters and daily centres, with

5 Dye, M. H., Ducharme, L. J., Johnson, J. A., Knudsen, H. K., & Roman, P. M. (2009). Modified therapeutic communities and adherence to traditional elements. *Journal of psychoactive drugs*, 41(3), 275-283.

6 This Bilateral initiative project is funded by the Active Citizens Fund Programme. The Active citizens fund in Greece is supported through a € 13.5 m grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway as part of the EEA Grants 2014 - 2021. The program aims to develop the sustainability and capacity of the civil society sector in Greece, and to strengthen its role in promoting and safeguarding democratic procedures, active citizenship and human rights. The Fund Operator for the Active citizens fund in Greece is Bodossaki Foundation in consortium with SolidarityNow. More information: [www.activecitizensfund.gr/en/](http://www.activecitizensfund.gr/en/)

7 Morton, S., Hohman, M., & Middleton, A. (2015). Implementing a harm reduction approach to substance use in an intimate partner violence agency: Practice issues in an Irish setting. *Partner abuse*, 6(3), 337-350. Young, M. G., & Manion, K. (2017). Harm reduction through housing first: an assessment of the Emergency Warming Centre in Inuvik, Canada. *Harm reduction journal*, 14(1), 1-11.

8 Ardino, V. (2014). Trauma-informed care: is cultural competence a viable solution for efficient policy strategies? *Clinical Neuropsychiatry*, 11(1).

9 Bullen, J. (2019). Gender responsive strategies

10 Marsiglia, F. F., Kulis, S. S., & Lechuga-Peña, S. (2021). Diversity, oppression, and change: Culturally grounded social work. Oxford University Press, USA.

women employees, catering to this predominantly marginalised demographic of women. Furthermore, individuals facing challenges with Problematic Substance Use are embraced, and provided with a secure environment, aiming to reduce the adverse outcomes linked to these patterns.

In conclusion, institutional support mechanisms often fail to recognise the unique needs of women experiencing homelessness, and the intersectionality of their situation, which often leads to a one-size-fits-all approach and overlooks the underlying factors (trauma of violence) and further contributes to their exclusion and stigmatisation. This institutional violence prolongs a cycle of marginalisation, discouraging homeless women to seek help and obstructing their path to recovery and safety. A comprehensive and inclusive approach towards homeless women is imperative to address this grave issue. A trauma-informed approach, safe housing, gender-specific services, mental health and substance abuse treatment, as well as an effort to build trust and rapport with these vulnerable women are actions of paramount priority. It remains crucial to recognise the interconnectedness of gendered violence, substance abuse, mental health challenges, and poverty in the lives of homeless women. A concerted effort from all levels of society, including policymakers, service providers, and institutions, is essential to break the cycle of violence and homelessness experienced by these women. ●



**Elena Founargiotaki** is a project officer at the Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture with an academic background in European and International Studies. She has been actively involved in the civil society in Greece for the past ten years both in volunteering and professional roles. The scope of her work focuses on human rights, equality, education and combating stereotypes and violence, especially against women and girls.



**Nicholas M. Spetsidis** has been the Projects Coordinator of all the national and international projects at the Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture (Greece) for the past 10 years. He acts as strategy advisor to the Board of the Union of Women Association of Heraklion, for policy and business development either at local or international level. In addition to this, he participates in advocacy meetings with national or European policy stakeholders and politicians.

# WAVE Members



The WAVE Network was established in 1994 as a network of women’s NGOs and women’s specialist services (women’s shelters, women’s centres, intervention centres, helplines and other services). The main objective of WAVE is to work towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and their children, to promote the rights of women and girls to live free from violence in both the public and the private sphere, and to promote the human rights of women and girls. The WAVE office serves as a linchpin for the whole network of WAVE.

The WAVE Network is comprised of **173 Members (127 single organisations, 33 networks, 13 individual Members)**, located throughout **46 European countries**. Through our members, together with the extensive WAVE online database, the network reaches more than 4,000 women’s organisations across Europe. The members of WAVE include women’s organisations, women’s specialist services, individuals and networks working to end violence against women and their children. Additionally, honorary membership can be granted. Prof. Dr. Carol Hagemann-White is the first honorary member of WAVE.

- Exchange with other organisations and experts within the same field in Europe
- Access to different trainings and webinars, as well as the whole annual conference (the second day is reserved for WAVE Members)
- Being part of an international body with a voice in Europe.

The WAVE Database is publicly available on the WAVE website and contains data of about 4,000 organisations. The Database helps survivors and practitioners to find comprehensive information on available women’s specialist services on their own, and in other European countries, through the website rubric ‘Find Help’.

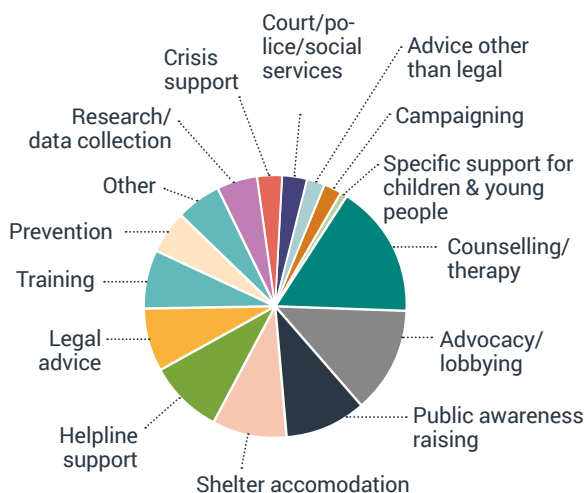
## BENEFITS OF BECOMING A WAVE MEMBER

- Access to the WAVE Members Only section which includes key publications, documents, and recordings of past webinars and trainings
- Access to the WAVE internal mailing list and bi-weekly members’ updates

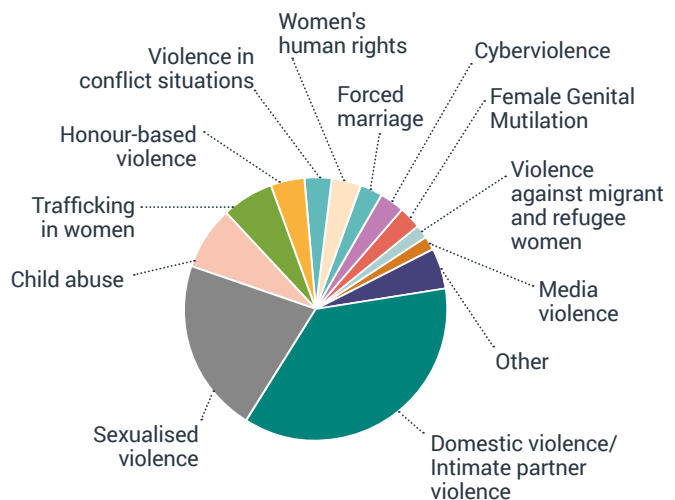
## HOW TO BECOME A WAVE MEMBER

If you are interested in becoming a WAVE Member, please contact our office: [office@wave-network.org](mailto:office@wave-network.org)

### MAIN SERVICES OF WAVE MEMBERS:



### MAIN FIELDS OF WORK OF WAVE MEMBERS:



**ALBANIA**

1. **Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN)**  
*Rrjeti i Fuqizimit të Grave Shqiptare*  
[www.awenetwork.org](http://www.awenetwork.org)
2. **Counseling Line for Women and Girls**  
*Linja e Këshillimit për Gra dhe Vajza*  
[www.hotlinealbania.org](http://www.hotlinealbania.org)
3. **Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC)**  
[www.gadc.org.al](http://www.gadc.org.al)
4. **Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC)**  
[www.hrdc.al](http://www.hrdc.al)
5. **Women's Association "Refleksione"**  
[www.refleksione.org](http://www.refleksione.org)
6. **Women Forum Elbasan** *Forumi i Gruas Elbasan*  
[www.forumigruaselbasan.org](http://www.forumigruaselbasan.org)
7. **Woman to Woman** *Gruaja tek Gruaja*  
[www.gruajatekgruaja.org](http://www.gruajatekgruaja.org)
8. **Center for Legal Civic Initiatives**  
*Qendra për Nisma Ligjore Qytetare*  
[www.qag-al.org](http://www.qag-al.org)
9. **Psycho-Social Centre "Vatra"**  
*Qendra Psiko-Sociale "Vatra"*  
[www.qendravatra.org.al](http://www.qendravatra.org.al)
10. **Women Centre "Light Steps"**  
*Qendra-Sociale "Hapa te Lehte"*  
[hapatelehte.org](http://hapatelehte.org)

**ARMENIA**

1. **Women's Support Center (WSC)**  
*Կանանց աջակցման կենտրոնը (ԿԱԿ)*  
[www.womensupportcenter.org](http://www.womensupportcenter.org)
2. **Women's Rights Center (WRC)**  
*Կանանց իրավունքների կենտրոնը (ԿԻԿ)*  
[www.wrcorg.am](http://www.wrcorg.am)
3. **Sexual Assault Crisis Center (SACC)**  
*Սեռական բռնության ճգնաժամային կենտրոն*  
[www.saccarmenia.org](http://www.saccarmenia.org)
4. **Women's Resource Center NGO**  
*Կանանց ռեսուրսային կենտրոն ՀԿ* [womenofarmenia.org](http://womenofarmenia.org)
5. **Impact Innovations Institute's Initiatives Foundation**  
[safeyou.space/en](http://safeyou.space/en)
6. **Women's Rights House NGO**  
*Կանանց իրավունքների տուն ԿՀ (ԿԻՏ)*  
[womensrightshouse.org](http://womensrightshouse.org)

**AUSTRIA**

1. **Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters**  
*Autonome Österreichische Frauenhäuser (AÖF)*  
[www.a oef.at](http://www.a oef.at)
2. **Domestic Abuse Intervention Centre Vienna**  
*Wiener Interventionsstelle gegen Gewalt in der Familie*  
[www.interventionsstelle-wien.at](http://www.interventionsstelle-wien.at)
3. **Network of Austrian Counseling Centres for Women and Girls**  
*Netzwerk österreichischer Frauen- und Mädchenberatungsstellen*  
[www.netzwerk-frauenberatung.at](http://www.netzwerk-frauenberatung.at)
4. **Ninlil – Empowerment and Counselling for Women with Disabilities**  
*Empowerment und Beratung für Frauen mit Behinderung*  
[www.ninlil.at](http://www.ninlil.at)
5. **FEM.A – Association of Feminist Single Mothers**  
*Verein Feministische Alleinerzieherinnen* [verein-fema.at](http://verein-fema.at)

6. **Renate Egger** *Individual Member*
7. **Rosa Logar** *Honorary Member (pending)*

**AZERBAIJAN**

1. **Clean World AID to WOMEN Social Union**  
[www.aidsactioneurope.org](http://www.aidsactioneurope.org)

**BELARUS**

1. **International Public Association "Gender Perspectives"**  
*Международное общественное объединение «Гендерные перспективы»*
2. **Legal Initiative – Commission on Women's Rights**  
*Правая ініцытыва*

**BELGIUM**

1. **Collective Against Family Violence and Exclusion**  
*Collectif contre les Violences Familiales et l'Exclusion (CVFE)* [www.cvfe.be](http://www.cvfe.be)
2. **Garance ASBL** [www.garance.be](http://www.garance.be)

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

1. **Foundation "United Women" Banja Luka**  
*"Udružene žene" Banja Luka*  
[www.unitedwomenbl.org](http://www.unitedwomenbl.org)
2. **"Medica" Zenica Information**  
[www.medicazenica.org](http://www.medicazenica.org)

**BULGARIA**

1. **Alliance for Protection against Gender-Based Violence**  
*Алианс за защита от насилие, основано на пола*  
[www.alliancedv.org](http://www.alliancedv.org)
2. **Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation**  
*Български център за джендър изследвания*  
[www.bgrf.org](http://www.bgrf.org)
3. **DA Foundation (DAF) – United Against Violence**  
*Фондация „Джендър алтернативи“*  
[www.gendernalternatives.org](http://www.gendernalternatives.org)

**CROATIA**

1. **Autonomous Women's House Zagreb**  
*Autonomna Ženska Kuća Zagreb* [azkz.hr](http://azkz.hr)
2. **B.a.B.e. Be active. Be emancipated**  
*Budi aktivna. Budi emancipiran* [www.babe.hr](http://www.babe.hr)
3. **Centre for Women War Victims – ROSA**  
*Centar za Žene Žrtve Rata (CŽŽR) – ROSA* [www.czzzr.hr](http://www.czzzr.hr)
4. **Women's Room**  
*Ženska Soba* [www.zenskasoba.hr](http://www.zenskasoba.hr)
5. **domine – Organization for the Promotion of Women's Rights** [www.domine.hr](http://www.domine.hr)

**CYPRUS**

1. **Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)**  
[www.medinstgenderstudies.org](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org)
2. **Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family**  
*Συνδέσμου για την Πρόληψη και Αντιμετώπιση της Βίας στην Οικογένεια (ΣΠΑΒΟ)* [www.domviolence.org.cy](http://www.domviolence.org.cy)

**NORTHERN CYPRUS**

1. **Association of Women to Support Living**  
*Kadından Yaşama Destek Derneği (KAYAD)*  
[www.kayad.org](http://www.kayad.org)



**CZECH REPUBLIC**

1. **proFem – Center for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence** *Centrum pro Oběti Domáčního a Sexuálního Násilí*  
[www.profem.cz](http://www.profem.cz)
2. **ROSA Center for Women**  
*ROSA Centrum pro Ženy* [www.stopnasili.cz](http://www.stopnasili.cz)

**DENMARK**

1. **LOKK – National Organisation of Women's Shelters in Denmark** *Landsorganisation af Kvindekrisecentre*  
[www.lokk.dk](http://www.lokk.dk)
2. **Danner** [www.danner.dk](http://www.danner.dk)
3. **Center for the Analysis of Power Relations**  
*Center for Magtanalyse (CMA)*  
[www.centerformagtanalyse.dk](http://www.centerformagtanalyse.dk)
4. **The Joan-Sisters** *Joan-Søstre*  
[joan-soestrene.dk](http://joan-soestrene.dk)

**ESTONIA**

1. **Women's Support and Information Centre**  
*Naiste Tugi- ja Teabekeskus* [www.wsic.ee](http://www.wsic.ee)
2. **Pärnu Women's Support Centre**  
*Pärnu Naiste Tugikeskus* [www.naistevarjupaik.ee](http://www.naistevarjupaik.ee)

**FINLAND**

1. **Women's Line Finland** *Naisten Linja – Kvinnolinjen*  
[www.naistenlinja.fi](http://www.naistenlinja.fi)
2. **Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters**  
*Ensi- ja Turvakotien Liitto*  
[www.ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi](http://www.ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi)

**FRANCE**

1. **National Federation of Women Solidarity**  
*Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes (FNSF)*  
[www.solidaritefemmes.asso.fr](http://www.solidaritefemmes.asso.fr)
2. **Women for Women France**  
[www.womenforwomenfrance.org/fr/](http://www.womenforwomenfrance.org/fr/)
3. **The Maison des Femmes of Saint-Denis**  
*La Maison des Femmes de Saint-Denis*  
[www.lamaisondesfemmes.fr](http://www.lamaisondesfemmes.fr)
4. **Association Protect Children**  
*Protéger l'enfant* [www.protegerlenfant.fr](http://www.protegerlenfant.fr)

**GEORGIA**

1. **Anti-Violence Network of Georgia (AVNG)**  
[www.avng.ge](http://www.avng.ge)
2. **Women Fund Sukhumi (WFS)**  
ქალთა ფონდი "სოხუმი"
3. **Union Sakhli – Consultation Centre for Women**
4. **Democrat Women's Organization of Samtskhe-Javakheti**
5. **Sapari** [sapari.ge](http://sapari.ge)
6. **Association Merkuri** ასოციაცია „მერკური“

**GERMANY**

1. **BIG e.V. – Berlin Initiative against Violence against Women** *Berliner Initiative gegen Gewalt an Frauen*  
[www.big-berlin.info](http://www.big-berlin.info)
2. **Association of Women's Shelters**  
*Frauenhauskoordination e.V.*  
[www.frauenhauskoordination.de](http://www.frauenhauskoordination.de)

3. **bff – Federal Association of Rape Crisis Centres and Women's Counselling Centres**  
*Bundesverband Frauenberatungsstellen und Frauennotrufe – Frauen gegen Gewalt e.V.* [www.frauen-gegen-gewalt.de](http://www.frauen-gegen-gewalt.de)
4. **GESINE Network „Gesundheit.EN“**  
*GESINE Netzwerk Gesundheit.EN*  
[www.gesine-intervention.de](http://www.gesine-intervention.de)
5. **kofra – Communication Center for Women on the Work and Life Situation**  
*Kommunikationszentrum für Frauen zur Arbeits- und Lebenssituation* [www.kofra.de](http://www.kofra.de)
6. **papatya – Crisis Facility for Young Migrant Women**  
*Kriseneinrichtung für junge Migrantinnen*  
[www.papatya.org](http://www.papatya.org)
7. **ZIF – Central Information Center for Autonomous Women's Shelters**  
*Zentrale Informationsstelle Autonomer Frauenhäuser*  
[www.autonome-frauenhaeuser-zif.de](http://www.autonome-frauenhaeuser-zif.de)
8. **Prof. i.r. dr. phil. Carol Hagemann-White**  
*Honorary Member*
9. **Karin Heisecke** *Individual Member*

**GREECE**

1. **European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN)**  
*Ευρωπαϊκό Δίκτυο κατά της Βίας (Ε.Δ.κ.Β.)*  
[www.antiviolence-net.eu](http://www.antiviolence-net.eu)
2. **Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture**  
*Σύνδεσμος Μελών Γυναικείων Σωματείων Ηρακλείου*  
[www.kakopoiisi.gr](http://www.kakopoiisi.gr)

**HUNGARY**

1. **NANE – Women's Rights Association**  
*Nők a Nőkért Együtt az Erőszak Ellen* [www.nane.hu](http://www.nane.hu)
2. **PATENT Association** *PATENT Egyesület* [patent.org.hu](http://patent.org.hu)

**ICELAND**

1. **Stígamót – Counseling and Information Centre on Sexual Violence** [www.stigamot.is](http://www.stigamot.is)
2. **Women's Shelter Association**  
*Samtaka um Kvennaathvarf* [www.kvennaathvarf.is](http://www.kvennaathvarf.is)

**IRELAND**

1. **Sexual Violence Centre Cork**  
[www.sexualviolence.ie](http://www.sexualviolence.ie)
2. **Rape Crisis Network Ireland** [www.rcni.ie](http://www.rcni.ie)
3. **Safe Ireland** [www.safeireland.ie](http://www.safeireland.ie)
4. **Women's Aid Ireland** [www.womensaid.ie](http://www.womensaid.ie)

**ITALY**

1. **D.i.Re – National Women's Network against Violence**  
*Donne in Rete contro la Violenza*  
[www.direcontrolaviolenza.it](http://www.direcontrolaviolenza.it)
2. **Associazione Nazionale Volontarie Telefono Rosa Onlus**  
*National Association of Volunteers of the Telefono Rosa Onlus* [www.telefonorosa.it](http://www.telefonorosa.it)
3. **Differenza Donna – Women and Girls against Violence**  
[www.differenzadonna.org](http://www.differenzadonna.org)
4. **BeFree Social Cooperative against trafficking, violence, and discrimination**  
*BeFree Cooperativa Sociale contro tratta, violenza e discriminazioni* [www.befreecooperativa.org](http://www.befreecooperativa.org)

5. **Paola Degani** *Individual Member*
6. **Dr. Cristina Gamberi** *Individual Member*
7. **Silvia Menecali** *Individual Member*

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#### KOSOVO

1. **Women's Wellness Centre (WWC)**  
*Qendra për Mirëqenien e Gruas (QMG)*  
[www.qmg-ks.org](http://www.qmg-ks.org)
2. **Kosovar Gender Studies Center**  
*Qendra Kosovare për Studime Gjimore* [www.kgscenter.net](http://www.kgscenter.net)
3. **Kosovo Women's Network**  
*Rrjeti i Grave të Kosovës* [www.womensnetwork.org](http://www.womensnetwork.org)

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#### LATVIA

1. **Crisis and Counselling Centre "Skalbes"**  
*Križu un Konsultāciju Centrs "Skalbes"*  
[www.skalbes.lv](http://www.skalbes.lv)
2. **Women's NGOs Cooperation Network of Latvia**  
*Latvijas Sieviešu nevalstisko organizāciju sadarbības tīkls*  
[www.sadarbibastikls.lv](http://www.sadarbibastikls.lv)
3. **Association "MARTA Centre"**  
*Biedrība "Centrs MARTA"* [marta.lv/lv/](http://marta.lv/lv/)

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#### LIECHTENSTEIN

1. **Women's Shelter Liechtenstein**  
*Frauenhaus Liechtenstein* [www.frauenhaus.li](http://www.frauenhaus.li)

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#### LITHUANIA

1. **Vilnius Women's House**  
*Vilniaus Moterų Namai* [www.vmotnam.lt](http://www.vmotnam.lt)

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#### LUXEMBOURG

1. **Women in Distress**  
*Femmes en Détresse A.S.B.L* [www.fed.lu](http://www.fed.lu)

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#### MALTA

1. **Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence**  
[www.domesticviolence.gov.mt](http://www.domesticviolence.gov.mt)
2. **Network Forum Malta**
3. **Migrant Women Association Malta**  
[www.migrantwomenmalta.org](http://www.migrantwomenmalta.org)
4. **Dr. Marceline Naudi** *Individual Member*

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#### MOLDOVA

1. **Association against Violence "Casa Mărioarei"**  
*Asociația împotriva Violenței în Familie „Casa Mărioarei”*  
[www.antiviolența.md](http://www.antiviolența.md)
2. **Center for Support and Development of Civic Initiatives "Resonance"**  
*Центр развития и поддержки гражданских инициатив «РЕЗОНАНС»* [www.resonancengo.org](http://www.resonancengo.org)
3. **Women's Law Centre**  
*Centrul de Drept al Femeilor* [www.cdf.md](http://www.cdf.md)
4. **National Coalition "Life without Violence in the Family"**  
*Coaliția Națională "Viața fără Violență în Familie"* [www.stopviolenta.md](http://www.stopviolenta.md)

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#### MONTENEGRO

1. **SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Nikšić**  
*SOS Telefon za Žene i Djecu Žrtve Nasilja Nikšić*  
[www.sosnk.org/en/](http://www.sosnk.org/en/)

2. **Women's Safe House Sigurna Ženska Kuća** [szk.co.me](http://szk.co.me)

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#### NETHERLANDS

1. **Association "Valente"**  
*Vereniging "Valente"* [www.valente.nl](http://www.valente.nl)
2. **Femmes for Freedom**  
[www.femmesforfreedom.com](http://www.femmesforfreedom.com)

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#### NORTH MACEDONIA

1. **National Council for Gender Equality (NCGE)**  
*Национален совет за родова рамноправност (СОЖМ)*  
[www.sozm.org.mk](http://www.sozm.org.mk)
2. **National Network to end Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – Voice against Violence**  
*Националната мрежа против насилство врз жени и семејно насилство* [www.glasprotivnasilstvo.org.mk](http://www.glasprotivnasilstvo.org.mk)

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#### POLAND

1. **Autonomy Foundation**  
*Fundacja Autonomia* [www.autonomia.org.pl](http://www.autonomia.org.pl)
2. **Women's Rights Centre**  
*Centrum Praw Kobiet* [www.cpk.org.pl](http://www.cpk.org.pl)

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#### PORTUGAL

1. **AMCV – Association of Women against Violence**  
*Associação de Mulheres contra a Violência*  
[www.amcv.org.pt](http://www.amcv.org.pt)

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#### ROMANIA

1. **A.L.E.G. Association for liberty and equality of gender**  
*Asociația pentru libertate și egalitate de gen*  
[www.aleg-romania.eu](http://www.aleg-romania.eu) [www.sieureuseesc.ro](http://www.sieureuseesc.ro)
2. **Anais Association**  
*Asociația Anais* [www.asociația-anais.ro](http://www.asociația-anais.ro)
3. **Necuvinte Association** [www.necuvinte.ro](http://www.necuvinte.ro)
4. **Filia Center**  
*Centrul Filia* [www.centrulfilia.ro](http://www.centrulfilia.ro)
5. **Sensiblu Foundation**  
*Fundația Sensiblu* [fundatiasensiblu.ro](http://fundatiasensiblu.ro)

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#### RUSSIA

1. **ANNA – National Center for Prevention of Violence**  
*Центр "АННА"* [www.facebook.com/anna.center.ru/](http://www.facebook.com/anna.center.ru/)
2. **Crisis Center "Ekaterina"**  
*Кризисный центр "Екатерина"* [www.kc-ekaterina.ru](http://www.kc-ekaterina.ru)
3. **Nizhny Novgorod Women's Crisis Center**  
*Нижегородского Женского Кризисного Центра*  
[www.woman-nnov.ru](http://www.woman-nnov.ru)
4. **Interregional Non-Governmental Organization for the Support of Family, Motherhood, and Childhood "Doctors to Children"**  
*"Врачи детям"* [www.vd-spb.ru](http://www.vd-spb.ru)
5. **Crisis Center for Women – Institute of Non-Discriminative Gender Interrelations (INGI)**  
*Кризисный центр для женщин – Институт недискриминационных гендерных ирреляций*  
[www.crisiscenter.ru](http://www.crisiscenter.ru)
6. **We Believe You**  
*Тебе Поверят «Тебе поверят»* [verimtebe.ru](http://verimtebe.ru)
7. **Nasiliu.Net**  
*Центр по работе с проблемой насилия «НАСИЛИУ.НЕТ»* [nasiliu.net](http://nasiliu.net)

**SERBIA**

1. **Autonomous Women's Center (AWC)**  
*Autonomi Zenski Centar Beograd* [www.womengo.org.rs](http://www.womengo.org.rs)
2. **Association FenomenA**  
[www.fenomena.org](http://www.fenomena.org)
3. **Oasis of Safety**  
*Oaza Sigurnosti Kragujevac* [www.ozasigurnosti.rs](http://www.ozasigurnosti.rs)
4. **The Association of Women Sandglass**  
*Pescanik Udruzenje Zena* [www.udruzenjepescanik.org](http://www.udruzenjepescanik.org)
5. **Daje – Roma Center for Women and Children**  
*Romski Centar za Žene i Decu* [www.romadaje.org](http://www.romadaje.org)
6. **Human Rights Committee Vranje**  
*Odbor za Ljudska Prava Vranje* [www.hrcvr.org](http://www.hrcvr.org)
7. **IZ KRUGA – VOJVODINA, organization for the support of women with disabilities**  
*IZ KRUGA – VOJVODINA organizacija za podršku ženama s invaliditetom* [izkrugavojvodina.org](http://izkrugavojvodina.org)

**SLOVAKIA**

1. **Alliance of Women in Slovakia** *Aliancia Zien Slovenska* [www.alianciazien.sk](http://www.alianciazien.sk)
2. **Fenestra** [www.fenestra.sk](http://www.fenestra.sk)

**SLOVENIA**

1. **Association SOS Helpline for Women and Children – Victims of Violence**  
*Drustvo SOS* [www.drustvo-sos.si](http://www.drustvo-sos.si)
2. **Association for Nonviolent Communication**  
*Društva Za Nenasilno Komunikacijo* [drustvo-dnk.si](http://drustvo-dnk.si)

**SPAIN**

1. **Association Another time**  
*Asociación Otro Tiempo* [www.otrotiempo.org](http://www.otrotiempo.org)
2. **Aspacia Foundation**  
*Fundación para la Convivencia Aspacia* [www.fundacion-aspacia.org](http://www.fundacion-aspacia.org)
3. **HELIA – Women Association**  
*Associació de suport a les Dones que pateixen Violència de Gènere* [www.heliadones.org](http://www.heliadones.org)
4. **Federation of Women's Associations Arena and Laurisilva**  
*Federacion de Asociaciones de Mujeres Arena y Laurisilva* [www.arenaylaurisilva.org](http://www.arenaylaurisilva.org)
5. **Association of Feminist Psychology and Psychotherapy**  
*Asociación de Psicología y Psicoterapia Feminista* [www.psicofeminista.com](http://www.psicofeminista.com)
6. **For You Woman Association**  
*Asociación Por Ti Mujer* [asociacionportimujer.org](http://asociacionportimujer.org)

**SWEDEN**

1. **Roks – National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden**  
*Riksorganisationen för kvinnojourer och tjejjourer i Sverige* [www.roks.se](http://www.roks.se)
2. **Unizon** [www.unizon.se](http://www.unizon.se)
3. **Uppsala Women's Shelter**  
*Uppsala Kvinnojour* [www.uppsalakvinnojour.se](http://www.uppsalakvinnojour.se)
4. **Women's shelter Jamtland county**  
*Kvinnojouren Jämtlands län* [kvinnojour.nu](http://kvinnojour.nu)

**SWITZERLAND**

1. **Women's Solidarity Organization of Switzerland and Liechtenstein**  
*Dachorganisation der Frauenhäuser der Schweiz und Liechtenstein* [www.frauenhaus-schweiz.ch/de](http://www.frauenhaus-schweiz.ch/de)
2. **Violence Que Faire (Violence What to do?)**  
[www.violencequefaire.ch](http://www.violencequefaire.ch)
3. **Brava – Together against Violence Against Women**  
*Brava – Gemeinsam gegen Gewalt an Frauen* [www.brava-ngo.ch](http://www.brava-ngo.ch)

**TÜRKIYE**

1. **Foundation for Women's Solidarity**  
*Kadın Dayanışma Vakfı* [www.kadindayanismavakfi.org.tr](http://www.kadindayanismavakfi.org.tr)
2. **Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation**  
*Mor Çatı Kadın Sigınağı Vakfı* [www.en.morcati.org.tr](http://www.en.morcati.org.tr)
3. **Mor Salkım Women's Association**  
*Mor Salkım Kadın Dayanışma Derneği* [www.morsalkim.org.tr](http://www.morsalkim.org.tr)
4. **Kadiye Bakırcı** *Individual Member*

**UKRAINE**

1. **Civil Society Organization "La Strada-Ukraine"**  
*Ла Страда-Україна* [la-strada.org.ua](http://la-strada.org.ua)
2. **Women's Information Consultative Center (WICC)**  
*Інформаційно-консультативного жіночого центру (ІКЖЦ)* [wicc.net.ua](http://wicc.net.ua)
3. **Women's Perspectives Center**  
*Центр Жіночі Перспективи* [www.women.lviv.ua](http://www.women.lviv.ua)

**UNITED KINGDOM**

1. **Imkaan** [www.imkaan.org.uk](http://www.imkaan.org.uk)
2. **Latin American Women's Aid (LAWA)**  
[www.lawadv.org.uk](http://www.lawadv.org.uk)
3. **London Black Women's Project**  
[www.lbwp.co.uk](http://www.lbwp.co.uk)
4. **Refuge** [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)
5. **Scottish Women's Aid**  
[www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk](http://www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk)
6. **Welsh Women's Aid**  
[www.welshwomensaid.org.uk](http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk)
7. **Women's Aid Federation of England**  
[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)
8. **Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland**  
[www.womensaidni.org](http://www.womensaidni.org)
9. **Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRSS)**  
[www.lawrs.org.uk](http://www.lawrs.org.uk)
10. **Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (STADV)**  
[www.standingtogether.org.uk](http://www.standingtogether.org.uk)
11. **Rape Crisis Scotland**  
[www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk)
12. **Against Violence and Abuse – AVA**  
[avaproject.org.uk](http://avaproject.org.uk)
13. **Women's Support Project**  
[www.womenssupportproject.org.uk](http://www.womenssupportproject.org.uk)
14. **Greta Squire** *Individual Member*
15. **Shazia Choudhry** *Individual Member*
16. **Beverley Gilbert** *Individual Member*
17. **Lily Greenan** *Individual Member*



WOMEN  
AGAINST  
VIOLENCE  
EUROPE