

Are you ready to *Step up!* your game to support women's right to live a life free from violence!



In 2016 and 2017, the WAVE Network in 46 European countries is stepping up to demand better protection and support for women victims of violence, and greater access to quality women specialized support services!

The WAVE *Step up!* Campaign will be conducted over 2016-2017 in Europe (access the *Step up!* [Blueprint](#)), with the aim to sensitize decision-makers, on the

national and European levels, to the importance of availability and access to support services that are tailored to meet women's needs. WAVE is calling on key decision-makers to actively support prevention and protection for women survivors of VAW, increase the availability of quality specialized services in Europe, and commit to improving access to life-saving services for all women indiscriminately!

**The *Step up!* Campaign will be launched in Europe on 25<sup>th</sup> May!** – so keep yourself posted for the exciting launch activities carried out on and around that day.

Building partnerships for change is crucial, and the WAVE Network needs each and every one of you! Join in the *Step up!* Campaign and help us making it a success! Contact the WAVE Office – [office@wave-network.org](mailto:office@wave-network.org) – to find out more about supporting and partnering in the campaign. *Be part of change, step up for women's rights!*

**An exciting and productive meeting for the WAVE Advisory Board (WAVE CoCo) in Vienna on 18-20 April 2016!**



On 18-20 April 2016, the WAVE office in Vienna was happy to welcome European delegates and co-delegates from 30 countries of the network, for its annual spring Advisory Board Meeting (WAVE CoCo)! The group worked in plenary sessions, as well as in working group sessions, on a variety of topics: news, successes and challenges from across Europe, data collection by women's support services and common definitions for working within the network, presentation of 2015 WAVE publications (including the [WAVE Mapping](#) and WAVE Report 2015), network building and future strategic planning for the WAVE Network.

The second day of the meeting was dedicated to working on the *WAVE Step up!* Campaign, discussing specific campaign activities and planning the coming launch of the campaign in Europe and nationally – the Advisory Board Meeting members were joined on that day by close to 20 additional campaigners from across Europe! **WAVE would like to thank all its wonderful members for attending the meeting in April, for their truly inspiring work and the incredible energy they provide to the network!** Looking forward to spring 2017!

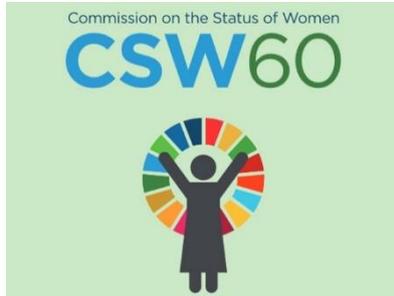
**In Cyprus, the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) organises a capacity-building workshop to promote women's participation in public and political life**

On 22-24 April 2016, WAVE member in Cyprus [MIGS \(Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies\)](#) in collaboration with the [National Democratic Institute \(NDI\)](#) held a [training workshop](#) targeted at women's organizations and NGOs active in the promotion of women's participation in public and political life across Cyprus.

Organised in frame of the project "[TIME TO ACT: Mobilizing and Building Capacity for Gender Parity in Decision-Making](#)", the workshop aimed among others to '*increased understanding of the importance of women in politics and decision-making for achieving gender equality*', '*increased understanding of the link between women's political leadership and positive changes to communities and countries*' and '*build consensus on lessons learned from efforts to increase women's political participation in the past-what worked/what kept it from succeeding/what should be done differently in an effort to identify strategies for the future*'. The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Equality has voiced its concern at the recent backlash on women's political participation -

both as candidates and elected representatives - which has led to the “absence of women in key decision-making bodies”; it has further emphasized the need for greater inclusion of the gender perspective in the political areas. To find out more about the 22-24 April capacity-building workshop, visit [MIGS’s website](#).

### The WAVE Network at the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60)



On 14-24 March 2016, a delegation of 14 WAVE Members from eight European countries took part in the [60<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW60\)](#), in New York, with the priority theme of ‘Women’s Empowerment and its link to Sustainable development’. This year’s review theme was ‘The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls’, and the Commission reviewed the implementation of the 2013 [CSW57 Agreed Conclusions](#) by member states.

WAVE welcomes the [CSW60 Agreed Conclusions](#), which emphasized the need for thorough implementation of laws criminalizing violence against women. Review of the implementation of the CSW57 Agreed Conclusions indicated that these have considerably contributed to the Sustainable Development [Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls](#) for 2030. The crucial role of women’s organizations in promoting women’s and girls’ interests and needs in local, national and international sustainable development agendas was further highlighted. Invited to present a [statement](#) at the [High-level interactive dialogue among Ministers: Building alliances for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) on 16 March, WAVE President Rosa Logar urged all Member States to consistently increase support to the seriously underfunded sector of protection and support to survivors.

### In Slovenia, Association SOS Help-line holds the conference “How to correctly report on domestic violence and violence against women” on 8 March 2016

On 8 March 2016, WAVE member in Slovenia [Association SOS Help-line for women and children – victims of violence](#) held the Educational Conference for Professional Public and Media on “How to correctly report on domestic violence and violence against women”.

Attended by over 70 participants (professionals from the media, police, ministries, municipalities and NGOs), the conference was opened by the Association’s President Maja Plaz, Charge d’Affaires of the US Embassy David Burger, and Ombudswoman Vlasta Nussdorfer. Representing the US-based organisation **Rhode Island Coalition Against Violence, Warwick (RICADV)**, Lucy Rios and Deborah DeBare particularly emphasized the importance of relationship-building and advocacy within media. For 20 years, RICADV has worked with the media on reporting on domestic violence; last year the organisation launched the online guide “[Telling the Full Story: An Online Guide for Journalists Covering Domestic Violence](#)”, sharing lessons learned through its own work, conversations with journalists and recommendations from survivors, as well as from a three-year media study conducted by the Boston College Media Research Action Project.

The conference aimed to start a conversation on ‘how media is influencing public view on domestic violence and violence against women’, connected to the **Istanbul Convention Article 17 - ‘Participation of the private sector and the media’**. Association SOS Help-line is currently preparing an online handbook for media and professional workers, with the help of the Slovene Association of Journalists and other professional workers from different spheres.

### The “Superheroines against Violence” of Bff- Frauen Gegen Gewalt!



*Do you sometimes wish that a superheroine existed? Who would prevent violence against women?* A few months ago (in November 2015), the [Federal Association of Rape Crisis Centers and Women’s Counselling Center - Bff](#) (Bff – Frauen Gegen Gewalt e.V.) launched the campaign “**Superheroines against Violence**” in Germany. The campaign aims to raise awareness of existing support structures for women and girls victims of all forms of violence, from domestic abuse and rape, to sexual assault, street harassment and bullying (including online). Coming to the rescue of women and girls, our Superheroines from

the women's counselling centers and helplines are here to listen to women, and support them in finding their own way out of violence. What superheroines against violence do? Bff – Frauen Gegen Gewalt e.V. explains it very nicely in this short video, available in [English](#), [German](#), [Turkish](#), [Arabic](#) and in [Sign Language](#).

The umbrella organization Bff – Frauen Gegen Gewalt e.V. covers more than 170 rape crisis centers and women's counselling centers in Germany. **Visit the Superheroines campaign [website](#) now!**

### Save the Date – 18th WAVE Conference in Berlin, Germany, 19-21 October 2016



The date is out! **The next annual WAVE Conference will be taking place in Berlin, Germany, on 19-21 October 2016.** Stay put for more information on registration and programme of the event in the coming months! If, like us, you cannot wait for the event and want to find out more about participating and/or supporting the event, contact the WAVE Office at [office@wave-network.org](mailto:office@wave-network.org).

The event will be organized by the WAVE Office in cooperation with WAVE Network members in Germany, including [BIG e.V. – Berliner Interventionsprojekt gegen Häusliche Gewalt](#); [Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V.](#), [Bff – Frauen Gegen Gewalt e.V.](#); and [ZIF – Zentrale Informationsstelle der Autonomen Frauenhäuser der BRD](#). Each year, the annual WAVE Conference provides a unique platform for women's organisations – and importantly, our wonderful WAVE member organisations in Europe –, experts and academics, decision-makers and other professionals working in the field to discuss and exchange on good practices and strategies for fostering the right of women survivors of violence to live a violence-free and empowered life! In 2015, the WAVE Network gathered in The Hague, Netherlands, for its [17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference](#).

**You know what you have to do – Mark your calendar and see you this autumn!**

### International News

#### Comments for Sweden by the CEDAW Committee – towards a gender perspective in arms export regulations

The [63<sup>rd</sup> session of the CEDAW Committee](#) took place on 15 February-4 March 2016; the Czech Republic, Iceland and Sweden comprised the European countries under review. Following the session, and the publication of formulated comments to state parties, **WAVE wishes welcome the CEDAW Concluding Comments for Sweden, in which the Committee takes a step forward in the recognition of extraterritorial obligations of State parties with regards Human Rights law.** For the first time, the CEDAW Committee reminds member states of their obligation to protect and promote Human Rights beyond their national borders. On arms exportation, [the Committee emphasizes the need to “ensure that the new legislation to regulate export of arms includes a strong and robust gender-specific perspective.”](#) In its [2016 Shadow Report](#) to the CEDAW, the [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#) International together with WILPF Sweden had brought concerns about physical and sexual violence against women and girls in situations of armed conflict to the attention of the Committee.

#### Belgium ratifies and Bulgaria signs the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women, and Domestic Violence!

On 14 March 2016, the [Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women, and Domestic Violence](#) (Istanbul Convention) was ratified by Belgium. Active for many years in the fight against gender-based violence, Belgium recently started implementing its *Fifth National Action Plan against Gender-Based Violence 2015-2019*. *“Our country considers the Istanbul Convention as the most advanced tool against gender-based violence and therefore decided to use it as reference for developing a national action plan”* – stated Secretary of State for Equal Opportunities Elke Sleurs. *“Following the Istanbul Convention, our goal is to regularly analyze the effectiveness of resources deployed at the judicial level. Therefore we will assess, and if necessary adapt some of our legislative tools and regulations, for example on temporary prohibition of residence in cases of domestic violence”* – Minister of Justice Koen Geens says. On 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016, [Bulgaria became the 40th member state to have signed the Istanbul Convention](#) – 21 States have so far signed and ratified the Convention.

The Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) adopts its questionnaire!

On the occasion of its Fifth Meeting in Paris, 9-11 March 2016, GREVIO adopted its questionnaire to monitor the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) by the State Parties. The document includes detailed questions on the different aspects contained in [Chapters II - VII of the text of the Convention](#). The questionnaire will set to “establish a baseline evaluation of how the Convention is implemented in all state parties”. The document provides guidance on reporting by state parties to the Convention; **non-governmental and civil society organizations working in the field of combating violence against women are encouraged to submit information on the implementation of the Convention on the basis of this questionnaire**. Austria and Monaco will be the first countries to be monitored by the GREVIO at the end of 2016 – find out more about the [steps in the first evaluation procedure](#), and the [provisional timetable for reporting by Parties to the Convention](#).

## New Research & Publications

“Effective Multi-agency Co-operation for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence. Training of Trainers Manual” - published by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with WAVE experts



Developed by Rosa Logar and PhDr. Branislava Marvánová Vargová from the WAVE Network, the publication aims to provide trainers with **the opportunity to investigate some advantages and key principles of the multi-agency approach** for the support of victims of domestic violence and violence against women. The manual may also be used by professionals to improve their theoretical background and expertise in preventing and combating violence and supporting victims, as well as access best

practice models in the field. ‘Firmly grounded on the standards of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) and on good practice in implementing these standards’, the publication represents a valuable education tool in different areas of multi-agency work, such as ensuring a victims’ and human rights-based approach, safety and protection of victims, prevention of discriminatory practices, management of high-risk situations, multi-disciplinary work on victims’ empowerment, and victim-oriented work with perpetrators. The 96-page manual is available on the [Council of Europe website](#).

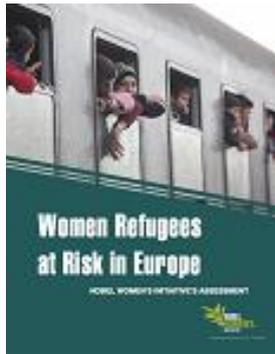
“Violence against children with disabilities: legislation, policies and programs in the EU” – published by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)



At the end of 2015, The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published the report “Violence against children with disabilities: legislation, policies and programmes in the EU”.

The aim of the report is to address “*the important but underreported issues of violence against children with disabilities, carrying out desk and conducting interviews with knowledgeable stakeholders*”. Based on desk research on legal and policy provisions addressing violence against children with disabilities, as well as national measures to prevent and protect against this violence, covering the 28 EU Member States, the report highlights several key findings and recommendations. In the area of prevention of violence in particular, the report stresses out the need for a holistic approach that is inclusive of the needs of all children. The need for increased accessibility of children’s helplines and the “*regular and coordinated cooperation among the different actors involved in national child protection systems [...] when developing measures to address violence*” is also addressed. The 124-page report is available from the [FRA website](#).

The Nobel Women’s Initiative publishes the report “Women Refugees at Risk in Europe”, highlighting the incidence of violence against refugee women on their journey to Europe



In March 2016, The [Nobel Women's Initiative](#) launched the report **"Women Refugees at Risk in Europe – Nobel Women's Initiative's Assessment"**. Based on the findings of a 2015 delegation of Nobel Peace Prize laureates and human rights experts to Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Germany, led by the Nobel Women's Initiative and the [International Campaign to Stop Rape & Gender Violence in Conflict](#), the report aims to *"assess the impact of war in Syria and the refugee crisis on women and children and to highlight women's contributions in forging solutions to the crisis, particularly in addressing the root causes"*. It provides an essential review of the 'Root causes of the refugee crisis: The war in Syria' and its 'Impact of the Refugee Crisis on Women', before looking at how to 'Ensure safe passage of refugee women through Europe' and looking forward with 'Ending the war in Syria: the solution to the refugee crisis'.

Despite the high incidence of violence against refugee women along "the dangerous trek across Europe", and sexual violence in particular, *"there is currently 100% impunity for gender-based crimes committed against refugee women"*. The 20-page report is available from the [Nobel Women's Initiative website](#).