



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE

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PRESS RELEASE:

Silber-Award for the Court Assistance for Victims of Violence in Austria

The European Network WAVE nominates the legal provision court assistance for the Future Policy Award 2014 as an innovative and exemplary measure – with success!

Geneva/Vienna: 15.10.2014. On the 14 October 2014, the Austrian measure of court assistance (“Prozessbegleitung”) has been awarded the Silver-Award in Geneva. In the year 2014, the “Oscar for Good Legislation” honored political solutions to end Violence against Women and Children. The court assistance was recognized as an exemplary measure of support for victims of violence in both criminal- and civil proceedings.

Since 2006, victims of violence have a legal right to free psychosocial and legal assistance in criminal court proceedings; since 2009, victims of violence have also been extended the right to free psychosocial assistance in civil proceedings. The number of victims making use of this support measure is constantly increasing and has reached approximately 6,900 persons in the year 2013.

Upon the invitation to nominate innovative and exemplary measures for the Future Policy Award, the European Network WAVE – Women against Violence Europe, an association with its seat in Vienna, nominated the institution of court assistance in Austria.

“We have nominated the Court Assistance for the Award, because it is an important legal measure, that empowers victims and that contributes to end violence against women and girls. Specifically the law provides for the professional support for women who are affected by gender-based violence and sexual violence, in criminal and civil proceedings. The free of charge court assistance is an exemplary measure that encourages women to fight for their rights at the courts. Therefore, it would be important that the court assistance not be subjected to budgetary restrictions; also, it would be important that in the future, free legal court assistance would also be available for victims of violence in civil court proceedings”, stresses Maria Rösslhuber, Manager of WAVE and of the Association Autonomous Women’s shelters in Austria (AÖF).

The World Future Council with its seat in Hamburg awards the Future Policy Award every year since 2009, and this year it is awarded in cooperation with UN-Women and the Interparliamentarian Union (IPU).

“The Future Policy Award honors law as that makes it easier for us to do the right things. We need laws for a fair world, where the rights of future generations are protected”, underlines Jakob von Uexküll, founder of the World Future Council and of the Alternative Nobel price.

Rosa Logar, the president, and one of the founders of WAVE, was present at the award ceremony on the 14th of October. Rosa Logar is also the manager of the Domestic Violence Intervention Center in Vienna, which implements court assistance by order of the Federal Ministry of Justice.

An overview over all institutions providing court assistance in Austria can be found on the website of the Federal Ministry of Justice (in German) under www.justiz.gv.at.
(<http://www.justiz.gv.at/web2013/html/default/2c94848535a081cf0135a4a0496e002d.de.html>)

The website of the Federal ministry of Justice also provides for information folders in many languages, including in English:
http://www.justiz.gv.at/web2013/file/2c948485371225d601397bee5b620df3.de.0/folder_prozessbegleitung_englisch_endfassung.pdf

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