



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE

# COUNTRY REPORT 2013

REALITY CHECK ON EUROPEAN SERVICES  
FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

A Right for Protection and Support?



# IMPRINT

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## WAVE (WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE)

Women against Violence Europe (WAVE) is a network of European women's NGOs and other organizations working in the field of combating violence against women and children. Since beginning of 2014, there are 104 women's NGOs and other organizations working to combat violence against women serving as Focal Points of the WAVE Network. They are located in 46 European countries. WAVE's central task is to raise awareness of violence against women and domestic violence, promote the work of women's NGOs and empower their work wherever possible.

The main activities of WAVE are:

- **Advocacy:** Influencing policy makers to promote, protect and strengthen the human rights of women and children in Europe.
- **Capacity Building:** Developing the capacity of the Network and involve the Focal Points of WAVE in all of WAVE's activities, including the Annual Conference as well as research projects and trainings, among other activities.
- **Exchange of Information:** Share the most recent and up-to-date information on relevant activities taking place in Europe, on local, national and European level with organizations in the WAVE Network. This includes the development of the Annual WAVE Country Report, where Focal Points provide their local expertise to assemble an overview of the situation for 46 European countries. Additionally, WAVE issues a monthly newsletter and press releases.
- **Research:** WAVE has conducted and continues to conduct research in the area of mapping of women's services, protecting high risk victims, data collection as well as research on the effects of violence on women, including the risk of falling into poverty, and the role of the healthcare sector in combating violence against women. In addition, WAVE joins other organizations and provides expertise for various projects.
- **Networking:** WAVE provides a platform for relevant stakeholders from all areas in the field of combating violence against women, including government officials, NGO experts as well as academic experts to exchange ideas and form alliances.

WAVE supports the aims of the United Nation, stressing the importance of working together towards ending all forms of violence against women and children in public and private life in accordance with the Vienna Declaration, the Declaration on Violence against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action.



## INTRODUCTION

Violence against women continues to be a major problem throughout Europe. As a significant percentage of women experience violence, there is still a shortage of available women's services, as well as lack of awareness among women survivors of violence of services and other support options available to them.

On 5 March 2014, the **European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)** launched the results of the first European Union-wide survey on violence against women.<sup>1</sup> The survey is based on **42,000 face-to-face interviews** conducted with women (aged 18-74) by trained female interviewers, between April and September 2012, in 28 EU member states. About **1,500 interviews** (random samples) were conducted per country. The survey focused on women's personal experiences of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence (partner violence), sexual harassment and stalking. The survey focused on women's experience since the **age of 15 and in the last 12 months, but it also included questions on experience of violence before the age of 15.**<sup>2</sup>

Key findings show that **one in three women** has experienced some form of physical and/or sexual assault since the age of 15. This amounts to **62 million women** in Europe. One in 10 women has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 15, and one in 20 women has been raped since the age of 15.<sup>3</sup> The survey pointed to a higher vulnerability of young women to be victimized.

The survey also uncovered a significant percentage of intimate partner violence: 22% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner, and 43% have experienced some form of psychological violence by a current or former partner.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 5% of women have experienced economic violence in their current relationship, and 13% of women have experienced some form of economic violence in past relationships.<sup>5</sup>

The findings show a disparity among the 28 EU member states; these differences between the member states must be interpreted in the context of the respective contexts: for instance, different levels of gender equality, or of cultural acceptability to talk about experiences of violence may be some of the factors explaining the differences, and that need to be explored further.<sup>6</sup>

The survey also measured women's experience with reaching out for help to support organizations: The survey showed that on the EU level:

- Only 6% of women contacted a women's shelter, only 4% contacted a victim support organization, but on the other hand, one-third of women contacted a doctor, a health center or a hospital.<sup>7</sup>
- 36% of women are not aware of specific laws or political initiatives for preventing domestic violence against women and 28% of women are not aware of laws or initiatives for protecting women in cases of domestic violence.<sup>8</sup>
- On average, almost one in five women in the EU (19%) is not aware of any of the support services for survivors of violence against women that were listed in the questionnaire.<sup>9</sup>
- Reporting rates to the police and other services are low: 67% of women did not report the most serious incident of partner violence to the police or another organization.<sup>10</sup>

On the basis of this survey, FRA expresses a series of opinions and recommendations.<sup>11</sup> They include, for example, the need to:

- enhance resources for specialist victim support services and awareness of violence against women,
- to focus on the role of the health care system in the identification and prevention of cases of violence against women,
- improve and harmonize data collection on violence against women in and between EU Member States, to address EU wide violence.
- counteract responses to women's victimization that reinforces negative culture of victim blaming.

Victim support is an important area of intervention in violence against women. In the area of work on service provision for women survivors of violence, in 2012, the report on the implementation of Area D Beijing Platform for Action<sup>12</sup> was prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality for the Cyprus Presidency, based on a research carried out by WAVE in cooperation with WAVE Focal Points in the 28 EU countries. On the basis of this report, the Cyprus Presidency

prepared Conclusions on “Combating violence against women, and the provision of support services for victims of domestic violence”, which were adopted on 6 December 2012 by the Employment and Social Policy Council (EPSCO).

In addition to providing an overview of the situation of women survivors of intimate partner violence, based on prevalence studies, criminal statistics and measures implemented aimed at combating violence against women, the report provides “an in-depth overview of the range and quality of services to which women victims of violence have access: emergency services, 24-hour helplines, legal advice and other services.”<sup>13</sup> Following publication of the report, Virginija Langbakk, European Institute for Gender Equality director stated that the “current support services do not meet the needs of women victims of violence. The specialized services are insufficient and unequally distributed in certain countries and the funding for them is inconsistent. To combat domestic violence effectively, we need to fight attitudes of complacency and acceptance of this phenomenon and encourage the establishment of proper support systems which can ensure the victims of violence and their children dignified lives.”<sup>14</sup>

So far comparative initiatives in the area of research measuring prevalence of violence against women, experience with reaching out to support organizations, and overview of availability of women’s services have been mostly conducted on the level of the European Union (28 Member States).

Council of Europe level initiative to gather information on available women’s services (national women’s helplines, women’s shelters and support services concerned with sexual violence) has been implemented in the framework of the Monitoring of the Implementation of Recommendation Rec(2002)5 on the Protection of Women against Violence in Council of Europe member states, with a regularly published report (most recently in 2014 – fourth round of monitoring), titled Protecting Women against Violence: Analytical Study on the Effective Implementation of Recommendation Rec(2002)5 on the Protection of Women against Violence in the Council of Europe Member States.<sup>15</sup> (For additional information on the report findings in comparison to the findings of the WAVE Country Report 2013, see section titled Services for Women Survivors of Violence). Furthermore, on the Council of Europe level, efforts continue to raise awareness among stakeholders of the need to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women. The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 outlines the following five objectives as areas of action:

1. Combating gender stereotypes and sexism.
2. Preventing and combating violence against women.
3. Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice.
4. Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making.
5. Achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.

The point of ‘preventing and combating violence against women’ focuses on promotion of the ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women. More specifically, the Council of Europe aims to:

- Support Member States to sign and ratify the Convention through provision of technical and legal expertise.
- Enhance implementation of the Convention by involving all relevant bodies and entities of the Council of Europe.
- Collect and disseminate information on legal and other measures taken at national level to prevent and combat violence against women, providing visibility to good practices.
- Promote the Convention beyond the European continent.<sup>16</sup>

## EXPERIENCES OF SURVIVORS

### OBJECTIVE OF THE WAVE COUNTRY REPORT 2013

It was the decision of the WAVE Network during the May 2013 Coordination Committee (CoCo) Meeting in Vienna to include case studies (termed ‘survivor stories’) in addition to collecting data on the availability of services for women survivors of violence across Europe in the WAVE Country Report 2013. Keeping in mind that case studies would represent only a single journey of an individual woman (and her children) and not be representative for a country as a whole, the goal was to make experiences of women and their children escaping violence in Europe visible and to relate it to information on available service provision in each country.

Women's services play an important role in serving women survivors of violence, advocating for survivors, lobbying governments and historically playing a central role in social change related to combating violence against women. They listen to the experiences of survivors every day and these experiences should be of central importance in designing support interventions for women survivors of violence.

In collecting information from women about their experiences, issues of ethical conduct were carefully considered (see next section on methodology). In total **29 survivor stories** were collected in **28 countries** (two in the United Kingdom). Summaries of the stories are published in the section on individual country information. The stories vary in that some were collected specifically for this research, while others are stories that have been made available from previous publications (Luxembourg, Ireland), have already been publically delivered by the women survivors (Bosnia and Herzegovina), or are case studies from existing work aimed at improving service provision/situation for women survivors of violence, as was the case in Portugal and Spain. In the case of Azerbaijan, the story was adapted to inform about the general situation facing women survivors of violence.

Overall, the stories are diverse and their formats differ, yet they all provide a window into the lives of women (and their children) affected by violence, their journey of reaching out for help and the challenges they faced in their search for protection, justice and a better future for themselves and their children. The majority of the stories told refer to domestic violence and show similar patterns of intimate partner violence<sup>17</sup> and its consequences on physical and mental health, yet the experiences of reaching out for help and receiving assistance differ widely, pointing to different levels of existing interventions in addressing violence against women throughout Europe. The outcomes for women are largely dependent upon the existing laws, implementation of the laws, comprehensive services available and sensitivity of professionals, and other measures available to women survivors of violence. As uniformity of actions/measures and in some cases political will are lacking, when it comes to combating violence against women throughout Europe, so do the outcomes for women survivors of violence across Europe.

## ► METHODOLOGY

WAVE Focal Points in all 46 countries were engaged in asking survivors to provide information on their experience and in 28 countries survivors stories could be collected and published. Issues of ethical conduct, fairness, respect, voluntary disclosure, safety, confidentiality, and permission to publish were carefully considered. A questionnaire to Focal Points to collect data for the case studies was developed and piloted in three countries to answer outstanding questions on and ensure feasibility of collecting and publishing such data in an ethical manner.

To ensure confidentiality, the names of women providing stories were not included, and in stories, where names are provided, these are not the actual names of the persons involved. Women providing information were participating voluntarily, they were informed about the purpose of the inquiry and were asked for permission to publish the edited story in the WAVE Country Report 2013. Out of respect for the women survivors, the focus of the stories remained on the women's journey to escape the violence, rather than the violent acts themselves as a way to raise awareness of the needs of the women and their children and the support available or lack thereof. Finally, safety for the women and their children was paramount with instructions provided to collect information only from the women, for whom the publishing of their stories would not imply a risk of further violence, despite measures taken to ensure anonymity.

The questionnaire for data collection served as structured guidance to interview survivors and contained questions on age, number and age of children, relationship to the abuser, forms of violence experienced (i.e. physical, sexual, psychological, economic) and duration, impact of the abuse, special difficulties women were facing such as dependency on the perpetrator, fear of losing a job, no assistance from the police or other institutions/organizations, other), questions on help seeking and experiences with support received, and the current situation as well as outlook for the future. The interviews were carried out by trained staff of women's support services and the case studies were provided to the WAVE office in English. Final edits were conducted by the authors of the report.

## ► SUMMARY

The information collected for survivor stories provided a view into the lives of women, who struggle or have struggled with escaping violence, reaching out for protection from violence as well as seeking justice for the violence they suffered,

and in some cases, also their children. Although the cases studies cannot be claimed to represent the situation in the entire country or throughout all of Europe and their qualitative nature limits the level of comparative analysis possible, some commonalities have been observed.

Despite many similarities in the stories, such as the most common violence described being intimate partner violence, which involves many different forms of violence at the same time: psychological, physical, sexual and economic, with many women beginning to experience first acts of violence by their partner in pregnancy, the level and type of support provided to women differ across the countries, most likely due to countries' different levels and types of service provision, different laws and varying levels of sensitization among professionals dealing with women survivors of violence and their children. Furthermore, women, depending on their status (residency, employment) may receive variable level of support even within the same country. The two stories in the United Kingdom serve as an example of this, where one woman experiencing violence received sufficient support based on a coordinated effort by different agencies and authorities involved, leading to a positive outcome in her case; whereas another woman, due to her lack of recourse to public funds (due to limited residency status) was unable to receive a similar level of support.

A common theme observed in the stories is women's inability to escape the violence, due to lack of financial independence or lack of external support from family members. There is a certain shame associated with experiencing violence and women are often afraid to come forward to disclose the violence, feeling not only responsible for keeping the family unit together, but also fearing that they will be blamed or that they will not be believed or taken seriously by those to whom they report/disclose the violence (see also FRA survey 2014<sup>18</sup>). Economic abuse is a very common part of intimate partner violence, where the perpetrator either unfairly controls the family resources or the consequences of violence prohibit the woman from continuing her employment. Despite all women survivors of violence looking towards establishing an independent future, inability to find employment makes this achievement difficult. Women, who reside in shelters, who are unable to find employment, find it difficult to leave the shelter, gaining financial independence and finding a new place to live. Together with court procedures related to child custody, visitations, divorce and/or property settlement, the women are often left with a lack of financial resources and face an insecure future.

In terms of service provision and response of authorities, much remains to be done in this area. Services are not only limited, but women are often unaware of the support they can receive, if it is available (see also FRA survey 2014<sup>19</sup>). Police, who are often the first to respond to violence, when lacking training and sensitization to intimate partner violence or other forms of violence, may not be able to properly respond and assist the woman. For example, they may not be aware of the perpetrator's tactics to minimize his role in the violence, may blame the woman, or simply may not provide the necessary information about available legal options for protection or available services. This also opens the woman to secondary victimization. Judges, who are unaware of the dynamics of intimate partner violence, may overlook the harm done to children, who directly experienced violence by the father, or who witnessed the violence against their mothers.

Enforcing joint custody and visitation rights might create dangerous situations for the woman and the children. As has been seen in some stories, women who reach out to government agencies such as social services are sometimes faced with the threat of being separated from the children, because of the violence in the home; such responses to the problem do not empower, but further disempower victims.

In some cases, when the violence becomes severe and includes attempted murder, the women find themselves in a situation of great desperation, being forced to leave their children with the perpetrator as the only way to save their own lives.

Women with dependent residency permits or undocumented migrant women face additional challenges as their status may not only prohibit them from accessing services such as shelters, but also limits their access to justice, when they reach out to authorities, who shift the focus from redressing the violation of human rights inflicted upon the woman, to her undocumented status instead.

Experiencing violence can have severe short-term and long-term consequences. In addition to physical injuries, women might experience lasting problems such as diminishing mental health and thoughts of suicide. Sexual violence was shown in one case to result in severe traumatization, leading to drug use. For all the reasons mentioned above, women's services run by independent women's organizations are vital as they are survivor centered, ensure confidentiality, focus on empowerment, provide aid to the children of the survivors, (among other standards and principles). The independence of NGOs from state institutions enables the women survivors of violence to approach them with trust, due to the lack of perceived power that is often associated with state institutions.

Women's services such as various women's centers, helplines or shelters provide an array of services and cooperation with authorities that represent the necessary provision of support in escaping violence, a situation that is often complex and requires a lengthy provision of support. Women's shelters, for example, do not simply provide accommodation, but often a sanctuary for women to escape violence, to gain knowledge about violence and how it manifests itself, to recognize violence and to learn how to resist it in the future, in addition to practical support such as legal advice, court accompaniment, support in the labour market, visits to state institutions (police, courts, social welfare offices). Children receive support in dealing with their own experiences of violence, and the mother-child relationship is strengthened as it may often become strained, when violence is used in the home by the father. Group work provides women survivors of violence with a safe place to share their experiences and to form relationships with other women in similar situations, enabling them to form support networks for the future.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, in majority of the stories, where women experienced intimate partner violence, the women experienced different forms together, since physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence are often interconnected. The perpetrators were most often husbands, boyfriends or partners, and the majority of women also had children. In few of the stories, the perpetrators were strangers or other family members, or the story involved violence suffered during war.

The consequences of violence included physical and psychological problems, lack of self-esteem, severe physical injuries, inability to trust others, financial instability, as well as physical, psychological and developmental effects on the children, difficulties in school and aggressive behavior. Often mentioned by the women was their lack of support and lack of financial independence that made leaving the abusive partner difficult. Where there was lack of family support, different reasons for this existed. For example, some women were socially isolated by their partners and eventually due to the violence, lost contact with their families; others lived in areas away from their family, however, also some families either chose not to interfere due to the perpetrator being dangerous, or felt that it was the woman's duty to keep the family together.

Some women reported a clear lack of support from state institutions that prohibited the woman from leaving the violent situation. For example, police interventions were not effective or were insensitive, or the court cases took too long or the sentence of the perpetrator was too lenient (ex. suspended sentences or reduction of sentence to a monetary fine). Several women however, said the police intervention had been effective, especially when the woman received information about her rights or information about available services. In a case in which the woman described a rape by strangers, the police and courts focused on the woman's undocumented status rather than on the human rights violation that she reported, causing authorities to focus on her 'behavior' rather than that of the perpetrators. The needed support received by the women from services varied and included accommodation, psychological support and counselling, group therapy, information about violence, connection or cooperation with authorities/other institutions/coordinated response, legal assistance, access to economic aid and educational benefits, advocacy, assistance with finding employment and housing, healthcare, follow-up visits and support related to children's needs.

Most of all, the stories show the severe and long-term effects of violence against women, how violence affects and disrupts the lives of women and children, and the overall cost to society that occurs not only, when resources are consumed to ensure protection and support for the women and children, but also the loss suffered by society, when women are unable, due to violence, to fully enjoy their rights and freedoms and to contribute their potential and intellect for example in employment, education or the upbringing of children. Violence affects the children as well, and without proper support and an end to the violence, the consequences may transfer to the next generation, and generations to come.

The stories give an insight into experiences of women and children suffering violence, they show the difficulties women face, not only by experiencing violence but also by the way society addresses violence against women, and the failure to address the needs and rights of victims in an adequate way. There are also positive examples showing that with appropriate support women and their children can embark on a path of life free from violence.

**WAVE would like to express a heartfelt thanks to all the woman and children who provided their stories for this report.**

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

### OBJECTIVE OF THE WAVE COUNTRY REPORT 2013

Sexual violence is still considered a taboo by many and is significantly underreported (see also the FRA survey 2014<sup>21</sup>). Furthermore, survivors of sexual violence need places to turn to in order to receive information, counselling and support,

among other immediate or long-term services. Unfortunately, sexual violence against women still does not receive adequate attention and there continues to be a significant lack of support for survivors; the majority of European countries have limited specialized service provision in the area of sexual violence or no provision at all.

In addition to data on available services for women survivors of sexual violence, the WAVE Country Report 2013 focused on available statistics on sexual violence, mainly from national prevalence studies, completed by information available in other sources. Despite the importance and comparative nature of the aforementioned Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) survey, its findings could not be utilized in the individual EU country profile pages as the data for the country pages was prepared prior to the release of the FRA survey findings on 5 March 2014.

## ► METHODOLOGY

To gather information on sexual violence against women in each country, the data was gathered mainly from national prevalence of violence surveys available in the different countries and other sources that included administrative data (i.e. police and/or court statistics). The main source for information about administrative data was the European Women's Lobby (EWL) Rape Barometer 2013<sup>22</sup>, which provided important information on data on rape as a form of sexual violence in the EU Member States. The former WAVE Country Report 2012 collected detailed information regarding availability, methodology and findings from existing national research on violence against women; hence data gathered and analysed in 2012, was built-upon in 2013 and focused on sexual violence against women, within and/or outside of intimate partner violence (depending on data availability). Most prevalence surveys included information on different forms of violence, including sexual violence (with variable definitions thereof), and in very few cases, information was available from dedicated prevalence of sexual violence surveys. Largely, studies looking at sexual violence specifically were conducted by independent organizations. Also, and in Ireland for example, the gathering of relevant disaggregated data on sexual violence is often conducted by women's NGOs.

As part of gathering of information on support services for women survivors of violence, the **WAVE Country Report 2013** also measures the availability of centers for women survivors of sexual violence. The information was gathered from WAVE Focal Points, available literature and the project 'Rape Crisis Center Europe.'<sup>23</sup> Information on available services was also checked against the 'Useful Contacts' country sections in the European Women's Lobby (EWL) 2013 Barometer on Rape in the EU. Based on recommendations of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women, there should **be either one rape crisis center or one sexual violence referral center per 200,000 inhabitants**. Women's centers for survivors of sexual violence included rape crises centers, sexual assault centers and other services for women survivors of sexual violence. Such centers may also belong in the category of women's centers.

The main objective to dedicate a section of the report to sexual violence was to elaborate on women's experience of sexual violence and to bring light to this form of violence, despite lacks in available data.

## ► SUMMARY

In the review of available data it was observed, that a great diversity of definitions of sexual violence was used, with only few surveys looking at sexual violence outside the private sphere, including sexual violence in the public space and sexual harassment. Methodology of surveys often included collection of information on experience of more severe forms of sexual violence, which therefore reduced the scope of these studies and hence the overall rates. Diversity in definitions of sexual violence makes comparison between countries not possible.

According to data collection and analysis of national prevalence surveys, the studies do not often disaggregate information by sex and age for both victim and perpetrator, and most of them are limited to sexual violence perpetrated by intimate partners, both former and current. While research shows that women most often experience sexual violence from someone they know, and often from a current or former partner, limiting information to only sexual violence by intimate partner does not give the full picture of the phenomenon of violence against women. Most of the time, rates of experience of sexual violence can be derived for lifetime experience of violence, rather than in the last 12 months, which fails to provide a realistic picture of the cycle of violence women are often trapped in, while at the same time when rates of violence for the last 12 months are provided, they are rather low, which may be due to the fact that women may not have been in a violent situation in the last 12 months, but may also point to women being less likely to disclose violence by current partner, especially

sexual violence. Lastly, in some surveys, it has been acknowledged that women are likely to not report sexual violence that happens to them, with often less than 10% of sexual assaults or rapes being reported to the police (see also the FRA survey 2014<sup>24</sup>).

According to the FRA survey, in two-thirds (66%) of cases of most serious incident of partner violence experienced, the respondents did not reach out to any service or organization, and in three quarters of cases (75%) of the most serious incidents involving non-partner violence. Moreover, women are more likely to contact a service following an incident of sexual violence than following physical violence: as a result of the most serious incident of sexual violence by a current or previous partner, 39% of women contacted a service; 30% of women did so following the most serious incident of sexual violence by a non-partner. Women were more likely to contact a healthcare service (hospital, doctor or other healthcare provider) first (15% of victims of physical non-partner violence and 21% of victims of sexual non-partner violence). In the case of partner violence, 19% of women victims of physical violence contacted health services, and 27% of women victims of sexual violence did so following the most serious incident. Victims of partner and non-partner violence are equally likely to report the most serious incident to the police. However, given that partner violence more often involves repeated incidents, reporting to the police may occur only after a series of violent incidents. On average, across all 28 EU Member States, besides victims reporting to the police themselves, a further 5% of victims of partner violence and 6% of victims of non-partner violence indicated that the police came to know about the incident in some other way; for example, when somebody else reported the incident to the police.<sup>25</sup>

There are several reasons why women do not report experience of sexual violence. First of all, there is still a real taboo associated with sexual violence, which is largely reinforced by a global rape culture, and the fear of secondary victimization when reporting to the police. Most violence is perpetrated by someone known to the victim and women often do not dare reporting sexual violence when the perpetrator is their current partner, which contributes to the phenomenon being underestimated. Marital rape is an important issue, as there is a remaining perception in many societies that sex is part of wife's obligations. While an increasing number of states have integrated it into their legislation, in practice, forced or non-consensual sexual intercourse and other acts of sexual nature occurring within marriage often fail to be identified as rape or sexual violence. A small survey conducted in a maternity hospital in Vilnius shows that 80% of women interviewed did not recognize rape as a form of violence that can happen in marriage. According to the Council of Europe Analytical Study of the Results on the fourth round of monitoring of the implementation of recommendation Rec(2002)5, almost no member state has instituted a specific offence of marital rape. All 46 reporting member states declared that all forms of intentional physical violence irrespective of the nature of the relationship are penalized, as is rape within the marriage on the same basis as rape outside marriage. In 44 states (except for Estonia and Ukraine) all forms of sexual assault against regular or occasional partners are criminalized. The same number of countries (except for Latvia and Ukraine) report all sexual acts against non-consenting persons are a criminal offence.<sup>26</sup>

Additionally to low reporting rates in administrative statistics, prevalence surveys may also fail to give an accurate impression of the dimension of the problem, as women surveyed are often reluctant to answer questions on their experience of sexual violence. Sometimes, the way questions are formulated may also impact the responses given. Furthermore, questions related to sexual violence are often limited or focus on most severe acts to limit the time spent on asking these questions, as women are often not comfortable discussing violent acts of sexual nature, especially when they occurred in current partnership or during childhood. For example, in Albania, 23% of the women surveyed in the prevalence study did not wish to give information on experience of sexual violence. The lack of disclosure of sexual violence was also supported in data collection in the survivor stories, where many women disclosed having experienced physical, psychological and economic violence, but not many disclosed having experienced sexual violence.

As related to available services providing support and assistance to women survivors of sexual violence, data for the purpose of monitoring countries' meeting of international obligations (more specifically the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations) is difficult to gather and compare. Unlike the commonly understood notion of what constitutes a national women's helpline or a women's shelter, centers for survivors of sexual violence (more specifically rape crisis centers or sexual assault/referral centers) are quite diverse and can be located within other institutions/structures or organizations. For instance, while there are five centers specialized for survivors of sexual violence among the SKR members in Sweden, in practice, most support services for women survivors of violence also address sexual violence. In Slovenia, certain women's NGOs specializing in assisting women also provide support for women sexual violence survivors. In the United

Kingdom, there are a variety of centers such as rape crisis centers or sexual assault referral centers (SARCS) existing that address sexual violence only, but are not always gender-specific.

Overall, the country report shows that there is a clear lack of support services for survivors of sexual violence. In total, WAVE was able to identify approximately **374 centers in 46 European countries**, where based on population numbers **(828,923,743), 3,214 centers are needed**. In several countries, there was no possibility to identify the total number of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence, while in others (Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine) no such specialized centers exist. A project 'Rape Crisis Network Europe'<sup>27</sup> sponsored by the Daphne Program has developed a database with information on available rape crisis centers throughout all of Europe, where data continues to be gathered and is not yet complete for all countries.

Sexual violence is largely considered an area that still lacks strong action and focus, which is largely due to the lack of available data on sexual violence. The WAVE Country Report 2013 therefore advocates for systematic, comprehensive and disaggregated data collection on sexual violence in the private and the public spheres. Without a comprehensive understanding of the scope of the violence (ex. rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment), it remains difficult to establish effective measures to prevent and combat this form of violence and provide appropriate support to women survivors of sexual violence. Recently, a report was published by the European Parliament on the 'Overview of the Worldwide Best Practices for Rape Prevention and for Assisting Women Victims of Rape' providing information on the definition of rape, links between rape and assisting victims of rape, as well as criteria for best practices, among others.<sup>28</sup>

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### OBJECTIVE OF THE WAVE COUNTRY REPORT 2013

#### Provide comparability of women's service provision and individual Country Profiles

The **WAVE Country Report 2013** provides information on women's support services (women's helplines, women's shelters and shelter place, women's centers including centers for women survivors of sexual violence) in 46 countries of Europe. Based on the methodology of data collection and analysis over the last years, a level of comparability among the 46 countries can be reached, however, as with any attempt at comparability, a certain level of caution must also be applied, due to the diversity among countries in service provision and sometimes difficulties encountered in deciding whether the service provision fully fits the definitions developed by WAVE experts.

In the cases of larger countries as well as where there is a lack of national networks of women's organizations and/or lack of resources for data collection, there is also a higher level of difficulty in providing reasonable estimates. The task of estimating or providing the exact number of women's helplines and women's shelters is somewhat easier as these services are more recognizable, although reliable data on them is still often missing, especially when it comes to national data on the users of women's support services. The WAVE Country Report is the only source providing information directly from women's support services in 46 European countries. It should serve to provide a reliable overview with a level of comparability.

A focus of the WAVE Report is given to individual countries in form of Country Profiles that should be most useful on national levels to inform relevant stakeholders of the availability of women's services in their countries with the hope of influencing and encouraging the stakeholders to implement improvements, where necessary, whether in data collection or in provision of women's services. Each country's level of service provision (national women's helplines and women's shelters only) is compared to relevant standards, mainly the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and the related recommendations set by the Council of Europe Taskforce to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence.<sup>29</sup> The recommendations include states' provision of specialized services, more specifically: one national women's helpline, operating 24/7, free of charge, addressing all forms of violence against women and providing multilingual support and one women's shelter place per 10,000 inhabitants.

States-level initiative to gather information on available women's services (national women's helplines, women's shelters and support services concerned with sexual violence) has been conducted regularly in the framework of the Monitoring of the Implementation of Recommendation Rec(2002)5 on the Protection of Women against Violence in Council of Europe member states and published in an Analytical Report.<sup>30</sup>

To some extent, the number of beds/shelter places available in the Council of Europe member states differs to the information provided in the WAVE report, however, data collection methods also differ. The analytical report of the Council of Europe utilises government level focal points to collect data, as well as other sources (including the EIGE 2012 report on

victim support and the WAVE Country Report 2012 to complement or fill missing data), the WAVE country report collects data mostly from NGOs, but also from secondary sources such as internet sites, national level monitoring reports and other service mapping studies (including the EIGE 2012 report on victim support). Furthermore, the Council of Europe report mentions that “numbers given by member states can differ in their frame of reference”, and may include multifunctional general accommodations or crisis centres serving different groups (although this is usually explained in comments). WAVE on the other hand attempts to gather data on availability of women’s shelter that accept only women and their children, and have women survivors of violence as the target group, therefore, shelters that also accept men or mother and child homes are not counted, when it is clear that data provided refers to shelters other than women’s shelters. The differences is clear in countries like Finland, where WAVE counted only 16 shelter places available in two women’s shelters, whereas the Council of Europe monitoring report shows 339 shelter places available. In addition to the two women’s shelters mentioned by WAVE, Finland offers a variety of other shelters like mother and child shelters, and also general shelters for all survivors (women and men) of domestic violence. Taking into account the definition of violence against women as a form of discrimination and the understanding of gender-based violence as disproportionately affecting women, WAVE excludes shelters that accommodate also men as these would not conform to practice protection from the perspective of gender and positive discrimination that is needed to address violence against women as a form of discrimination and an act of gender-based violence. Furthermore, knowing that in majority of countries throughout Europe, women’s shelters continue to turn away women survivors and their children due to lack of available space, by accepting men into shelters, the space for women to escape violence is further limited. A space taken by a man is a space taken away from a woman. Another clear difference between the current WAVE Country Report 2013 and the Council of Europe monitoring report is the number of shelter places in Spain. The number of 4,500 shelter places in Spain comes from 2011, whereas the most recent mapping conducted by a WAVE Focal Point in Spain in 2013 shows a significant decrease down to 3,329, likely a result of budget cuts. Despite differences in the two reports, the Council of Europe monitoring report states that “although data and calculations [in WAVE report] differ somewhat from those used [in the Council of Europe report], they are internally consistent and thus provide a clear picture of unequal provision across Europe,” showing especially that majority of shelters are to be found in older EU member states with the biggest gaps in non-EU countries. Generally, the Council of Europe monitoring report is also able to gather additional information as well as (through exchange of information with governments) gain a needed understanding about the level of importance governments attach to provision of safe accommodation for survivors of violence.

### ► **Bring awareness to the need of specialized women’s services in Europe**

Women’s services play a crucial role in helping women overcome all forms of violence, including the most common forms such as domestic violence and especially intimate partner violence. Violence against women and especially intimate partner violence entails a complex problem that requires the involvement of numerous actors and the enactment of broad range of actions. Specialized and independent women’s NGOs are best equipped to bring women out of violent situations, provide customized care to help them overcome obstacles and the consequences resulting from having experienced violence, and provide them with support in the future to ensure a path free of violence.

Because the work of women’s organization and their expertise in combating violence against women is invaluable, their work must be promoted and they must be given a voice to continue the women’s movement and influence positive outcomes. This is the main goal of the WAVE Network. For this reason, the Annual WAVE Country Report is always conducted in close collaboration with WAVE Focal Points, relying on their expertise to provide most up to date information and to assist them in raising awareness of developments in their countries.

According to recently published research that took place over a 40 year period, “the autonomous mobilization of feminists in domestic and transnational contexts – not leftist parties, women in government, or national wealth – is the critical factor accounting for policy change. [Furthermore, the analysis] reveals that the impact of global norms on domestic policy making is conditional on the presence of feminist movements in domestic contexts, pointing to the importance of on-going activism and a vibrant civil society.”<sup>31</sup> The hard work and motivation of the feminist movement contributed to significant change over recent decades in transforming the norms of service provision for survivors of violence and influenced governments to recognize violence against women as a human rights violation.

In the last decade, there has been recognition of states’ responsibility to protect the human rights of women and their children, to ensure their safety and protection from violence. This recognition comes not only from the women’s movements, but also from the Council of Europe, the European Union, and the United Nations. Services must be specialized in the sense that they conduct their work on the basis of their understanding of the gender-specific nature of violence against women and the human rights framework.<sup>32</sup>

### ► Focus on women's helplines, women's shelters and women's centers

The most vital services for women survivors of violence are women's national helplines, women's shelters (accommodation and support) and women's centers (non-residential support). They are one of the first places women can turn to receive immediate protection and advice.

The national women's helplines must operate 24/7, be free of charge, accessible on a national level and have professionally trained staff.<sup>33</sup> Free of charge women's helplines are important for various reasons, but most importantly so that the phone call is not recorded on a phone bill and hence the woman has the security in knowing that the perpetrator has no way of finding out that she contacted a women's helpline. Furthermore, a helpline counselling session, especially in complex situations may last up to or even longer than one hour. Women who are survivors of violence often do not have the finances to cover expensive telephone bills, as they also may be experiencing economic violence by their partners and hence have limited financial means. Helplines must be available around the clock as violence can happen at any time of the day, especially in later hours of the day or at night. Women who experience violence, who have an urgent need to escape, are in need of safe accommodation for themselves and their children. Women's shelters, for the same reason as helplines, must be free of charge, operate 24/7, for women only, have professionally trained staff and receive continuous financial support from the state in order to ensure sustainability. Furthermore, women's shelters need to have certain safety precautions such as outside cameras and secret locations, among others.<sup>34</sup>

Women's centers are crucial services as well, for various reasons: women's shelters do not exist in all regions and women's centers provide advocacy and counselling. Some women may not need accommodation at a women's shelter, but they need support and advocacy with access to justice, for example. The WAVE Country Report 2013 provides information about women's centers in the country section. The comparative part gives an overview on women's helplines and women's shelters only.

### ► Focus on financial situation of women's services

Although some countries' governments have taken the situation of violence against women and domestic violence against women with great seriousness and a show of responsibility, for which they should be commended, other countries' governments in Europe continue to overlook their human rights obligations to protect women from violence. Financial support from the state is an issue of provision of quality and sustainability. The staff working at women's services composes of highly qualified professionals, who work tirelessly to empower and protect women survivors of violence and their children. Their focus and majority of their time should be spent ensuring the well-being of survivors and provision of necessary and customized support for the survivors, instead most of the services receiving little or no support from their state governments must additionally spend time focusing on searching for funding and in some cases must discontinue their operations. This not only results in women survivors of violence and their children left with no place to turn for help or protection (often returning to the abusers), but also the loss of valuable expertise due to the inevitable staff turn-over that occurs. In today's economic environment, more specifically the economic downturn resulting from the economic crisis, governments explain their budget cuts to women's services as necessary due to lack of funds, yet funds continue to be available for bail outs of financial institutions, costly subsidies for businesses, decreases in tax rates and military expenditures. The countries, whose governments' continue to fund services for women survivors of violence and their children should be commended for their efforts and serve as positive examples encouraging other governments to join their ranks.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Article 22 (Specialist Support Services) of Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence obligates the parties to take necessary measures to "provide or arrange for [...] specialist support services to any victim subjected to any of the acts of violence covered by the scope of [the] Convention." Furthermore, it is stated that the parties to the Convention "shall provide or arrange for specialist women's support services to all women victims of violence and their children." The Explanatory Report to the Convention further clarifies the text of Article 22 as parties having to "set up or arrange for a well-resourced specialist support sector," noting that support for and empowerment of women survivors of violence is best ensured by women's organizations or local authorities that are specialized in the field and have knowledge of gender-based violence.

In general, from an overview of 46 countries studied for this report, most EU Member States provide some level of state funding to women's services, including national women's helplines and national women's shelters. For some countries, including Portugal, Poland, Spain, Norway and Austria, among others, funding for services for survivors of violence or domestic violence is stipulated in national law or provided through long-term contracts, although in some of these countries, this means provision of services is gender neutral. In many countries of the Caucasus and the Commonwealth of Independent States, funding for women's services is provisional, project based or the services are financially supported

by the United Nations or agencies of other international organizations, as well as through private donations and volunteer work. The support of these donors and volunteers should be commended as without them many women survivors of violence and their children would certainly face a future of violence. It should be noted however that funding in the form of short-term projects, foreign donations and volunteer work is not sustainable, causing the services to face the risk of closing down. States that provide no or low levels of financial support to women's services should attempt to reorganize their priorities and realize that empowering and protecting women survivors of violence is needed for a healthy society and to establish a positive future for the country.

## ► METHODOLOGY

As with previous WAVE Country Reports,<sup>35</sup> the WAVE Focal Points provided information for their countries as they are best equipped to know the situation on the local level. The main methods of collecting data involved providing Focal Points with a written questionnaire and definitions for women's services with the aim of determining the number of national women's helplines, women's shelters, women's centers and centers for women survivors of sexual violence. The goal of utilizing the knowledge of Focal Points is to receive most up-to-date information on the provision of services. Despite WAVE collecting annual data on women's services, service provision may change and the level of service provision may increase or decrease from one year to the next, hence it is important to update information, if necessary.

As can be seen, when comparing the WAVE Country Report 2013 with the 2012 report, data on the number of women's shelters as well as the number of shelter places available has slightly changed, as in some countries new women's shelters were opened, closed or simply because more accurate data became available in 2013. The goal of the WAVE Annual Country Report has always been to continue improving data collection in the field of services for women survivors of violence. Where information was not available from WAVE Focal Points, WAVE relied upon secondary data sources such as previous years report (WAVE Country Report 2012) and other sources, including websites.

Each country's level of provision of national women's helplines, women's shelters and available shelter places and the centers for women survivors of violence was compared to relevant minimum standards, mainly the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and the related recommendations set by the Council of Europe Taskforce to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence.<sup>36</sup> **The recommendations include states' provision of specialized services,<sup>37</sup> more specifically: one national women's helpline, operating 24/7, free of charge, addressing all forms of violence against women and providing multilingual support; one women's shelter space per 10,000 of inhabitants (for accommodation of a woman and her children); one women's rape crisis center or sexual violence referral centers per 200,000 inhabitants.<sup>38</sup>** Due to the scope of the research, for national women's helplines, the main criteria for meeting the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations was their existence, 24/7 accessibility and phone calls free of charge. Although information on multilingual support was also researched, and in most cases provided, it would be outside of the scope of this research to determine which languages are relevant in each country and to determine compliance with Recommendations based on these criteria. For women's shelters, the main criteria for meeting the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations included the number of women's shelter spaces available per 10,000 inhabitants. It should also be noted that the Explanatory Report of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence specifies that should the services meet the needs of the population, the **one shelter place per 10,000 inhabitants need** not be applied.<sup>39</sup> Population data from the UN Demographic Yearbook 2009<sup>40</sup> was utilized for each country, or if available, Focal Points provided population data from most recent country census.

The Council of Europe Convention represents a significant and positive shift in policy making on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, as the Convention sets Europe-wide obligatory standards for Council of Europe countries as means of ensuring protection of women survivors of violence and their children. Prior to drafting of the Convention, women's NGOs were active in promoting the development of such instrument. Furthermore, the drafting process involved the input of NGOs as well, including representatives of WAVE, who contributed as members of the Ad Hoc Committee on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CAHVIO). Since adoption of the Istanbul Convention, WAVE Network has been active in promoting the Convention.<sup>41</sup> The Convention is an instrument that provides a "detailed, comprehensive [...] framework for state measures to eliminate violence against women."<sup>42</sup> It covers areas of integrated policies and data collection; prevention; protection and support; substantive law; investigation, prosecution, procedural law and protective measures; migration and asylum; and international cooperation.<sup>43</sup> The Convention has been opened for signatures since May 2011 and as of 10 March 2014, 24 countries have signed the Convention and eight have ratified it. These include Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia and Turkey.<sup>44</sup> At the same time in 2013, only three countries have ratified the Convention. It will enter into force, once it has been ratified by 10 countries.

## ► Definitions of women's support services

The definitions of women's support services were developed by experts from the WAVE network in the years prior.<sup>45</sup> The definitions aim to capture the most significant characteristics of each service, while at the same time leave space for development, as the women's sector is not static and instead moves continuously not only to adopt to changing circumstances, but also to ensure improvement to better serve women survivors of violence.

### ▷ National women's helpline

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

### ▷ Women's shelter

A women's shelter is a specialized service for women which provides immediate and safe accommodation to women survivors of violence and their children where they can live without fear of being abused. Women's shelters need to offer special services and safety precautions.<sup>46</sup> The number of shelter places in women's shelters is mostly defined as number of shelter beds, although in some countries, where shelter spaces include a specific number or percentage of beds for women and children, only the beds allocated to women were counted.

### ▷ Women's center

The term women's center is used in the WAVE Country Report for all women's services that provide non-residential support of any kind (information, advice, counseling, practical support, court accompaniment, legal information, pro-active support, outreach, among others) to women survivors of any form of violence and their children. Women's NGOs used different terms for this kind of services in different countries, such as "women's crises centers" or "women's counseling centers." Since these terms, especially the term "counseling" might have different meanings in different countries and regions, it was decided to use the term "women's centers."

## ► WAVE STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE WORK OF WOMEN'S SUPPORT SERVICES

- Working from a gendered understanding of violence against women – Services need to demonstrate an approach which recognizes the gendered dynamics, impacts and consequences of violence against women within an equalities and human rights framework, including the need for women only services.
- Specialist women's support services – The support must be appropriate and tailored to the specific needs of service users. Special attention should be given to address the needs of specific groups of women, such as young women, older women, migrant women, asylum seeking and refugee women, women from minority ethnic groups, women with disabilities and others. The kind of support survivors need may differ according to the type of violence suffered and this makes it necessary to provide specialized services such as rape crisis centers, women's centers for survivors of sexual harassment in the workplace, young women's shelters and women's shelters for victims of forced marriage.
- Support for children – Children are always affected by the violence against their mother, especially in cases of domestic violence and they are often abused as well. Therefore all women's services should also have the resources to adequately support the children, according to their age and their needs.
- Safety, security and human dignity – Services need to ensure that all interventions prioritise the safety and security of survivors and respect their dignity.
- Confidentiality – Services need to respect and observe service users' right to confidentiality; service users should also have the right to be informed of situations where that confidentiality may be limited.
- Diversity and non-discrimination – All services need to respect the diversity of service users and apply a non-discriminatory approach.

- Fair access and free of charge - Support should be available free of charge, equitably distributed across regions and crisis provisions such as women's helplines and shelters should be available 24/7.
- Advocacy and support – Women's services need to provide both case and system advocacy to be able to promote the rights of and meet the needs of service users.
- Empowerment and autonomy – The main aim of all services should be to empower women survivors of violence and their children by, inter alia, making sure they know their rights and entitlements and can make decisions freely in a supportive environment that treats them with dignity, respect and sensitivity. Services should always aim at supporting survivors to regain control of their lives and to promote their right to autonomy and self-determination.
- Participation and consultation – Services need to promote service-user involvement in the development and evaluation of the service. Therefore, services should be organised in a democratic way and ensure the participation by the service users. Survivors should be regularly invited to participate in the evaluation of services and have the right to file a complaint to an independent body (for instance the ombudsperson) if they are not satisfied with the quality of the service.
- Holding perpetrators accountable – Services for survivors of violence need to apply the approach that there is no excuse for violence, that the perpetrator is always responsible for the abusive behaviour and that he has to be held accountable.
- Governance and accountability – Services need to be effectively managed, ensuring that service users receive a quality service from appropriately skilled and supporting staff.
- Coordinated response – Services need to operate within a context of relevant inter-agency cooperation, collaboration and coordinated service delivery. The protection and needs of women survivor of violence should always be at the centre of multi-agency work.
- State obligations and due diligence – That women's services should be run by independent women's NGO s does, of course, not mean that there is no obligation of the State to fund the services, on the contrary.



## ► SUMMARY - COMPARATIVE STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S HELPLINES AND WOMEN'S SHELTERS IN EUROPE

### ► NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES

TABLE 1: NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES IN 46 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Country	Women's Helpline	Calls free of charge	Operates 24/7	Multilingual support	Meets Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations
Albania	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Armenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Azerbaijan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Belarus	No				No
Belgium	No <sup>47</sup>				No
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data	Yes
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes	No	No data	No
Croatia	No				No
Cyprus	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Czech Republic	No				No
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>48</sup>	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
France	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Iceland	No				No
Ireland	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kosovo	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	No				No
Liechtenstein	Yes	No	Yes	Yes <sup>49</sup>	No
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Luxembourg	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Macedonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Malta	No				No
Moldova	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montenegro	No				No
Netherlands	No				No
Norway	No				No
Poland	No				No
Portugal	No				No
Romania	No				No
Russia	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Serbia	No				No
Slovakia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Switzerland	No				No
Turkey	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Ukraine	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
United Kingdom	Yes <sup>50</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
TOTAL: 46 countries	31	28	19	22	17
Percentage - Yes	67%	61%	41%	48%	37%
Percentage - No	33%	39%	59%	52%	63%

A nationwide women's helpline is available in **31 out of 46** European countries. Out of the 31 countries that have a national women's helpline, **28 countries provide a helpline free of charge and 19 of the national women's helplines operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.** In total, **only 17 out of the 31 available national women's helpline meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations to provide a helpline that is both free of charge and operates 24/7.** Currently, **only 37% of European countries meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations to provide a national women's helpline operating 24/7 and free of charge.** The countries meeting the recommendations include Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany<sup>51</sup>, Greece, Italy, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. In majority of the countries, where a national women's helpline exists, the helplines provide some level of multilingual assistance. The WAVE Country Report 2013 findings closely reflect those of the WAVE Country Report 2012.

**TABLE 1A: OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES IN 46 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

	Total number of National Women's Helplines	National Women's Helpline Free of Charge	National Women's Helpline 24/7	National Women's Helpline Free of Charge and 24/7
<b>YES</b>	31 (67%)	28 (61%)	19 (41%)	17 (37%)
<b>NO</b>	15 (33%)	18 (39%)	27 (59%)	29 (63%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	46 (100%)	46 (100%)	46 (100%)	46 (100%)

TABLE 2: NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES IN EU MEMBER STATES

Country	Women's Helpline	Calls free of Charge	Operates 24/7	Meets Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations - Free of charge and 24/7
Austria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Belgium	No			No
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes	No	No
Croatia	No			No
Cyprus	Yes	Yes	No	No
Czech Republic	No			No
Denmark	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	No	No
France	Yes	Yes	No	No
Germany	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	Yes	No	No
Ireland	Yes	Yes	No	No
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	No			No
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	No	No
Luxembourg	Yes	No	No	No
Malta	No			No
Netherlands	No			No
Poland	No			No
Portugal	No			No
Romania	No			No
Slovakia	Yes	No	Yes	No
Slovenia	Yes	Yes	No	No
Spain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
TOTAL: 28 EU Countries	19	17	10	9
Percentage - Yes	68%	61%	36%	32%
Percentage - No	32%	39%	64%	68%

In the **28 EU member states, 19 countries provide a national women's helpline**, accounting for approximately **68%** of the EU. Seventeen of the helplines are free of charge, but only **10 of the 19 operate 24/7**. Therefore, only nine countries meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations of providing a national women's helpline that operates 24/7 and is free of charge. These nine countries represent **32% of the EU, thus 68% of EU countries do not yet meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations**. The countries providing a 24/7 helpline free of charge are: Austria, Denmark, Estonia, Germany<sup>54</sup>, Greece, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

## ► WOMEN'S SHELTERS

TABLE 3: WOMEN'S SHELTERS IN 46 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Country	Population Data	Number of Women's Shelters	Women's Shelter Places Needed	Women's Shelter Places Available
Albania	2.831.741	8	283	200
Armenia	2.969.081	2	297	14
Austria	8.365.275	30	837	759
Azerbaijan	9.356.500	1	936	8
Belarus	9.665.120	3	967	23
Belgium	10.666.866	26	1.067	460
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.842.566	10	384	185
Bulgaria	7.585.131	6	759	55
Croatia	4.284.889	16	428	267
Cyprus	803.147	1	80	9
Czech Republic	10.487.178	4	1.049	96
Denmark	5.519.441	45	552	430
Estonia	1.340.271	12	134	86
Finland	5.311.276	2	531	16
France	65.820.916	52	6.582	1.729
Georgia	4.371.535	2	437	34 <sup>56</sup>
Germany	80.585.700	353 <sup>57</sup>	8.059	6.800 <sup>58</sup>
Greece	11.282.751	13	1.128	223
Hungary	9.908.798	0	991	0
Iceland	319.575	1	32	22
Ireland	4.588.252	20	459	138
Italy	60.192.698	65	6.019	453
Kosovo	1.733.872	8	173	130
Latvia	2.254.834	0	225	0
Liechtenstein	36.942	1	4	3
Lithuania	2.971.905	0	297	0
Luxembourg	537.039	8	54	150
Macedonia	2.050.671	5	205	22
Malta	404.962	3 <sup>59</sup>	40	36
Moldova	3.559.497	1 <sup>60</sup>	356	25
Montenegro	631.536	3	63	38
Netherlands	16.485.787	96	1.649	1.608
Norway	4.828.726	46	483	815
Poland	38.153.389	1	3.815	26
Portugal	10.632.482	37	1.063	632
Romania	20.121.641	41	2.012	590
Russia	141.909.244	42	14.191	400
Serbia	7.186.862	14	719	162 <sup>61</sup>
Slovakia	5.418.374	2	542	31
Slovenia	2.042.335	16	204	249
Spain	45.929.476	47 <sup>62</sup>	4.593	3.329 <sup>63</sup>
Switzerland	7.743.832	18	774	247
Sweden	9.298.515	161	930	631 <sup>64</sup>
Turkey	76.667.864	123 <sup>65</sup>	7.667	2.190
Ukraine	45.963.359	3	4.596	100
United Kingdom	62.261.892	383 <sup>66</sup>	6.226 <sup>67</sup>	4.703 <sup>68</sup>
TOTAL	828.923.743	1.731	82.892	28.124

The table shows that in the 46 European countries, there are 1,731 women's shelters offering 28,124 shelter places to women and children survivors of violence. According to the minimum standard of one shelter place per 10,000 inhabitants, 82,892 shelter places are needed in the 46 countries combined. Therefore, an estimated 55,242 places are missing, amounting to 67% of the recommended places. Only three countries (Luxembourg, Norway, and Slovenia) meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations of one place per 10,000. Netherlands nearly meets the recommendations missing only 2.5% of needed place, while in Austria 9% of shelter places are missing, and Malta 10%. Netherlands, Austria and Malta are the only three countries missing 10% or under of recommended number of shelter places.

Women's Shelter Places Missing	Number of Inhabitants per 1 Women's Shelter Place	Percentage of Recommended Women's Shelter Places Missing	Meets Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations
83	14,159	29%	No
283	212,077	95%	No
78	11,021	9%	No
928	1,169,563	99%	No
944	420,223	98%	No
607	23,189	57%	No
199	20,771	52%	No
704	137,911	93%	No
161	16,048	38%	No
71	89,239	89%	No
953	109,241	91%	No
122	12,836	22%	No
48	15,585	36%	No
515	331,955	97%	No
4,853	38,069	74%	No
403	128,575	92%	No
1,259	11,851	16%	No
905	50,595	80%	No
991	n/a	100%	No
10	14,526	31%	No
321	33,248	70%	No
5,566	132,876	92%	No
43	13,337	25%	No
225	n/a	100%	No
1	12,314	25%	No
297	n/a	100%	No
0	3,580	0%	Yes
183	93,212	89%	No
4	11,249	10%	No
331	142,380	93%	No
25	16,619	40%	No
41	10,252	2.5%	Nearly
0	5,925	0%	Yes
3,789	1,467,438	99%	No
431	16,824	41%	No
1,422	34,104	71%	No
13,791	354,773	97%	No
557	44,363	77%	No
511	174,786	94%	No
0	8,202	0%	Yes
1,264	13,797	28%	No
527	31,352	68%	No
299	14,736	32%	No
5,477	35,008	71%	No
4,496	459,634	98%	No
1,523 <sup>69</sup>	13,239 <sup>70</sup>	24% <sup>71</sup>	No
55,242	29,474	67%	

► Comparison with WAVE Country Report 2012

In comparison to the WAVE Country Report 2012, a difference in total number of shelter places and shelter places available can be noted. Although the differences can be attributed to new shelters being opened and/or closed, the differences mostly reflect new information being made available in 2013 that was not available during the research period of 2012. **In the WAVE Country Report 2012, the total number of shelters in the 46 European countries was 2,520 with a total number of 29,947 shelter places, while in the WAVE Country Report 2013, the total number of shelters in the 46 European countries is 1,731 with a total number of 28,124 shelter places.** Although in most countries, increases in the number of women's shelters and women's shelter places has been observed in comparison to 2012 data, the number of women's shelters in UK (England) could not be estimated, and instead the number of shelter providers 383 was included. This significantly lowers the number of shelters from last year by more than 700 shelters, however, does not mean that less shelters are available, only that the number previously estimated (over 1,000 in United Kingdom (England)) no longer reflects the situation, where the actual number of women's shelters is especially difficult to estimate. **The most significant decreases in the number of women's shelter places have been observed in United Kingdom (England) with 622 shelter places less (from 4,200 in the WAVE Country Report 2012 to 3,577 in the WAVE Country Report 2013). Another significant decrease in shelter places involved Spain with 3,329 in 2013 compared to 4,500 in 2012. This reflects the most recent mapping conducted by a WAVE Focal Point in Spain in 2013, whereas the 4,500 figure can be traced to 2011.<sup>72</sup>**

TABLE 4: WOMEN'S SHELTERS IN EU MEMBER STATES

Country	Population Data	Number of Women's Shelters	Women's Shelter Places Needed	Women's Shelter Places Available <sup>73</sup>
Austria	8.365.275	30	837	759
Belgium	10.666.866	26	1.067	460
Bulgaria	7.585.131	6	759	55
Croatia	4.284.889	16	428	267
Cyprus	803.147	1	80	9
Czech Republic	10.487.178	4	1.049	96
Denmark	5.519.441	45	552	430
Estonia	1.340.271	12	134	86
Finland	5.311.276	2	531	16
France	65.820.916	52	6.582	1.729
Germany	80.585.700	353 <sup>74</sup>	8.059	6.800 <sup>75</sup>
Greece	11.282.751	13	1.128	223
Hungary	9.908.798	0	991	0
Ireland	4.588.252	20	459	138
Italy	60.192.698	65	6.019	453
Latvia	2.254.834	0	225	0
Lithuania	2.971.905	0	297	0
Luxembourg	537.039	8	54	150
Malta	404.962	3 <sup>76</sup>	40	36
Netherlands	16.485.787	96	1.649	1.608
Poland	38.153.389	1	3.815	26
Portugal	10.632.482	37	1.063	632
Romania	20.121.641	41	2.012	590
Slovakia	5.418.374	2	542	31
Slovenia	2.042.335	16	204	249
Spain	45.929.476	47 <sup>77</sup>	4.593	3.329 <sup>78</sup>
Sweden	9.298.515	161	930	631 <sup>79</sup>
United Kingdom	62.261.892	383 <sup>80</sup>	6.226 <sup>81</sup>	4.703 <sup>82</sup>
TOTAL	503.255.220	1.440	50.326	23.506

In general, small changes in the positive direction have been observed showing a trend in increasing number of shelters and shelter places. For example, in Greece, eight new shelters have been added with an additional 117 shelter places. Other countries with changes in the number of shelters are Albania (+2), Belarus (+1), Bosnia and Herzegovina (+1), Croatia (+3), Estonia (+2), France (+10), Germany (+8), Italy (+5), Luxembourg (-1), Macedonia (+1), Montenegro (+1), Romania (+6), Russia (+1), Serbia (+1), Slovenia (-2), Sweden (-23) and Turkey (+20). The changes do not always reflect shelters opening and/or closing, instead new information becoming available. Furthermore, caution should be exercised in countries with increases, where women's organisations do not receive sufficient state funding as any increases indicating a new shelter opening may involve implementation of a new project and is not automatically reflective of a sustainable structure being established.

There are 1,440 women's shelters in the 28 EU countries with an estimated total of 23,506 shelter places available. The 1,440 women's shelters serve a population of more than 503 million inhabitants. In order to meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, an estimated number of 50,326 shelter places are needed, thus 26,820 places are still missing, which means nearly half of the shelter places needed exist. Hungary, Latvia, and Lithuania have no women's shelters and 16 countries are missing more than 50% of the recommended shelter places. In addition, at this time, one shelter place in all of the 28 EU countries serves approximately 21,410 inhabitants, just over double the recommended number. Luxembourg and Slovenia are the only EU member states to meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations and the Netherlands is missing only 2.5% of needed places. Austria and Malta are missing 9-10% of the needed places, and are also close to meeting the recommendations.

Women's Shelter Places Missing	Number of Inhabitants per 1 Women's Shelter Place	Percentage of Recommended Women's Shelter Places Missing	Meets Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations
78	11.021	9%	No
607	23.189	57%	No
704	137.911	93%	No
161	16.048	38%	No
71	89.239	89%	No
953	109.241	91%	No
122	12.836	22%	No
48	15.585	36%	No
515	331.955	97%	No
4.853	38.069	74%	No
1.259	11.851	16%	No
905	50.595	80%	No
991	n/a	100%	No
321	33.248	70%	No
5.566	132.876	92%	No
225	n/a	100%	No
297	n/a	100%	No
0	3.580	0%	Yes
4	11.249	10%	No
41	10.252	2.5%	Nearly
3.789	1.467.438	99%	No
431	16.824	41%	No
1.422	34.104	71%	No
511	174.786	94%	No
0	8.202	0%	Yes
1.264	13.797	28%	No
299	14.736	32%	No
1.523 <sup>83</sup>	13.239 <sup>84</sup>	24% <sup>85</sup>	No
26.820	21.410	53%	

TABLE 5: WOMEN'S SHELTERS IN OLD EU MEMBER STATES

Country	Population Data	Number of Women's Shelters	Women's Shelter Places Needed	Women's Shelter Places Available
Austria	8.365.275	30	837	759
Belgium	10.666.866	26	1.067	460
Denmark	5.519.441	45	552	430
Finland	5.311.276	2	531	16
France	65.820.916	52	6.582	1729
Germany	80.585.700	353 <sup>87</sup>	8.059	6.800 <sup>88</sup>
Greece	11.282.751	13	1.128	223
Ireland	4.588.252	20	459	138
Italy	60.192.698	65	6.019	453
Luxembourg	537.039	8	54	150
Netherlands	16.485.787	96	1.649	1608
Portugal	10.632.482	37	1.063	632
Spain	45.929.476	47 <sup>89</sup>	4.593	3.329 <sup>90</sup>
Sweden	9.298.515	161	930	631 <sup>91</sup>
United Kingdom	62.261.892	383 <sup>92</sup>	6.226 <sup>93</sup>	4.703 <sup>94</sup>
Total	397.478.366	1.338	39.748	22.061

In the old EU Member States, there are **1,338 women's shelters offering 22,061 shelter places**. Of the 39,748 places needed according to the total population, **17,783 places are still missing, accounting for 45% of recommended number of shelter places**.

TABLE 6: WOMEN'S SHELTERS IN NEW EU MEMBER STATES

Country	Population Data	Number of Women's Shelters	Women's Shelter Places Needed	Women's Shelter Places Available
Bulgaria	7.585.131	6	759	55
Croatia	4.284.889	16	428	267
Cyprus	803.147	1	80	9
Czech Republic	10.487.178	4	1.049	96
Estonia	1.340.271	12	134	86
Hungary	9.908.798	0	991	0
Latvia	2.254.834	0	225	0
Lithuania	2.971.905	0	297	0
Malta	404.962	3 <sup>99</sup>	40	36
Poland	38.153.389	1	3.815	26
Romania	20.121.641	41	2.012	590
Slovakia	5.418.374	2	542	27
Slovenia	2.042.335	16	204	249
Total	105.776.854	102	10.578	1.441

In the new EU member states there are **102 shelters offering 1,441 shelter places**. Of the 10,578 places needed according to the total population, **9,181 places are still missing, accounting for 87% of recommended number of shelter places**.

The tables of the old and new EU member states show a useful picture of the significant differences in available shelter places. **In the old EU Member States, 45% of the recommended shelter places are missing, while in the new EU Member States, 87% of the recommended shelter places are missing.** In the old EU member States one shelter place serves **18,017 inhabitants** and in the new EU member states, one shelter place serves **73,405 inhabitants**. This number in the new EU member states is partly high due to no women's shelter being available in Hungary, Latvia, and Lithuania with a combined population of about 15 million persons.

Women's Shelter Places Missing	Number of Inhabitants per 1 Women's Shelter Place	Percentage of Recommended Women's Shelter Places Missing	Meets Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations
78	11.021	9%	No
607	23.189	57%	No
122	12.836	22%	No
515	331.955	97%	No
4.853	38.069	74%	No
1.259	11.851	16%	No
905	50.595	80%	No
321	33.248	70%	No
5.566	132.876	92%	No
0	3.580	0%	Yes
41	10.252	2.5%	No
431	16.824	41%	No
1.264	13.797	28%	No
299	14.736	32%	No
1.523 <sup>95</sup>	13.239 <sup>96</sup>	24% <sup>97</sup>	No
17.783	18.017	45%	

Women's Shelter Places Missing	Number of Inhabitants per 1 Women's Shelter Place	Percentage of Recommended Women's Shelter Places Missing	Meets Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations
704	137.911	93%	No
161	16.048	38%	No
71	89.239	89%	No
953	109.241	91%	No
48	15.585	36%	No
991	n/a	100%	No
225	n/a	100%	No
297	n/a	100%	No
4	11.249	10%	No
3.789	1.467.438	99%	No
1.422	34.104	71%	No
515	200.681	95%	No
0	8.202	0%	Yes
9.181	73.405	87%	

TABLE 7: WOMEN'S SHELTERS IN COUNTRIES OUTSIDE THE EUROPEAN UNION

Country	Population Data	Number of Women's Shelters	Women's Shelter Places Needed	Women's Shelter Places Available
Albania	2.831.741	8	283	200
Armenia	2.969.081	2	297	14
Azerbaijan	9.356.500	1	936	8
Belarus	9.665.120	3	967	23
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.842.566	10	384	185
Georgia	4.371.535	2	437	34 <sup>101</sup>
Iceland	319.246	1	32	22
Kosovo	1.733.872	8	173	130
Liechtenstein	36.942	1	4	3
Macedonia	2.050.671	5	205	22
Moldova	3.559.497	1 <sup>102</sup>	356	25
Montenegro	631.536	3	63	38
Norway	4.828.726	46	483	815
Russia	141.909.244	42	14.191	400
Serbia	7.186.862	14	719	162 <sup>103</sup>
Switzerland	7.743.832	18	774	247
Turkey	76.667.864	123 <sup>104</sup>	7.667	2190
Ukraine	45.963.359	3	4.596	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>325.668.523</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>32.567</b>	<b>4.618</b>

There are **291** women's shelters in countries outside of the EU with an estimated **total of 4,618 shelter places available**. The **291 women's shelters serve a population of more than 325 million persons**. In order to meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, an estimated number of **32,567** shelter places are needed, thus **28,281 places are missing**, which accounts for **87%** of recommended number of shelter places. Therefore only about **13% of the places needed exist**. **The situation is most concerning in Russia, where only 400 shelter places are available for a population of more than 141 million people**. In addition, at this time, one shelter place in all of outside of the EU area serves a population of **70,521 persons**.

Only one of the countries meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, which is **Norway**. One shelter place serves about **5,925 people**, which is well below the minimum standard of one per **10,000 inhabitants**. **Of 18 non-EU countries, only four of these are missing less than 50% of the recommended number of shelter places**. The other 14 countries are missing from between 50-99% places.

Women's Shelter Places Missing	Number of Inhabitants per 1 Women's Shelter Place	Percentage of Recommended Women's Shelter Places Missing	Meets Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations
83	14.159	29%	No
283	212.077	95%	No
928	1.169.563	99%	No
944	420.223	98%	No
199	20.771	52%	No
403	128.575	92%	No
10	14.511	31%	No
43	13.337	25%	No
1	12.314	25%	No
183	93.212	89%	No
331	142.380	93%	No
25	16.619	40%	No
0	5.925	0	Yes
13.791	354.773	97%	No
557	44.363	77%	No
527	31.352	68%	No
5.477	35.008	71%	No
4.496	459.634	98%	No
28.281	70.521	87%	

TABLE 8: WOMEN'S SHELTERS IN EUROPE: OVERVIEW

	Population Data	Number of Women's Shelters	Women's Shelter places needed (CoE Taskforce Recommendations)	Women's Shelter Places Available	Women's Shelter Places Missing	Number of Inhabitants per One Women's Shelter Place	Percentage of Shelter Places Missing
Europe (46 Countries)	828.923.743 (100%)	1.731	82.892	28.124	55.242	29.474	67%
Non-EU (18)	325.668.523 (39%)	291	32.567	4.618	28.281	70.521	87%
EU All Member States (28)	503.255.220 (61%)	1.440	50.326	23.506	26.820	21.410	53%
EU New Member States <sup>105</sup> (13)	105.776.854 (21% of EU)	102	10.578	1.441	9.181	73.405	87%
EU New Member States <sup>106</sup> (15)	397.478.366 (79% of EU)	1.338	39.748	22.061	17.783	18.017	45%

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey - Main results. (2014). Available at [[http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results_en.pdf)]. (Accessed 10 March 2014).
- <sup>2</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Results at a glance. (2014). Pg. 39.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid. Pg. 9.
- <sup>4</sup> FRA Press Release: Violence against Women: every day and everywhere (5 March 2014).
- <sup>5</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Results at a glance. (2014). Pg. 24.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid. Pg. 16.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid. Pg. 11.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid. Pg. 36.
- <sup>9</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results (2014). Pg. 162.
- <sup>10</sup> FRA press release (5 March 2014). Pg. 2.
- <sup>11</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Results at a glance. (2014). Pg. 9.
- <sup>12</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/violence-against-women-victim-support-report>
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The Council adopts conclusions on violence against women based on EIGE's report. [<http://www.eige.europa.eu/content/news-article/the-council-adopts-conclusions-on-violence-against-women-based-on-eiges-report>]
- <sup>15</sup> [www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/default_en.asp)
- <sup>16</sup> Council of Europe (CoE). (2014). Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017.
- <sup>17</sup> All but three stories (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Spain) refer to women's experience of intimate partner violence.
- <sup>18</sup> <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/vaw-survey-main-results>
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> See information in: Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2004). Away from Violence – Guidelines for Setting Up and Running a Women's Refuge. Accessible on: [[www.wave-network.org/content/away-violence](http://www.wave-network.org/content/away-violence)].
- <sup>21</sup> <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/vaw-survey-main-results>
- <sup>22</sup> [www.womenlobby.org/publications/rapports/article/2013-ewl-barometer-on-rape-report?lang=fr](http://www.womenlobby.org/publications/rapports/article/2013-ewl-barometer-on-rape-report?lang=fr)
- <sup>23</sup> [www.rcne.com](http://www.rcne.com)
- <sup>24</sup> <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/vaw-survey-main-results>
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid. Pg. 59-61.
- <sup>26</sup> Council of Europe. (2014). Analytical Study of the Results of the fourth round of monitoring the implementation of recommendations Rec(2002)5 on the protection of women against violence in the Council of Europe member states. Pg. 14.
- <sup>27</sup> [www.rcne.com](http://www.rcne.com)
- <sup>28</sup> European Parliament Directorate-General for Internal Policy. Policy Department Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs. (2013). Overview of the Worldwide Best Practices for Rape Prevention and for Assisting Women Victims of Rape.
- <sup>29</sup> See Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence Explanatory Report. (7 April 2011). Articles: 23 (Shelters), 24 (Telephone helplines), 25 (Support for victims of sexual violence): The Explanatory Report refers to the Council of Europe Taskforce to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence to serve as guide for implementing minimum recommended standards for service provision.
- <sup>30</sup> [www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/default_en.asp)
- <sup>31</sup> Htun, Mala and S. Laurel Weldon. (August 2012). The Civil Origins of Progressive Policy Change: Combating violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975-2005. [*American Political Science Review*]. Vol. 106, No. 3.

- <sup>32</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality. (2012). Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Violence against Women – Victim Support. Luxembourg. Pg. 29.
- <sup>33</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). Description of a National Women’s Helpline. [<http://www.wave-network.org/sites/default/files/helplinedescription.pdf>]
- <sup>34</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). Description of a Women’s Shelter. [<http://www.wave-network.org/sites/default/files/shelterdescription.pdf>]
- <sup>35</sup> See Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). WAVE Publications. [<http://www.wave-network.org/content/wave-publications>]
- <sup>36</sup> See Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence Explanatory Report. (7 April 2011). Articles: 23 (Shelters), 24 (Telephone helplines), 25 (Support for victims of sexual violence): The Explanatory Report refers to the Council of Europe Taskforce to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence to serve as guide for implementing minimum recommended standards for service provision.
- <sup>37</sup> See Council of Europe Taskforce to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence. (27 May 2008): Paragraph 58: “States should ensure that all support services take a gender perspective...”
- <sup>38</sup> Council of Europe Taskforce to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence. (27 May 2008). Paragraph 60.
- <sup>39</sup> See Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence Explanatory Report. (7 April 2011). Article 23: “However, the number of shelter places should depend on the actual need.”
- <sup>40</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Affairs. (2009-2010). United Nations Demographic Yearbook. 61st Edition.
- <sup>41</sup> See Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). Help Ratify the Council of Europe Convention. [<http://www.wave-network.org/content/help-ratify-council-europe-convention>]
- <sup>42</sup> The Istanbul Convention was adopted in April 2011 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
- <sup>43</sup> Strengthening Health System Responses to Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: A Programmatic Package for Health Professionals, Service Providers and Policy Makers. [<http://respondgbveeca.org/training-programme-for-health-care-providers/facts-on-gbv/forms-of-gbv/24>]
- <sup>44</sup> Council of Europe. Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence: CETS No.: 210. [[www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/print/ChercheSig.asp?NT=210&CM=&DF=&CL=ENG](http://www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/print/ChercheSig.asp?NT=210&CM=&DF=&CL=ENG)]
- <sup>45</sup> Detailed information on how to run a women’s shelter/refuge is available in the WAVE Manual ‘Away from Violence’ available at [[www.wave-network.org/content/away-violence](http://www.wave-network.org/content/away-violence)]
- <sup>46</sup> The functions of women’s shelters also go beyond only providing accommodation, and many often provide non-residential services such as counselling, legal advice, resettlement support, among others, which are crucial for survivors of violence and empower them to overcome their traumatic experiences.
- <sup>47</sup> Regional helplines available, see country page for additional information.
- <sup>48</sup> The helpline in Estonia operates 24/7 as of 2014.
- <sup>49</sup> Depending on language skills of the staff.
- <sup>50</sup> Each country of the UK has its own national helpline.
- <sup>51</sup> The helpline in Germany began its operations in March 2013.
- <sup>52</sup> Regional helplines available, see country page for additional information.
- <sup>53</sup> Each State of the UK has its own national helpline.
- <sup>54</sup> The helpline in Germany began its operations in March 2013.
- <sup>55</sup> Shelter places refer (mostly) to shelter beds in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>56</sup> The number of shelter places in Georgia is an estimate, based on a median number of shelter places available in 44 countries (according to WAVE Country Report 2012 data), where data on the number of shelter places was available. In all of the 44 countries, there are between 2-37 shelter places available per shelter with the median number of 17 places per shelter.

- <sup>57</sup> This number is an estimated number, as there are no official statistics taking all women's shelters into account. Source: Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (2012): Bestandsaufnahme zur Situation der Frauenhäuser, der Fachberatungsstellen und anderer Unterstützungsangebote für gewaltbetroffene Frauen und deren Kinder; Gutachten im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums.
- <sup>58</sup> Information refers to 345 shelters.
- <sup>59</sup> There are also two hostels in Malta that take women when the shelters are full, or act as a moving-on place to free up spaces in the shelters, providing an additional 36 bed spaces.
- <sup>60</sup> There are eight shelters in Moldova with about 106 shelter places available. Only one of them is a women's shelter serving women and children survivors of domestic violence exclusively; the other seven shelters are public institutions and offer various services, including services to victims of violence.
- <sup>61</sup> In Serbia, there are at least 162 shelter places, as it has not been possible to account for all available shelter places in the country.
- <sup>62</sup> In Spain, there are at least 47 women's shelters in Spain, as not all shelters can be accounted for.
- <sup>63</sup> Data refers to 18 out of 19 regions. The information is calculated without taking into account shelter places that may be available in the region of Cantabria.
- <sup>64</sup> The number 631 refers to the estimated number of shelter beds available at Roks' shelters in 2012.
- <sup>65</sup> There are also 19 first receiving units/refuge stations in which the women and their children are placed if there is no space available in the shelters.
- <sup>66</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 289 in England (refers to service providers, not individual shelters/refuges); 36 in Wales; 13 in Northern Ireland; 45 in Scotland.
- <sup>67</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 5,223 in England; 301 in Wales; 180 in Northern Ireland; 522 in Scotland.
- <sup>68</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 3,577 in England; 227 in Wales; 390 in Northern Ireland; 509 in Scotland.
- <sup>69</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 1,646 in England; 74 in Wales; 0 in Northern Ireland (the places available are more than the ones needed); 13 in Scotland.
- <sup>70</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 14,604 in England; 13,244 in Wales; 4,614 in Northern Ireland; 10,260 in Scotland.
- <sup>71</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 32% in England; 25% in Wales; 0% in Northern Ireland (places available are more than places needed); 2,5% in Scotland.
- <sup>72</sup> See European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). (2012). Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Violence against Women – Victim Support. Pg. 120.
- <sup>73</sup> Shelter places refer (mostly) to shelter beds in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>74</sup> This number is an estimated number, as there are no official statistics taking all women's shelters into account. Source: Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (2012): Bestandsaufnahme zur Situation der Frauenhäuser, der Fachberatungsstellen und anderer Unterstützungsangebote für gewaltbetroffene Frauen und deren Kinder; Gutachten im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums.
- <sup>75</sup> Information refers to 345 shelters.
- <sup>76</sup> There are also two hostels in Malta that take women when the shelters are full, or act as a moving-on place to free up spaces in the shelters providing an additional 36 bed spaces.
- <sup>77</sup> In Spain, there are at least 47 women's shelters in Spain, as not all shelters can be accounted for.
- <sup>78</sup> Data refers to 18 out of 19 regions. The information is calculated without taking into account shelter places that may be available in the region of Cantabria.
- <sup>79</sup> The number 631 refers to the estimated number of shelter beds available at Roks' shelters in 2012.
- <sup>80</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 289 in England (refers to service providers, not individual shelters/refuges); 36 in Wales; 13 in Northern Ireland; 45 in Scotland.
- <sup>81</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 5,223 in England; 301 in Wales; 180 in Northern Ireland; 522 in Scotland.

- <sup>82</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 3,577 in England; 227 in Wales; 390 in Northern Ireland; 509 in Scotland.
- <sup>83</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 1,646 in England; 74 in Wales; 0 in Northern Ireland (the places available are more than the ones needed); 13 in Scotland.
- <sup>84</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 14,604 in England; 13,244 in Wales; 4,614 in Northern Ireland; 10,260 in Scotland.
- <sup>85</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 32% in England; 25% in Wales; 0% in Northern Ireland (places available are more than places needed); 2.5% in Scotland.
- <sup>86</sup> Women's shelter places refer (mostly) to shelter beds in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>87</sup> This number is an estimated number, as there are no official statistics taking all women's shelters into account. Source: Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (2012): Bestandsaufnahme zur Situation der Frauenhäuser, der Fachberatungsstellen und anderer Unterstützungsangebote für gewaltbetroffene Frauen und deren Kinder; Gutachten im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums.
- <sup>88</sup> Information refers to 345 shelters.
- <sup>89</sup> In Spain, there are at least 47 women's shelters in Spain, as not all shelters can be accounted for.
- <sup>90</sup> Data refers to 18 out of 19 regions. The information is calculated without taking into account shelter places that may be available in the region of Cantabria.
- <sup>91</sup> The number 631 refers to the estimated number of shelter beds available at Roks' shelters in 2012.
- <sup>92</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 289 in England (refers to service providers, not individual shelters/refuges); 36 in Wales; 13 in Northern Ireland; 45 in Scotland.
- <sup>93</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 5,223 in England; 301 in Wales; 180 in Northern Ireland; 522 in Scotland.
- <sup>94</sup> The data is segregated by each country as follows: 3,577 in England; 227 in Wales; 390 in Northern Ireland; 509 in Scotland
- <sup>95</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 1,646 in England; 74 in Wales; 0 in Northern Ireland (the places available are more than the ones needed); 13 in Scotland.
- <sup>96</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 14,604 in England; 13,244 in Wales; 4,614 in Northern Ireland; 10,260 in Scotland.
- <sup>97</sup> The data is segregated by each country of UK as follows: 32% in England; 25% in Wales; 0% in Northern Ireland (places available are more than places needed); 2.5% in Scotland.
- <sup>98</sup> Shelter places refer (mostly) to shelter beds in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>99</sup> There are also two hostels in Malta that take women when the shelters are full, or act as a moving-on place to free up spaces in the shelters providing an additional 36 bed spaces.
- <sup>100</sup> Shelter places refer (mostly) to shelter beds in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>101</sup> The number of shelter places in Georgia is an estimate, based on a median number of shelter places available in 44 countries (according to WAVE Country Report 2012 data), where data on the number of shelter places was available. In all of the 44 countries, there are between 2-37 shelter places available per shelter with the median number of 17 places per shelter.
- <sup>102</sup> There are eight shelters in Moldova with about 106 shelter places available. Only one of them is a women's shelter serving women and children survivors of domestic violence exclusively; the other seven shelters are public institutions and offer various services, including services to victims of violence.
- <sup>103</sup> In Serbia, there are at least 162 shelter places, as it has not been possible to account for all available shelter places in the country.
- <sup>104</sup> There are also 19 first receiving units/refuge stations in which the women and their children are placed if there is no space available in the shelters.
- <sup>105</sup> 13 Countries which became members of the EU in 2004, 2007, 2013.
- <sup>106</sup> 15 Countries which became members of the EU before 2004.

# ALBANIA (REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA)



**COUNTRY EXPERTS:** Monika Kocaqi, PhD Candidate, Freelance Consultant; Woman Forum Elbasan; Human Rights in Democracy Center

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 2,831,741<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 1,409,931<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1995

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1994

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 19 December 2011

ratified: 4 February 2013

## SUMMARY

There is one women's helpline in Albania that is free of charge, but does not operate 24/7. In 2012, the helpline provided 1,800 phone counselling sessions and 756 face-to-face sessions. Furthermore, there are eight women's shelters in Albania with approximately 200 shelter places available. Currently, 29% of recommended shelter places are missing. At the time, Albania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendation for national women's helpline and women's shelter provision. Additionally, there are five women's centers in Albania and no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*I am 42 years old* and have a 15 year old daughter. I, along with my daughter, suffered physical, psychological and economic abuse at the hands of my partner for 14 years, which started when I was pregnant with my daughter. One year ago in 2012, I sought support from the police, and during court proceedings, I was granted a protection order<sup>4</sup> and a place in the national shelter.<sup>5</sup> Prior to this, I contacted the police on numerous occasions. I first received a protection order for one year in 2009 and after the protection order expired, I returned to my partner. The situation did not change and my partner continued to be violent to me and my daughter. The violence escalated and I contacted the police again. Escaping the violent relationship was especially difficult for me as I had no support from my family, was unemployed and my physical and psychological health was severely affected, and I had visible signs of abuse on my face and my body.

When I initially reached out for help to the police, I did not receive the necessary information about the protection that the law on domestic violence offers to victims. More recently, in 2013, in the process of extending the protection order, the court suspended my case without hearing from me or considering evidence. I am currently in the process of improving my life and that of my daughter. During the abuse, I felt hopeless but have regained a good outlook for the future thanks to the support I had received. My daughter and I are currently accommodated at the shelter and have received economic aid and health care, and I have been referred to employment programs offered by state institutions. The Human Rights in Democracy Center has been providing me with psychological counseling and legal assistance. I hope that I will soon find a job and will then be able to rent a place for myself and my daughter, in order for us to continue a normal life.



## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Services for women survivors of violence are crucial in supporting women during the long journey to escape violence and improve their lives. Services often also play a complementary role to assistance provided to women by state institutions such as the police or judicial systems, providing women with accommodation, counselling, necessary information and referrals to other services such as to health care professionals or employment offices. In Albania, there is still a limited number of state institutions and women’s NGOs that offer services to women survivors of violence. The capacity of available state and NGO services is low in comparison to the need.<sup>6</sup>

Regional distribution of services is limited and there is no women’s shelter in Northern Albania<sup>7</sup>, and women must relocate to bigger cities like Tirana or Vlora in order to access a shelter. There is especially lack of access to information for women in rural areas about options available to them. Funding for women’s services comes from a limited budget, and women’s services depend upon foreign and project-based funding to sustain their services.<sup>8</sup>

Access to the state operated women’s shelters depends upon issuance of a protection order.<sup>9</sup> A Day Care Center (DCC) in Elbasan (a project of Woman Forum Elbasan) accommodates women victims of domestic violence until an immediate protection order is issued. The staff at the DCC assist women in applying for the protection order. The DCC therefore serves as an in-between center providing lodging from a few hours to two to three days, while awaiting the issuance of the protection order. The legal requirement for issuing such an order is 48 hours for adults and 24 hours for minors. While sheltered at DCC, the women and children also receive social, psychological, medical, and/or legal counselling.<sup>10</sup>

Presently, there are serious problems with appropriate handling of protection order requests. Issuance of a protection order is “subject to detailed analysis of the court based on documented evidence and the burden of proof is placed upon the victim.”<sup>11</sup> Despite the existing and entered into force (since 2007) Law “On Measures against Violence in Family Relations,” health institutions, which play a crucial role in providing documented evidence (medical report) for the issuance of protection orders, have not aligned their procedures with legal obligations. Since 2007, not one report has been issued by health centers in Tirana (apart from Kamza, which is a separate municipality). In 2012, almost 74% protection order cases were dismissed, with one of the main reasons for dismissal being lack of evidence (including a medical report).<sup>12</sup> Where a woman fails to provide evidence, the judge often will dismiss the case, resulting in the woman most likely returning to the perpetrator, having no place else to live. The perpetrator is likely to become more violent.<sup>13</sup>

### WOMEN’S HELPLINE<sup>14</sup>

There is one national women’s helpline in Albania, established in 1996, called the *Counseling Line for Women and Girls*. The phone number is (+355 422 33408). The helpline does not operate 24/7 (it operates six days per week, 9:00-20:00) and is free of charge, offering assistance only in Albanian. The helpline is 100% funded from foreign donations.

**Based on this information, Albania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



National Women’s Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>15</sup>
1	Yes	No	1,800 telephone counseling sessions 756 face-to-face counseling sessions

### WOMEN’S SHELTERS<sup>16 17 18</sup>

There are eight women’s shelters<sup>19</sup> in Albania with approximately 200 shelter places available. There are four shelters operated by NGOs, two emergency shelters run by NGOs, and two government-run shelters offering 100 places (beds) in total for survivors of gender-based violence and domestic violence.<sup>20</sup> The first shelter opened for domestic violence survivors (Shelter for Abused Women and Girls) was established in 1998 by an NGO.

One state-run shelter and two NGO-run shelters primarily aid survivors of trafficking. Two shelters, the Shelter for Abused Women and Girls in Tirana and the Tjeter Vision/Another Vision Shelter in Elbasan are specialized in serving women survivors of domestic violence and their children. All the shelters accept children of the survivors, with most having age limits for boys. One shelter has a stay period of between four to six months, whereas the other shelters accommodate women for as long as it is necessary. The shelters are predominantly funded by foreign donations (67%) and by the state (33%).

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 283 women’s shelter places are needed in Albania. With 83 women’s shelter places missing (29%), Albania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>21</sup>
8	283	200	83	29%	14,159	93 women/girls accommodated 48 children accommodated with their mothers

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are five centers supporting women survivors of violence and their children, run by independent women's NGOs that are operating in Tirana, Elbasan, Durres, Kukes, and Skoder.

The first counselling center was established in Tirana in 1996. The centers are independent and not part of additional services offered by any of the shelters mentioned above.<sup>22</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on the prevalence of sexual violence against women in Albania is available from the prevalence of violence survey Domestic Violence in Albania: A National Population-Based Survey published in March 2009.<sup>23</sup> Sexual violence is defined as an act of forcing, coercing, or attempting to coerce any sexual contact or behavior without consent. It includes, but is not limited to, marital rape, attacks on sexual parts of the body, forcing sex after physical violence has occurred, or treating a person in a sexually demeaning manner. Sexual violence committed by intimate partners and family members within the context of marriage, dating relationships, and family was surveyed.<sup>24</sup>

The survey shows that in 330 of the 2,590 households surveyed (or 12.7%) women aged 15 to 49 reported that their husband/intimate partner had forced them to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to, while 1.3% reported that their husband/intimate partner had forced them to perform humiliating sexual acts when they did not want to. Both estimates correspond to sexual violence experienced in the victims' lifetime.<sup>25</sup> However, as 23% of the women interviewed did not wish to give a response regarding experience of sexual violence, prevalence rates in the Albanian prevalence survey are likely to be underestimated.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the survey does not address sexual violence experienced by women outside of the domestic sphere.<sup>27</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Albania.<sup>28</sup>

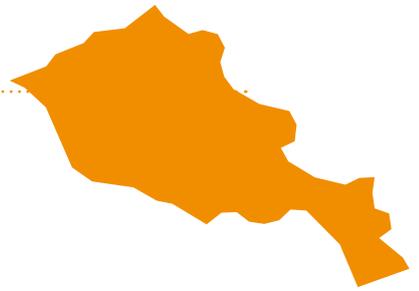
## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There is a local women's helpline (0800 99 88) that was established on March 8, 2013 by the Tirana Municipality and the Network of Community Centers. This helpline does not operate 24/7, is free of charge, and offers assistance for cases of domestic violence.<sup>29</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> www.instat.gov.al
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Human Rights in Democracy Center, located in Albania.
- <sup>4</sup> According to Human Rights in Democracy Center, based on the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations 2006, immediate protection orders can be issued by the court for a period of up to 30 days. Long-term protection orders may also be issued by the court for up to one year, with the possibility of extension of up to another year, if the victim is deemed to be at risk of continued violence.
- <sup>5</sup> According to WAVE Albania expert Monika Kocaqi, the National Treatment Center for Domestic Violence (national shelter opened by the central government with the support UNDP in 2011) requires for an Immediate Order or Protection Order to be first issued by the court in order for the survivor to receive placement in the shelter. The official source of information is from the Council of Ministers Decision no. 505 on 13.07.2011 "For the approval of the standards of social care services for the victims of domestic violence in the residential centers public and non public ones". Specifically, this condition is under Standard no. 4 "Personal data of the beneficiaries and their administration", see table of criteria under this standard, criteria no. 4 "the file must contain the order issued by the court for placing the beneficiary in an institution".
- <sup>6</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> At the end of 2013, a new shelter was opened in Kukes, northern Albania. There is a 24 hour shelter for victims of domestic violence and victims of trafficking. The shelter is funded by OSCE and there are 2 shelter places.
- <sup>8</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>9</sup> According to WAVE Albania expert Monika Kocaqi, the National Treatment Center for Domestic Violence (National Treatment Center for Domestic Violence, a national shelter opened by the central government with the support UNDP in 2011) requires for an Emergency Order or Protection Order to be first issued by the court in order for the survivor to receive placement in the shelter. (This is not applicable to NGO operated shelters)
- <sup>10</sup> Woman Forum Elbasan. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The Day Care Centre (DCC) operates based on „Summary of the Legislation on Economic Assistance and Social Services“ of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (now Ministry of the Well-being and Youth), and in the DECISION Nr. 505 dated back to 13.07.2011 on standards of Social Care Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, in Public and Non-Residential Centers Public.
- <sup>11</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.  
District Court Decisions on Domestic Violence (Protection Orders), January-December 2012 (by Human Rights in Democracy Center).
- <sup>13</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>14</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012 : Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 37-38.
- <sup>15</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>16</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012 : Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 38.
- <sup>17</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>18</sup> Information provided by WAVE Albania expert Monika Kocaqi.
- <sup>19</sup> State-run women's shelters are National Treatment Center for Domestic Violence in Tirana and Host Center for Victims of Trafficking in Tirana. NGO-run women's shelters are Shelter for Abused Women and Girls in Tirana, Vatra Vlore Shelter in Vlore, Different and Equal Shelter in Tirana, Tjeter Vision/Another Vision Shelter in Elbasan, NGO Gjirokastra, and Woman Forum Elbasan.
- <sup>20</sup> Agolli, M., Kocaqi, M., Plaku, A. (2013). The Road Map and Costing of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in Albania.
- <sup>21</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The information is available for two State shelters only (National Treatment Center for Domestic Violence in Tirana and Host Center for Victims of Trafficking in Tirana). Women's shelters in Albania do not jointly collect data on the number of service users accommodated in the shelters.
- <sup>22</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 38.
- <sup>23</sup> A second national survey for domestic violence in Albania was conducted in 2013.
- <sup>24</sup> Haar, Dr. Robin N. and Dr. Milika Dharmo. (March 2009). Domestic Violence in Albania: A National Population-Based Survey. [National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) Albania]. Pg. 8.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid. Pg. 28.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid. Pg. 18.
- <sup>27</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012 : Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 35.
- <sup>28</sup> Human Rights in Democracy Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.

# ARMENIA (REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Susanna Vardanyan (Women's Rights Center)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 2,969,081<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 1,438,917<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 2001

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1993

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2006

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

In Armenia, women's services provided by NGOs are often project based and receive little or no state funding. There are two national women's helplines, one of which operates 24/7 and provides assistance free of charge. In the period of January to July 2013, one of the helplines registered 1,344 phone calls, while data for 2012 for the second helpline indicates more than 300 phone calls received. Furthermore, there are only two women's shelters in Armenia, where 14 shelter places are available. One of the shelters provided accommodation for 160 women and children in the period of January to September 2013, whereas at least 15 women could not be accommodated due to lack of space, and were referred to other services for support. Currently, 95% of recommended women's shelter places are still missing.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*I am 35 years old.* Marriage brought me no happiness. I spent 12 years in an abusive relationship, with a husband who beat me, abused me and humiliated me continuously. He was unfaithful to me and would frequently bring his lovers to our home, where our child would witness his behavior. He had no concern for raising our child, had no job and racked up gambling debts. Adding to my already depressing situation, my mother-in-law used to blame me for my husband's actions.

Once my husband showed up intoxicated at my place of work and started to beat me. I was hospitalized. After leaving the hospital, I moved into my parents' home together with my son. My husband was against me living away from him and would regularly come to my parents' home to further abuse me, threaten me and demand money from me. I decided to for once escape the violence, when my husband attempted to murder me. During the 12 years of marriage, I was tolerant and patient. I overlooked my husband's betrayals and supported him financially, even paid off his gambling debts, and focused my energies on my son's musical education, but when I realized that my husband represented a danger to my life, I knew I could no longer be with him and I involved the police and then contacted a women's center. At the center, I received psychological counseling and was assisted with moving into a shelter.

During my marriage, my world was broken. I was always nervous, fearful and felt isolated. Due to the violence, I was not able to work continuously. I was afraid of making decisions by myself, and following his attempt to kill me, I became afraid of dying. The psychological counseling I received helped me to regain my self-confidence and independence, which helped me overcome many of my fears. The violence also impacted the relationships between my son and I, which has since improved and we have mutual respect and trust, knowing together that we wanted to start a new life. The center has also assisted me in finding employment. I currently live at my parents' home, together with my son. I work, earn money and am able to sustain my family by myself.



## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

The Women’s Rights Center support and drop in center has been in operation for 16 years and provides free of charge legal and psychological counseling to women survivors of domestic violence. Despite provision of crucial support to women survivors of violence, service provision by non-profit organizations in Armenia receives no or limited funding from the state and the services are therefore in difficult financial situation.<sup>4</sup> Services are often project based, which results in discontinued services upon completion of the project.

### WOMEN’S HELPLINE<sup>5 6</sup>

There are two national women’s helplines in Armenia.

The first helpline is called the National Hotline Service in Yerevan. It has operated since its establishment in 1999. The helpline is operated by the Armenian NGO Women’s Rights Center (support and drop in center). The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. In addition to providing support to survivors of domestic violence, the helpline provides free legal and psychological counseling. Support is offered mainly in Armenian, with Russian and English as needed. The helpline numbers are (+374 10 54 28 28 and 080 080 850). Additional helpline (099 887 808) is also operated by the Women’s Support Center with funding provided by the Tufenkian Foundation.

The second helpline is operated by the Armenian Lighthouse Foundation<sup>7</sup> and the phone number is (20 80).

**Based on this information, Armenia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



National Women’s Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (January-July 2013) <sup>8</sup>
2	Yes (at least 1)	Yes (at least 1)	1,344 phone calls, telephone counseling and informative sessions

### WOMEN’S SHELTERS<sup>9 10</sup>

There are two women’s shelters in Armenia with approximately 14 shelter places available. Originally, the first shelter was established in 2002 by an independent women’s NGO Women’s Rights Center. This shelter has been closed since 31 May 2013 due to expiration of project funding. The current shelters include one funded by the by the Tufenkian Foundation and operated by the Women’s Support Center, which opened in 2012. The second shelter is funded by the Armenian Lighthouse Foundation. The shelters accommodate women survivors of domestic violence and their children, but also women experiencing poverty and pregnant women. There is a 90 day stay limit at the shelter supported by the Tufenkian Foundation and women can stay up to two years at the shelter funded by the Armenian Lighthouse Foundation. The shelters are predominantly funded by foreign donations.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 297 women’s shelter places are needed in Armenia. With approximately 283 women’s shelter places missing (95%), Armenia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women’s Shelters						
Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (January-September 2013) <sup>11</sup>
2	297	14	283	95%	212,077	160 women and children accommodated, 15-20 women could not be accommodated due to lack of space <sup>12</sup>

### WOMEN’S CENTERS

Armenia is divided into 11 regions. Currently, there is only one crisis center (women’s support and drop in center); it is located in Yerevan and operated by the Women’s Rights Center.<sup>13</sup> There were four counseling centers in these regions: Gegharkounik, Tavoush, Lori and Syunik, however they all closed in May 2013.<sup>14</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Armenia is available from the prevalence of violence survey Nation-Wide Survey on Domestic Violence against Women in Armenia published in 2010. No definition or indications are given in the survey as to what acts were deemed to constitute sexual violence. The women surveyed were aged 15 to 49 years, and the perpetrators included intimate partners.

Of ever-partnered women who reported having suffered one or several forms of violence by their intimate partner at some point in their life, 3.3% reported that they had been subjected to sexual violence.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, 9.2% of women disclosed having experienced sexual violence in childhood or adolescence, before the age of 15.<sup>16</sup>

Sexual and physical violence have significant consequences on the physical (sexually transmitted diseases, miscarriages) and psychological health of women. The survey indicates that 22.1% of ever-partnered women that were ever subjected to physical or sexual violence were at least once injured due to physical or sexual violence by their intimate partners.<sup>17</sup> Sexual and physical violence overlap; the survey estimates that one in five women subjected to physical violence has also been a victim of sexual abuse.<sup>18</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There is no information available on the existence of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Armenia.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> <http://countryeconomy.com/demography/population/armenia>
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Women's Rights Center, located in Armenia.
- <sup>4</sup> Women's Rights Center. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 42.
- <sup>6</sup> Women's Rights Center. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid: The Armenian Lighthouse Charitable Foundation was established in 2006 in Yerevan, Armenia. The idea of a "lighthouse" was first established by the Ghazarian Foundation in 1999 and grew out of the concern for the situation of Armenian women and children, and the integrity of the Armenian family.
- <sup>8</sup> Women's Rights Center. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The helpline operated by the Women's Rights Center had 1,344 registered calls in the period of 1 January 2013 – 31 July 2013 that included 897 counseling sessions regarding domestic violence and 447 inquiries for information. Additionally, in 2012, the second helpline funded by the Armenian Lighthouse Foundation helpline received more than 300 phone calls.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 42.
- <sup>10</sup> Women's Rights Center. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid: The data refers to a nine month period of January-September 2013 and refers to the shelter operated with the support of the Armenian Lighthouse Charitable Foundation.
- <sup>12</sup> Women and children not able to be accommodated are referred to other organizations for support.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 42.
- <sup>14</sup> Women's Rights Center. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>15</sup> UN Population Fund (UNFPA). (2010). Nation-Wide Survey on Domestic Violence against Women in Armenia. [National Statistical Service of Republic of Armenia]. Yerevan. Pg. 10.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. Pg. 11.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.

# AUSTRIA (REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Maria Rösslhumer (Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network - AÖF and Information Centre against Violence)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 8,365,275

Female population: 4,291,705

Member of Council of Europe: 1956

Member of European Union: 1995

CEDAW ratified: 1982

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: 14 November 2013

## SUMMARY

There is a national women's helpline in Austria that operates 24/7 and is free of charge. In 2013, the helpline assisted 7,970 callers; 6,597 of which were women. There are 30 women's shelters throughout the country with 759 shelter places available. In 2012, a total of 1,735 women and 1,767 children were accommodated in women's shelters. Currently, Austria meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for women's helpline provision, but with 9% of women's shelter places missing, it does not yet meet the recommendations for women's shelter provision. In addition, there are nine intervention centres available providing various support for women survivors of violence. In 2013, a shelter accommodating women and girls survivors of forced marriage was opened in Vienna.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*I am 33 years old.* I was in an abusive marriage and eventually turned to the women's shelter of one of the Austrian autonomous women's shelters to escape the violence. Here I gave birth to my daughter, who is now 3.5 years old. I never had any family of my own, as I grew up in a children's home. I wanted to have a higher education and I even studied for one year at a university, however, as I had no family supporting me as a young adult, I quit school and started to work. At present, I am starting out my life anew and I have learned a lot from my stay at the women's shelter.

One day, I left my violent husband and fled to a friend living in a city of Upper Austria. She took me to the police station, where I was informed about the possibility of staying at a women's shelter. When I went to the shelter for the first time, I did not know what to expect, everything was new and I just hoped that I would receive help for my situation.

During my first stay at the women's shelter, my then husband called me about 15 times a day, for an entire month. This was so horrible for me, it was stressful and burdensome, so after a month, I could not take it anymore and I went back to him. Three months later, I had to return to the shelter again as the violence did not stop. Meanwhile I was pregnant from my husband. It was a difficult time for me, also because my pregnancy was not an easy one. But I had a quiet room at the shelter where I could stay, and finally get some sleep, and that in itself was amazing for me. I also enjoyed living together with women from Austria and from different countries, this was fulfilling and made my difficult situation (being pregnant and alone, the uncertainty, everything being new...) easier. The time for me was still very difficult and I suffered from depression. But it was good to be in the women's shelter: even though the shelter staff working there were always very busy, they always found time to come and see me and make sure I had everything I needed. It was comforting to see that the work they did was more than just a job for them, that they put their heart into it, I still remember this until today.



Having a supportive environment helped me to come to terms with everything. I received much positive input in the shelter. For example, throughout my life, I have always felt compassion for others to the point, where I sacrificed my needs to fulfil theirs. And then, I would have no more energy and power for myself. We spoke about this during my counselling sessions at the shelter and I decided that I could no longer go on living like this, that I had to also care about myself and recognize that my needs are important.

After one year in the women's shelter, I moved into a flat of my own, with my baby. At first I was happy to have my own place, as sometimes it would get a little loud in the shelter with all the children living there. But then, for the first three to four months, I felt very lonely because I got used to living with different women and I missed the support we provided for each other. For this reason, I visited the women's shelter on several occasions during this time. I also had some follow-up visits at the shelter, so it worked out quite well to visit with the staff and the women, who lived there. I really enjoyed the visits, but after a few months, I came less often, as I was now starting to feel a lot more independent.

The stay in the women's shelter had a great impact on my life: I have given birth to a child, I have grown up, and I finally experienced knowing what it means to have a family. Here in the shelter, I had the chance to see positive role models among the women. What I saw there was a lot different from my own experiences in the past. I thought that of these many women, they are all so different and have different ways of coping with the abuse they suffered - but all of them need peace, all of them need time and space to be able to gather their strength. Becoming confident is very important in overcoming abuse. I have often observed how women slowly gained self-confidence, and how it changed them for the better. I have finally understood that I do not need anyone to tell me whether they approve of me, of how I look for example – this recognition must come from me. I know for the future, that no matter how difficult life may become, I know who I am.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>2</sup>

There is one women's helpline in Austria. It is called the Women's Helpline against Violence (Frauenhelpline gegen Gewalt) and is run by an independent women's NGO, the Austrian Women's Shelter Network (AÖF). The phone number of the helpline is (0800 222 555). It operates 24/7, is free of charge and provides assistance to women survivors of all forms of violence against women. Multilingual assistance is provided in Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Turkish, Romanian and English. The multilingual staff is only available once a week on specific days, except for English, which is available throughout the week.<sup>3</sup> The Women's Helpline is 100% financed by the Ministry for Women's Affairs.<sup>4</sup>

**Based on this information, Austria meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2013) <sup>5</sup>
1	Yes	Yes	7,970 calls in total, of which 6,597 were from women

## WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 30 women's shelters in Austria with approximately 759 shelter places available. The first women's shelter was opened in 1978 in Vienna and the most recent in 2005 in Carinthia. All 30 shelters are run by independent women's NGOs. The shelters accept women survivors of violence and their children. In five of the shelters, the women can be accommodated for a period of four to six months, while in the remaining shelters women can stay up to 12 months.<sup>6</sup> The Viennese women's shelters additionally offer 55 safe (transitional) places in flats/apartments designated specifically for women following their stay at the shelter. The shelters are predominantly funded by the state (80-100%) and by private donations (0-20%).<sup>7</sup>

In 2013, the first shelter for women and girls, survivors of forced marriage opened in Vienna with eight shelter places available. This shelter is run by an independent women's NGO and is 100% financed by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Women's Affairs.<sup>8</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 837 women's shelter places are needed in Austria. With approximately 78 women's shelter places missing (9%), Austria does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>9</sup>
30	837	759	78	9%	11,021	1,735 women and 1,767 children were accommodated (3,502 in total <sup>10</sup> )

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are nine intervention centers for women survivors of domestic violence in Austria – one in each Bundesland. The first centers were opened in 1998 in Vienna and in Graz. All centers are run by independent women's NGOs. In addition, there are approximately 10-12 centers for migrant, minority ethnic, Roma and asylum seeking women as well as undocumented migrant women in Austria. These centers offer specialized legal advice and psychological support for all women, including women survivors of domestic violence.<sup>11</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Austria is available from the prevalence of violence survey titled Violence in the Family and in Close Social Spheres: Austrian Prevalence Study on Violence against Women and Men, published in 2011. Additionally, information on sexual harassment is provided in the study. The survey shows that 29.5% of women experience sexual violence (a quarter of these are victims of rape)<sup>12</sup> and 74.2% of women experience sexual harassment at some point in their lifetime since the age of 16.<sup>13</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>14</sup>

There are six women's centres for survivors of sexual violence in Austria. Five of the centres are run by independent women's NGOs and one is run by the state. The centres are predominantly funded by the state (90%) and private donations (10%). The center in Vienna is fully funded by the state (by City of Vienna).<sup>15</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> The story was made available by WAVE Focal Point Austrian Women's Shelter Network, located in Austria.
- <sup>2</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 47.
- <sup>3</sup> See the homepage of the Women's helpline: [[www.frauenhelpline.at/de/muttersprachliche-beratung](http://www.frauenhelpline.at/de/muttersprachliche-beratung)]
- <sup>4</sup> Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network – AÖF. (2014). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 48.
- <sup>7</sup> Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network – AÖF. (2014). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network – AÖF. (2014). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The information provided refers to 26 of the 30 women's shelters of the Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network. Information on how many women and children could not be accommodated due to lack of space is not available, however, it is estimated that about 100 women and children must find alternative situation due not being able to find place at the women's shelter, and unable to return home due to being in a dangerous situation.
- <sup>10</sup> The Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network exists since 1988 and gathers the statistics from the women's shelters since 1991. The data includes the total number of days that women and their children were accommodated. In 2010, women and children spent a total of 194,179 days in 26 of the 30 women's shelters, where data is available.
- <sup>11</sup> Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network – AÖF. (2014). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also: Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Ibid. Pg. 48.
- <sup>12</sup> European Women's Lobby (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 15.
- <sup>13</sup> Kapella, Olaf et al. (2011). Gewalt in der Familie und im nahen Sozialen Umfeld: Österreichische Prävalenzstudie zur Gewalt an Frauen und Männer. [Österreichisches Institut für Familienforschung (ÖIF)]. Vienna. Pg. 60.
- <sup>14</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 47.
- <sup>15</sup> Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelter Network – AÖF. (2014). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

# AZERBAIJAN

(REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN)

COUNTRY EXPERT: Mehriban Zeynalova (Clean World Social Union Aid to Women)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 9,356,500<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 4,707,700<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 2001

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1995

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2001

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: No  
ratified: n/a



## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Azerbaijan operating 24/7 and free of charge. In 2013, the helpline received 4,865 calls. Additionally, there is one women's shelter in Azerbaijan with eight shelter places available. Currently, 99% of recommended shelter places are missing in the country. Lack of state funding for women's services has had detrimental impact on their sustainability. At the time, Azerbaijan meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on national women's helpline provision; the country does not meet the recommendations on women's shelter service provision.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*Violence against women in Azerbaijan is prevalent.* The situation for many women who try to escape violence is dire, and is worsened by victims' distrust of authorities and fear of rejection from family members, if the violence is disclosed. Additionally, service provision for women survivors of violence is scarce and affected women do not have ready access to information about available services or methods of support they could utilize. Women who are especially economically dependent on the perpetrator have limited options and often remain with the abusers, as they have nowhere else to go.

Intimate partner violence against women manifests itself in physical, psychological and sexual violence, and threats of murder, among other acts. With lacking trust in the police and lack of social protection, a woman may remain for years in a violent relationship, suffer from unwanted pregnancies, experience severe violence, and continue to live in fear for her life. Raising the issue of divorce or separation places the woman at increased risk of violence, and even when she manages to escape her home and find place in a shelter, the road to rebuilding her life is often long and difficult due to the consequences of the long-term and coercive pattern of abuse she has suffered. In the meantime, the perpetrator is likely to go unpunished and continue (openly) to exert different forms of violence against his partner (destruction of personal property, social isolation, harassment), when feeling a sense of immunity from the law.

As violence against women has its roots in inequality and discrimination, women in Azerbaijan find themselves at further risk due to prevalent injustice, dismissive attitude towards human rights and poverty. The recent presence of international organizations and NGOs in Azerbaijan has raised awareness of societal problems such as internal displacement (800,000 persons are internally displaced today in Azerbaijan), prostitution, drug abuse, domestic violence, police abuse, harassment, alcoholism, human trafficking and AIDS. However, protection of marginalized groups is severely lacking and the state has yet to work on concrete solutions, including a national policy. This also stems from lack of research data, awareness-raising among civil society, and absence of qualified specialists with knowledge of root causes of societal problems, to offer viable solutions.



## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is a national women's helpline in Azerbaijan. It is operated by the organization Clean World Social Union Aid to Women. The number of the helpline is (+99 412 408 5696), it operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The helpline covers all forms of violence against women, including violence against women in the family, sexual violence and human trafficking. Assistance is available in Azerbaijani, English, Russian and Turkish. There is no state funding provided for operation of the helpline.<sup>4 5</sup>

**Based on this information, Azerbaijan meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



National Women's Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2013) <sup>6</sup>
1	Yes	Yes	4,865 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There is one women's shelter in Azerbaijan with eight shelter places available. It was opened in 2003 and is run by an NGO, accepting women survivors of domestic violence and their children. The period of stay in the shelter is from one week to six months depending on the individual situation of the survivor. For women with children, the stay may be prolonged for up to one year, if needed. Due to limited space in the shelter, many survivors are not able to be accommodated.<sup>7</sup> The shelter is predominantly funded by foreign donations and does not receive any state funding.<sup>8</sup> In addition to accommodation, the shelter provides women with psychological counseling, legal advice, and referrals to medical services.<sup>9</sup> In general, there are no permanently working shelters in Azerbaijan for women escaping violent situations.<sup>10</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 936 women's shelter places are needed in Azerbaijan. With 928 women's shelter places missing (99%), Azerbaijan does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women's Shelters						
Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2013) <sup>11</sup>
1	936	8	928	99%	1,169,563	245 women and 13 children were accommodated, 306 women and 16 children applying for shelter space could not be accommodated due to lack of space in the shelter.

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

The Ministry of Health in Azerbaijan has planned to open a women's counselling center in 2012.<sup>12</sup> At this point, the center has not yet been opened.<sup>13</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Azerbaijan is available from the prevalence of violence survey Azerbaijan Demographic and Health Survey 2006 published in 2008. The interview questionnaire reveals that sexual violence is defined as either: forced sexual initiation with current or former partner or husband, and/or physically forced sexual intercourse when the woman did not want to and/or the performance of forced sexual acts.<sup>14</sup>

According to the findings, 4% of women in Azerbaijan have experienced sexual violence at some point in their lives.<sup>15</sup> Of the women interviewed who have ever had sexual intercourse, 3% reported that their first intimate experience was forced. The survey shows that 3.5% of the women who experienced force at their first sexual experience were aged 15 to 19 at the time.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, reporting behaviors for sexual violence were studied in the survey. When compared to older women, younger women are less likely to report having experienced sexual violence.<sup>17</sup>

According to survey findings, values and attitudes within a culture have much to do with the way in which women and men perceive specific actions as acts of sexual violence and thus have an impact on the findings of the study.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, in the survey, women were asked to state which of the following circumstances justified refusal of intercourse: knowing husband has a sexually transmitted disease; knowing husband has intercourse with other women; being tired or not being in the mood. Younger women are less likely to agree that a woman is justified in refusing sex for the above reasons than older women: 43% of women aged 15-19 agreed that refusing sex the above reasons is justified, compared to 60-70% of women aged 20-29, and 70% or more of women in other age groups. Furthermore, there is also correlation with the marital status and number of children a woman has on believing that refusing sex for is justified for the above reasons: women who have never been married or, have no children are also less likely to agree that refusal is justified in all of the circumstances than other women.<sup>19</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

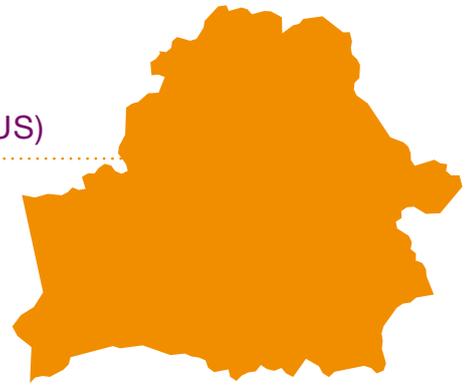
There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Azerbaijan.<sup>20</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Clean World Social Union Aid to Women: Data available on [www.azstat.org/MESearch/details]
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Clean World Social Union Aid to Women, located in Azerbaijan: The description has been adapted based on a story from a woman survivor of intimate partner violence and information about the general social and economic situation in the country.
- <sup>4</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 52.
- <sup>5</sup> Clean World Social Union Aid to Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 52.
- <sup>7</sup> Clean World Social Union Aid to Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 52.
- <sup>9</sup> Clean World Social Union Aid to Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>10</sup> Gender Association „Symmetry“. (2011). Women Access to Justice in Azerbaijan Report Gender. [Access: 8 October 2013: [http://www.karat.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Access\\_to\\_justice\\_Report\\_Azerbaijan\\_en.pdf](http://www.karat.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Access_to_justice_Report_Azerbaijan_en.pdf)]. Pg. 19.
- <sup>11</sup> Clean World Social Union Aid to Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 52.
- <sup>13</sup> Clean World Social Union Aid to Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>14</sup> Azerbaijan Demographic and Health Survey 2006. (May 2008). [State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan]. Pg. 218.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. Pg. 214.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. Pg. 202.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 53.

# BELARUS

(REPUBLIC OF BELARUS)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Irina Alkhovka, Chairperson of the Board (Gender Perspectives)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 9,665,120

Female population: 5,156,995

Member of Council of Europe: No

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1981

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2004

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Belarus and three women's shelters with a total of 23 shelter places are available to women survivors of violence. The most recent shelter was opened in June 2013. Since it was opened, until the end of the year, 21 women and 24 children were accommodated. In another shelter (in Lida), 60 women and 27 children were accommodated in 2013. Currently, the available shelter provision still misses 98% of recommended shelter places. There are efforts in place to institute services for survivors of violence that include services such as general helpline for survivors of domestic violence; and helpline for children, parents and professionals, who face situations of violence, abuse and neglect against children, among others.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*A 33 year old woman (Vera)<sup>2</sup>* called the national toll-free hotline for domestic violence survivors (8 801 100 88 01), run by the NGO 'Gender Perspectives'. The woman described her situation as follows: she has run away from her husband, who had beaten her, and she now lives with her children at her mother's home. She had to visit a medical centre, as she had hematomas on her face and neck, and doctors also diagnosed a concussion of her brain.

When Vera described what happened to her, doctors channelled the information to the police. The local police officer visited Vera in the hospital to clarify the facts of the case. Vera submitted the claim against her spouse, but police did not undertake any actions for two weeks. So, Vera approached the national toll-free hotline for domestic violence survivors for advice on how to proceed further with the case. The hotline consultant provided her with emotional support and information, and referred Vera to the social worker/case manager of 'Gender Perspectives' for further assistance.

During the meeting with the social worker, Vera stated that it was not the first time her husband physically abused her, but the first time she decided to reach out for help in public. During the ten-year marriage, Vera went through physical, psychological violence (paranoid jealousy, humiliating behaviour, total control from the spouse's side) and economic violence (all the financial means were under husband's control). She has two children (five and twelve years old.)

While attempting to escape the violence, Vera faced the following difficulties: Financial - (During the marriage all the acquired property was registered to the relatives of the husband. Vera had to move out with her children, and could take only her personal belongings. Vera also lost her job, because she worked in the company with her husband, owned by her husband's relatives); Psychological - (Vera suffered acute

stress); Housing - (Vera had to live at her parents' premises with her children, because she had no legal rights to the apartment she lived in during the marriage. Also, at the time she would have needed it, there was not a single women's shelter in her city.); Lack of information about her rights and options for a way out of the existing situation.

As a result, there was no possibility to hold her husband administratively<sup>3</sup> liable, because it was next to impossible to prove a case of violence, despite of the existence of the medical expertise with documented traumas, due to the absence of a law on domestic violence in Belarus. Moreover, an investigation into administrative offence can only start upon written claim of victims.

Vera also faced the biased attitude from the police side (male officers), who underestimated the seriousness of the accident, made hints that Vera fabricated the violent situation due to the vested interests, and took the offender's side. Finally, the case was not submitted to the court due to the lack of evidence and absence of witnesses.

During several months Vera obtained legal assistance for the filing for divorce, for alimony, for division of property, holding the spouse liable for violence, and formulating several complaints and claims. Without the assistance of IPA 'Gender perspectives', Vera could never have been able to afford a qualified and usually expensive legal assistance. For example, one day of court hearing with attorney participation costs approximately 120-150 USD, while an average monthly salary in cities is 500 USD.

For 10 months Vera required psychological assistance and support from the specialists of 'Gender Perspectives'.

Currently, her crisis situation is resolved, she found a new job, became divorced, resides at her parents' apartments with her children, the litigation on the property division, acquired in the marriage, is in the court resolution stage (it took more than a year to bring it to the court). Presently, Vera and her children live in a safe and peaceful atmosphere.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is no national women's helpline in Belarus addressing domestic violence or other forms of violence against women.<sup>4</sup>

**Based on this information, Belarus does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are three women's shelters with 23 shelter places in Belarus.<sup>5</sup> One shelter is located in Lida (Grodno region), the other shelter, the 'Social Crisis Center for Women', is based in Mogilev SOS Children village and the newest one, the 'Shelter for Women Survivors of Domestic Violence and their Children', is located in Minsk and is operating since June 2013.<sup>6</sup>

The shelter in Lida is run by the Orthodox Sisterhood of the Orthodox Church and offers seven places for women and children.<sup>7</sup> The period of stay in the Lida shelter is up to three months.<sup>8</sup> The Mogilev based shelter, the 'Social Crisis Center for Women' is run by an NGO and offers seven places for women and up to 14 places for children.<sup>9</sup> The Minsk based shelter is also run by an NGO and offers 9 places for women and their children.<sup>10</sup> The services in the shelters are free of charge and the women and children staying at the shelters are provided with social and psychological support.<sup>11</sup> The shelters are predominantly funded by private donations with the shelter run by the church supported by its own funding. Neither of the shelters receives support from the state.<sup>12</sup> Inadequate capacities of shelters make many women continue to suffer from domestic violence and live together with aggressors.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding the collection of data of women's shelters, only the state can collect and provide 'national' statistics. There is no other agency collecting statistics on women's shelters. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection only collects statistics on state crisis rooms and the number of women using their services. Some of the difficulties in collecting of nationwide statistics of women's shelters include the different definition of clients of each shelters, which are thus difficult to compare; the lacking resources for NGOs for the collection, analysis and presentation of statistics. Also, the women's shelters run by NGOs are operated according to different principles on how to face domestic violence than, for example, a church run center.<sup>14</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 967 women's shelter places are needed in Belarus. With approximately 944 women's shelter places missing (98%), Belarus does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2013) <sup>15</sup>
3	967	23	944	98%	420,223	81 women and 51 children <sup>16</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are no women specific centers in Belarus serving women survivors of domestic violence or other forms of violence.<sup>17</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on sexual violence in Belarus is available from the prevalence of violence survey titled Main Outcomes of the Survey on Domestic Violence Assessment in the Republic of Belarus in 2008 published in 2008.<sup>18</sup> The study focused on intimate partner violence where only violence in opposite sex relationships was studied. The male and female respondents ranged from 18-60 years old. Much of the data is collected for physical violence and sexual violence together, which makes it difficult to gather specific data on sexual violence.

Accordingly, 8% of women have suffered from physical and sexual violence at home. More specifically, 13.1% of women experienced sexual violence from their spouses.<sup>19</sup>

Childhood experiences appear to have large impact on the experience of violence in adulthood. Among the female respondents, who witnessed physical violence in their families, 17.5% have experienced sexual violence. Furthermore, among those women who were subject to physical violent acts in their childhood, 21.9% have become sexual violence victims.<sup>20</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Belarus.<sup>21</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

The NGO 'Gender Perspectives' is operating a hotline for survivors of domestic violence. In 2012, it received 767 calls and in 2013, 2,960 calls.<sup>22</sup> The helpline was launched on 13 August 2012, its number is (8 801 100 8 801). The helpline is free of charge and operates 12 hours per day (08:00-20:00), seven days a week. The helpline provides psychological, legal and social counselling and refers survivors to support services available in the country. The helpline is funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in Belarus.<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, there is a helpline for children, parents and professionals, who face situations of violence, abuse and situations of child neglect. The number of this helpline is (8 801 100 16 11). The helpline is free of charge and operates 24/7. It is operated by a state health institution, whose staff is trained and supported by the NGO called 'Understanding'. It is a member organization of Child Helpline International.<sup>24</sup>

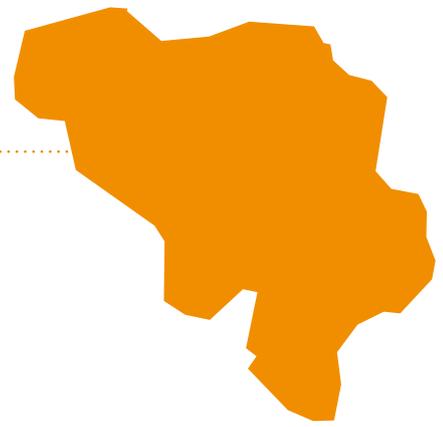
Other helplines available in Belarus include an anti-trafficking information line (113). The helpline is free of charge and offers counselling on safe migration and serves as an SOS line for victims of trafficking. The anti-trafficking information line is operated by the NGO 'Gender Perspectives' (in the framework of the La Strada Belarus Programme and Business Women's Club of Brest).<sup>25</sup>

Lastly, 148 Territorial Centers of Social Assistance are available in Belarus. In addition to offering psychological support and legal counselling free of charge, 53 of the centers offer accommodation facilities called 'crisis rooms' for any person in a difficult situation. This includes survivors of domestic violence. The centers are not operating 24/7, but are mainly opened during business hours. The limit on stay is usually 10 days. Admission decisions are usually made by several specialists, which increases the length of the admission procedure and the accommodation is not often used by women survivors of violence as it is not suitable for them.<sup>26</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives', located in Belarus.
- <sup>2</sup> The name has been changed to protect the identity of the woman.
- <sup>3</sup> In the majority of cases, domestic violence is treated as an administrative offense. When domestic violence does not result in severe bodily injury, such case is addressed under the Administrative Code. Practice shows that majority of domestic violence cases are addressed as administrative offense, and later escalate leading to a criminal offense. This is usually a result of the victim filing a complaint, reaching out for help, and/or seeking justice, which causes the perpetrator to behave more violently. Treating the case as an administrative offense leads to problems for the victim, for one because the perpetrator is not properly addressed and hence is free to continue the violence, which is more likely to escalate during this time. Furthermore, in administrative offense cases, the court has the option, and not the obligation to inform the victim about the hearing taking place. This results in proceedings taking place without the knowledge and presence of the victim, who finds out about any decisions taken only after the fact. If the victim does not become aware of the decision in a timely manner, she may also lose the possibility to file an appeal to the ruling, if decision taken is not favorable to the victim. Treating domestic violence cases as administrative offense often results in women withdrawing their claims, when they experience escalation of violence and threats by the perpetrator. Additionally, administrative offense judgments resulting in monetary penalties are often paid out from the family budget and further harmful to the victim and/or the children.
- <sup>4</sup> International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives'. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also: Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 57.
- <sup>5</sup> International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives'. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 57.
- <sup>9</sup> International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives'. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives'. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also: Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence.Pg.57.
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence.Pg.57.
- <sup>13</sup> International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives'. (2013). Information provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives'. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The two shelters for which statistics were available were the shelter for survivors of domestic violence in Lida (the whole year 2013) and the Shelter for women survivors of domestic violence and their children in Minsk (since its launching from June 2013).
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid: Among these, 60 women and 27 children were accommodated in the Shelter in Lida, 21 women and 24 children were accommodated in the shelter in Minsk. In 2012, the shelter in Lida accommodated about 82 women and 65 children.
- <sup>17</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg.58.
- <sup>18</sup> Centre of Sociological and Political Research of the Belarusian State University and United Nations Representative in the Republic of Belarus. (2008). Main Outcomes of the Survey on Domestic Violence Assessment in the Republic of Belarus in 2008. Pg.1: A summary in English of the Findings is available on the UN Secretary General's Data Base on Violence against women: [<http://sgdatabse.unwomen.org/searchDetail.action?measureId=25127&baseHref=country&baseHrefId=206>]
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. Pg.2.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> International Public Association 'Gender Perspectives'. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 57.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid.

# BELGIUM (KINGDOM OF BELGIUM)



## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 10,666,866  
 Female population: 5,442,557  
 Member of Council of Europe: 1949  
 Member of European Union: 1957  
 CEDAW ratified: 1985  
 CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2004  
 CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
 signed: 11 September 2012  
 ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is no national women’s helpline in Belgium and three helplines offer support for survivors of violence in each region of the country. Furthermore, there are 26 women’s shelters with 460 shelter places available. Currently, 57% of recommended shelter places are missing in Belgium. As of yet, the country does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendation for provision of a national women’s helpline and available shelter places.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN’S HELPLINE

There is no national women’s helpline in Belgium.<sup>1</sup>

**Based on this information, Belgium does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

However, based on the structure and language differences in Belgium, it is important to note that each region has its own helpline. Specifically for cases of violence, there are three helplines, one in Flemish and two in French. For Flemish speakers and all forms of violence, domestic (any member of the family), child abuse, elder abuse, sexual violence, ‘honor related’ violence, and more, the helpline number is 1712 ([www.1712.be](http://www.1712.be)). For French speakers encountering marital violence, victims can contact Ecoute Violences Conjugales at 0800.30.030([www.ecouteviolencesconjugales.be](http://www.ecouteviolencesconjugales.be)). For French speakers experiencing sexual violence, there is the SOS Viol 02/534.36.36 ([www.sosviol.be](http://www.sosviol.be)).

### WOMEN’S SHELTERS

There are 26 women’s shelters in Belgium with approximately 460 shelter places available. The first four shelters were established in 1977 and another 10 in 1980. Of the shelters, 22 are located in Flanders, three in Wallonia and one in Brussels. The 22 shelters in Flanders offer 350 shelter places and those in Wallonia and Brussels 110 in total. The shelters specialize in accommodating women survivors of all forms of violence. The shelters are predominantly funded by the state.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 1,067 women’s shelter places are needed in Belgium. With approximately 607 women’s shelter places missing (57%), Belgium does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



### Women’s Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
26	1,067	460	607	57%	23,189	-

### WOMEN’S CENTERS

There are no women’s centers in Belgium.<sup>3</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Belgium is available from the prevalence of violence survey, Emotional, Physical and Sexual Abuse – The Experiences of Women and Men, published in 2010. In the survey, there is no differentiation between the term ‘violence’ and ‘abuse’.

Sexual violence in the survey includes rape, unwanted sexual relations and unwanted touching. The survey sets two time periods to analyze the occurrence of violence: over a lifetime (since adulthood) and over the last 12 months prior to the interview. Sexual violence includes, but is not limited to, forced sexual touching, attempted forced sexual relations, and forced sexual relations. Two other types of sexual abuse are considered in the report: sexual abuse in ‘public areas’ context (in the past 12 months; in the street/public transport/other public area, unwanted touching or grabbing) and sexual abuse in the ‘couple’ context (in the past 12 months; humiliating or degrading sexual practices or gestures imposed by partner/ex-partner).<sup>4</sup>

Findings of the survey show that, of the women who declared having experienced forced or unwanted sexual touching or relations, 48.4% identified their partner as perpetrator, 9.7% a family member, 12.9% a friend, 6.5% someone in the workplace, and 22.6% a stranger. Therefore, a majority of cases disclosed occur in the private (marital or family) space. By comparison, a majority of cases of sexual abuse reported by men are committed by either a friend (37.5%) or a stranger (37.5%).<sup>5</sup>

With 8% of women in the age group 35 to 44 years, and 8.8% in the age group 44 to 54 years experiencing sexual violence, occurrence of sexual abuse is prevalent in these two age groups and twice as high as in other groups.<sup>6</sup>

The survey shows that, over the lifetime, 5.6% of the women experienced forced or unwanted sexual touching or relations occurring after the age of 18.<sup>7</sup> When sexual abuse was not an isolated occurrence, it may have occurred as often as 10 times or more.<sup>8</sup> A majority of women (70.6%) have talked to someone about their experience; while as many as 29.4% of women did not disclose it to anyone, which is most often the case when the perpetrator is the intimate partner.<sup>9</sup>

When sexual abuse occurred before adulthood, 8.1% of women declared having experienced forced sexual touching and 3.9% unwanted sexual intercourse. Overall, 8.9% of the women interviewed were victims of sexual abuse before the age of 18, most of the time perpetrated by a male family member, a close friend or a stranger.<sup>10</sup> Half of the time, sexual violence was experienced as a single occurrence.<sup>11</sup>

Most of the women who reported having experienced sexual violence in the last 12 months prior to the interview identified their current partner as the perpetrator.<sup>12</sup>

Sexual violence, among other types of abuse, has long lasting consequences. As indicated in the survey, these include stress, depression and anxiety, insomnia, use of sleeping pills and anti-depressants, consumption of illicit drugs and alcohol, suicide attempts and the need for psychological counseling.<sup>13</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There is no information available on the availability of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence.<sup>14</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Belgium's services for women survivors of violence are based on the administrative regional structure of the country. This is especially the case for helplines. In addition to the regional helplines specific for violence, Belgium has three regional general hotlines offering support to anyone in a crisis situation. The helplines offer support in Flemish (106), French (107) and German (108). Additionally, there are five counselling helplines for each Flemish region run by Center for Social Care (CAW), that offer specialized assistance for survivors of domestic violence. Counselling is offered in Flemish, French and English. The phone calls are free of charge. Additionally, the five counselling centers (CAWs) available offer general support, however, they can also be accessed by women survivors of violence, and the support offered is specialized for survivors of domestic violence, although is not gender specific.<sup>15</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 63.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Pieters, Jérôme et al. (2010). Emotional, Physical and Sexual Abuse – The Experiences of Women and Men. [Institute for the Equality of Women and Men]. Pg. 18.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pg. 46-47.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid. Pg. 32: Prevalence rates for other age groups are 3.1% (18-24 years), 4.1% (25-34 years), 5.0% (55-64 years), and 3.1% (65-75 years).
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid. Pg. 28.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid. Pg. 48.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid. Pg. 50-51.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid. Pg. 56-57.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid. Pg. 57-58.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. Pg. 72-73.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. Pg. 36-41.
- <sup>14</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 63.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.



# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



COUNTRY EXPERT: Sabiha Husić (Association 'Medica' Zenica)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 3,842,566

Female population: 1,965,254

Member of Council of Europe: 2002

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1993

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: 8 March 2013

ratified: 7 November 2013

## SUMMARY

There are two national women's helplines in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Both helplines operate on a 24/7 basis and are free of charge. Over the year 2012, both helplines received 5,493 calls. Furthermore, there are 10 women's shelters, with approximately 185 shelter places available. Currently, 52% of recommended shelter places are missing in BiH. Over the year 2012, 274 women and 336 children were accommodated in women's shelters. As a result, Bosnia and Herzegovina meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline, but does not meet the recommendations on provision of women's shelters.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

Letter addressed by a woman survivor participating in the 20-year anniversary conference organized by 'Medica' Zenica and medica mondiale, 24-25<sup>th</sup> October 2013, in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*Dear Friends,*

I wrote this at the break of dawn. Your presentations had an immense impact on me, so I simply decided to write this. I write because I do not have the strength to speak. To be a woman victim of war, while also being a mother, a wife, a daughter and a sister, is a burden that we who survived such events must live with. You all talk about rights and justice for victims, but in reality those are absent from our everyday lives. In order for us to fulfil any of our rights, we have to go from one institution to another, speak about our painful past and explain who we are. Repeatedly, and always with difficulty, we try to achieve those rights. Many women victims of war do not have access to proper housing. They are unemployed and their children find no support for education. Many of them live in large families and the benefits they receive are often their only source of finances. In such families, even greater traumas are generated, sometimes leading women to have suicidal tendencies. Despite all the worries they have to carry, women victims try to suppress their pain and suffering. Only sometimes, when their inner strength fails them, they scream out. Others then wonder, "What is wrong with her? Yesterday, she was normal."

In the silence of my room, I thought a lot of all that was said yesterday. I saw that you were all great humanists, and dedicated fighters for rights. I ask you to do everything possible to improve the lives of victims and to empower them economically, for example through projects and the provision of material (i.e. agricultural machines). Help can come from women's empowerment through work. Women are diligent and hard working, and economic empowerment would contribute to making their lives easier.

Dear friends, while we were celebrating last night, thousands of women victims probably spent sleepless night thinking of how to

survive tomorrow. We really appreciate your work and are grateful for what you do, but we also ask you to help us achieve all those rights. Only once we are safe and secure, once we have homes, and once our children can go to school and find employment without problems, will our burden feel lighter. Until then, we will not only be victims of war, but also victims of peace. I am not a person familiar with using big words. I am writing this using my heart and my experience. Maybe this letter is pointless, but I simply had to write this in the name of all women victims. I felt the responsibility to draw your attention to the everyday problems we face. The eyes of thousands of women are turned to you.

I would like to thank the organizers, who enabled me to attend this event. This has been really important to me. I thank you all.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>2</sup>

There are two national women's helplines in Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of the helplines is the only SOS Helpline to cover the territory of Republika Srpska. The helpline (1264) was established in 2005 and is run by several NGOs. It operates 24/7 and is free of charge. It provides assistance to women survivors of domestic violence. The second helpline is the only SOS Helpline to cover the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The helpline (1265) was established in 2008 and is run by several NGOs and a social service center. The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. It provides assistance to women survivors of domestic violence.

**Based on this information, Bosnia and Herzegovina meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>3</sup>
2	Yes	Yes	5,493 calls received (4,303 by the Republika Srpska SOS Helpline and 1,190 by the Federation of BiH SOS Helpline)

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>4</sup>

There are 10 women's shelters in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with approximately 185 shelter places available.<sup>5</sup> The first shelter was opened by 'Medica' Zenica in 1993. The shelter assists women and children survivors of war and post-war sexual violence, survivors of domestic violence and violence in the family, as well as survivors of human trafficking. The last shelter was opened by the NGO Lara, in Bijeljina (Republika Srpska), in August 2012. All of the shelters for women survivors of domestic violence are run by NGOs (nine by independent women's NGOs and one by religious based NGO). All of the shelters accept children of the survivors and the period of stay is between one to six months. The shelters are partially funded by the state (on a federal, cantonal, and municipal level), as well as receive funds from other donor types.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 384 women's shelter places are needed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With approximately 199 women's shelter places missing (52%), Bosnia and Herzegovina does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>6</sup>
10	384	185	199	52%	20,771	274 women accommodated, 336 children accommodated with their mothers

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are 13 women's centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Twelve of the centers are run by independent women's NGOs and one by a religious based NGO. The centers include two crisis centers, five psychological counselling centers, and six legal aid and advice centers. Funding for the centers is primarily from foreign donations (90%) and from the state (10%).<sup>7</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

A study titled Prevalence and Characteristics of Violence against Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina was conducted in 2013 by the Gender Equality Agency of BiH.<sup>8</sup> The survey was conducted on a sample of 3,300 households and adult women in BiH. In the survey, sexual violence includes the following acts: coercion to have sexual intercourse against the will of the respondent; pressure to have sexual intercourse caused by fear; forcing respondents to do things during sexual intercourse that makes them feel humiliated; and touching or other acts of sexual meaning done against the will of the respondent.<sup>9</sup> Findings show that 6% of women have experienced sexual violence during their adult life (starting at age 15), while 1.3% of women experienced sexual violence in the last 12 months.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, 5.1% of women victims of partner violence reported having experienced sexual violence perpetrated by a current and/or former partner in their lifetime. However, reported cases of sexual violence perpetrated by a current partner remain very low (only 10), which makes any thorough analysis of the phenomenon difficult.<sup>11</sup> Among women victims of sexual violence committed by a partner in the last 12 months, as many as 71% experienced such violence more than once.<sup>12</sup>

Additional research was conducted by 'Medica' Zenica and is titled Second Look at the Tip of the Iceberg – Research on Gender-Based Violence and Violence against Children. The research was conducted in November 2008 and involved 700 female respondents (600 in Zenica and 100 in Modriča), ages 18 and above. The study results estimate that 8% of women have experienced sexual violence at the hands of their intimate partner in their lifetime.<sup>13</sup>

Over the period 2013-2014, the women's organization 'Medica' Zenica is conducting a comprehensive research on the long-term consequences of war rape and sexual violence, and coping strategies of survivors in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The findings of the research will be published and presented by mid-2014.<sup>14</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>15</sup>

There are two women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Both of the centers are run by independent women's NGOs. The first center was opened by 'Medica' Zenica in 1993 and the second in Tuzla in 1994. The funding for the centers comes predominantly from foreign donations.

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

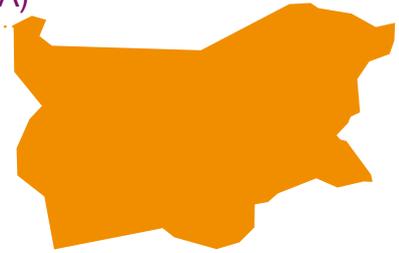
In addition to the two national women's helplines available in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a project activity for the year 2013 established a Blue Line for children victims of violence. Calls are free only when coming from a specific operator. The Blue Line for children operates from 11:00-15:00, from Monday to Friday.<sup>16</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point 'Medica' Zenica, located in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- <sup>2</sup> 'Medica' Zenica. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Shelter places refer here to shelter beds.
- <sup>6</sup> 'Medica' Zenica. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 69.
- <sup>8</sup> Prevalence and Characteristics of Violence against Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2013). [[http://www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyri/Vlada/centri/gendercentarrs/media/vijesti/Documents/prevalency\\_study.pdf](http://www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyri/Vlada/centri/gendercentarrs/media/vijesti/Documents/prevalency_study.pdf)]
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid. Pg. 67.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. Pg. 68.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 66.
- <sup>14</sup> 'Medica' Zenica. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>15</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 69.
- <sup>16</sup> 'Medica' Zenica. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

# BULGARIA

(REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation (BGRF), Nadja Centre

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 7,585,131

Female population: 3,914,835

Member of Council of Europe: 1992

Member of European Union: 2007

CEDAW ratified: 1982

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2006

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Bulgaria that is free of charge, but does not operate 24/7. In the period of June 2012 – June 2013, the helpline received 469 calls. There are six women's shelters in Bulgaria. In the period of June 2012 – June 2013, the shelters accommodated 110 women and 112 children. Currently, 93% of recommended women's shelter places are missing in Bulgaria, and the country does not yet meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelters. Furthermore, there are 12 women's centers in the country and no specialized centers for women survivors of sexual violence.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*I have a daughter* who is one and a half years old. The father of my daughter is my former boyfriend and he has abused me physically, psychologically as well as emotionally – and my daughter was a witness to the violence. The psychological violence started years ago – threats to my life, verbal abuses, 15-20 short messages per day and phone calls. The physical violence did not happen that often. His violence in the past has even included kidnapping my daughter. When I tried to take my daughter back, I was physically assaulted by him. He told me the reason he took our daughter away from me is to prohibit me from leaving the town, where he lived. A few days later he returned my daughter but continued to threaten me with messages and phone calls. I was under constant pressure and harassment. This is an example of how he had tried to restrict my liberty. What made my situation further difficult was that I was isolated and living in a town with my former partner, where I had no friends or family.

Since leaving the abuser, I have reached out for help – I lodged a complaint before the court. I have also informed the police officers and I asked the doctor to provide me with medical certificates for the injuries. I was assisted by two lawyers, both of them very well trained and very experienced women who supported me and gave me courage. The court issued an order for immediate protection, but it was not effective as the abuser continued to violate me and the police believed that his actions were not sufficient to deem his being in violation of the protective order.

The abuse has affected me and my daughter deeply. I could not stop thinking about it. I was especially let down by the lack of protection that was offered to me by the police. My daughter was deeply troubled emotionally and until today she is traumatized by the kidnapping incident.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Bulgaria run by Animus Association.<sup>2</sup> The phone number is (+359 2 981 76 86) and it is free of charge. The helpline does not operate 24/7.<sup>3</sup>

**Based on this information, Bulgaria does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (June 2012 - June 2013)
1	Yes	No	469 calls <sup>4</sup>

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are six women's shelters in Bulgaria with 55 shelter places available.<sup>5</sup> The first shelter was opened in 1997. The shelters are run by NGOs, a majority of which are members of the Alliance for Protection against Domestic Violence. The shelters are in Sofia (operated by Animus Association), Varna (operated by SOS Families at risk), Burgas (operated by Demetra), Pleven (operated by Open Door), Silistra (operated by Ekaterina Karavelova) and Pernik (operated by PULS). The shelters are specialized in accommodating survivors of domestic violence. All of the shelters accept children of the survivors, with an age limit for boys of 10-12 years in some of the shelters. The shelters offer a stay period of three to six months. All shelters have security precautions and are free of charge. The shelters are funded partly by the state, local municipality and foreign and private donations.<sup>6</sup>

According to national experts, in practice, access to women's services in Bulgaria is not ensured for all survivors of violence. The main reason for this is the insufficient number of places available in the shelters. Another obstacle is restrictive policies, where women cannot access shelters at night. A child over the age of 18 years cannot be accommodated in the shelter with the mother, even if he or she is mentally disabled.<sup>7</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 759 women's shelter places are needed in Bulgaria. With approximately 704 women's shelter places missing (93%), Bulgaria does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (June 2012 – June 2013)
6	759	55	704	93%	137,911	110 women accommodated, 112 children accommodated <sup>8</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are 12 women's centers in Bulgaria. All centers provide counseling, information and advice, advocacy, independent domestic violence advice and legal advice. Most of the centers offer intervention safety support, with few providing assistance with resettlement. The centers receive some state funding.<sup>9</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to the EWL Barometer on Rape, no government data on women victims of rape is available and studies on sexual violence against women are rare. A research carried out by a private agency, "Alpha Research Agency" in 2012 shows that between 100,000 and 250,000 Bulgarian women (11% of all Bulgarian Women) are sexually abused. In most cases (80%), the perpetrator is known to the victim. An increase of date rape, which mostly affects teenagers between 14 and 18 years of age, has also been noted.<sup>10</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Bulgaria.<sup>11</sup> According to the EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU



2013, a few NGO projects and programs offer counseling and legal aid for women, but the state does not systematically provide any mechanism for facilitating the access of women to counseling and to justice.<sup>12</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Additionally, there are two shelters for survivors of trafficking, funded by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Bulgaria.<sup>13</sup> One of the shelters, the SOS Family at Risk Foundation, is located in Varna; the other shelter, Association Equilibrium, is located in Burgas. Both shelters offer six places for survivors of trafficking.

Furthermore, several NGOs provide helplines for survivors of domestic violence, and some provide support in situations of trafficking, counseling for the relatives, or counseling to prevent violence. The NGO helplines operate in the frame of different projects and are implemented for a fixed period, depending on the availability of funding: The Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation operates a helpline in three Bulgarian cities – Sofia, Haskovo and Dimitrovgrad, but also receives calls from other towns; the Association Centre Dynamics operates a helpline in the Ruse region, the Helpline of the PULS Foundation operates in the Pernik region, and the association Open Door operates in the Pleven region. In 2012, almost all helplines operated from 9:00-21:00, whereas the BGRF helpline operated 24 hours on a voluntary basis.<sup>14</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by a women's organization in Bulgaria.
- <sup>2</sup> Nadja Centre. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Nadja Centre. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 71.
- <sup>7</sup> Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 72.
- <sup>10</sup> European Women's Lobby (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 19.
- <sup>11</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 72.
- <sup>12</sup> European Women's Lobby (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 19.
- <sup>13</sup> Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.

# CROATIA (REPUBLIC OF CROATIA)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: B.a.Be. – Be active. Be emancipated.,  
Women’s Room – Center for Sexual Rights,  
Autonomous Women’s House Zagreb

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 4,284,889<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 2,218,554<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1996

Member of European Union: Yes

CEDAW ratified: 1992

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2001

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: 22 January 2013

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is no national women’s helpline in Croatia. Furthermore, there are 16 women’s shelters with approximately 267 shelter places available for women survivors of violence. Currently, 38% of recommended shelter places are missing in Croatia. Over the year 2012, the shelter Safe House of Vukovar, run by the women’s organization B.a.be., accommodated 19 women and 28 children. As a result, Croatia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women’s helpline and women shelters. Additionally, there are 29 women’s centers in Croatia offering counselling and other support, and one women’s center for survivors of sexual violence.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*I am 35 years old* and I have four children between ages of 10 and three and a half. For nine years, my children and I were victims of physical, psychological, emotional and economic violence from my now ex-husband. For many years, we lived in near total isolation in a small wooden house at the edge of the forest, “sheltered” from all views. We lacked most commodities, and had no running water, electricity and heating for some time. We also never had proper toilets. After I gave birth to my second child, my husband started to beat me, from time to time, when he felt like doing so. He constantly insulted me and degraded me in front of the children. One day, in order to further isolate me, my husband decided to divide the house in two parts, using furniture. My children would not meet their grandparents, other children or anyone else for that matter. The last two years of our marriage were the worst. At this time, I was prevented from breastfeeding or even carry my fourth child. I was not allowed to talk to my children, take care of them, to be with them in any possible way.

I looked for help on several occasions: from a friend, a psychologist, a lawyer, a priest and from women’s organizations. I found understanding and support in the women’s shelter my children and I lived in for 16 months. There, I received free legal support and psychological counselling for my children and me. A lawyer helped me with the divorce procedure and represented me in court. I also found a lot of support listening to the experiences of other women in the shelter. It made me realize that I was not alone with my problem. Running away from my ex-husband together with my children was a rebirth. It was also for the best for my children, who had significant psychological and social problems at the time when we moved into the shelter. They were afraid of separation, afraid of other people, and afraid that their father would try to take them away. They had nightmares, problems with bedwetting, speech problems, and generally had no self-confidence.

My children are much better now. We have our own house and I have a job. The children can finally spend time with family relatives and with friends. They can finally celebrate birthdays and have a normal social life. My battle for the custody of my children has been going on for almost three years. I feel that the Croatian legal system is too slow in prosecuting and punishing abusers. My husband is still a free man; he still has not been punished. A real nightmare ended the day I escaped with my children. The next step will be to win the legal battle. But my outlook for the future is only positive!

Finally, I would like to share this quote from the movie Rocky Balboa, which helps me go on: “[I]t ain’t how hard you’re hit; it’s about how hard you can get hit, and keep moving forward. How much you can take, and keep moving forward. That’s how winning is done.”

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Support services for women and children victims of domestic violence often face a lack of funding. Most shelters cover annual expenses on a project basis and private individual and corporate donations. Lack of funding often has a negative impact on sustainability of staff.<sup>4</sup> While women’s shelters run by autonomous women’s NGOs should receive 30% of their funding from each of three state entities (the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, the town and the county), lack of available resources is often invoked as justification for decreased funding. This has particularly been the case during the economic crisis.<sup>5</sup>

The situation is also very difficult for women’s centers and rape crisis centers. While a lot of time and effort is spent on fundraising throughout the year, a majority of donors show little interest in funding activities such as counselling. Instead, they often make funding available for ‘new’ and ‘different’ projects. As a result, centers have a lot of difficulties finding resources to run their basic activities and support women survivors of different forms of violence.<sup>6</sup>

The Minister of Social Policy and Youth, appointed two years ago, has showed no interest in supporting or even communicating with women’s NGOs providing services. She frequently and publicly stated that shelters should be closed, and state’s focus turned towards work with perpetrators, while women and children should remain in the family house. Furthermore, she had showed no interest in furthering the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention, which she seems to have put ‘into the drawer’. This lack of support has gone hand in hand with decreasing levels of financing from the state, which regularly leads services to close.<sup>7</sup>

### WOMEN’S HELPLINE

There is no national women’s helpline in Croatia.<sup>8</sup>

**Based on this information, Croatia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN’S SHELTERS

There are 16 women’s shelters in Croatia with at least 267 shelter places available.<sup>9</sup> Eleven shelters are run by independent women’s NGOs or other NGOs<sup>10</sup>, and five are run by public institutions.<sup>11</sup> The shelters offer accommodation for women survivors of domestic violence. All of the shelters accept children of the survivors and offer a stay of more than six months. The shelters receive some level of state funding.<sup>12</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 428 women’s shelter places are needed in Croatia. With approximately 161 women’s shelter places missing (38%), Croatia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women’s Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>13</sup>
16	428	267	161	38%	16,048	19 women accommodated; 28 children accommodated

### WOMEN’S CENTERS<sup>14</sup>

There are 29 women’s centers, referred to as women’s counseling centers, in Croatia. All of the centers provide counseling, information and advice, resettlement support and independent domestic violence advice. Only few of the centers offer intervention safety support.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to findings published in the 2013 EWL Barometer on Rape, in 2012, women accounted for 90% of 'victims of criminal offences against sexual freedom and morality'. Furthermore, they accounted for 93.8% of victims of rape.<sup>15</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>16 17</sup>

There is one women's center for survivors of sexual violence. The center was set up in 2002 in Zagreb by an independent women's NGO Women's Room. The center is predominantly funded by foreign donations (56%), the state (40%) and private donations (4%).

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In addition to the women's shelters, six shelters – with at least 76 beds – accommodating women, men and children also service women survivors of violence. One shelter is the Organization for Integrity and Prosperity (OIP) in Split. The shelter is run by an NGO and services survivors of trafficking. The four remaining shelters are run by the state. They include Caritas Dubrovnik, Home for Children and Adult Victims of Domestic Violence "Rainbow" Zagreb, Home for victims of domestic violence "Saint Nicola Shelter" Varaždin, and Home for victims of domestic violence "Safe House" Čakovec.<sup>18</sup>

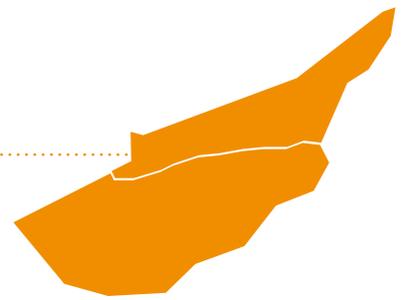
Although there is no national women's helpline in Croatia, about 35 different counseling and SOS helplines cover the whole of Croatia. The helplines run by Autonomous Women's House Zagreb and Women's Room operate eight hours a day on week days, and cover the whole of Croatia. Some of the women's counseling centers that work on a 24/7 basis also run helplines.<sup>19</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Croatian Bureau of Statistics. Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2011, Population by Sex and Age. [[http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/publication/2012/SI-1468.pdf](http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2012/SI-1468.pdf)]. Pg. 11.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Autonomous Women's House Zagreb, located in Croatia.
- <sup>4</sup> B.a.Be. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Autonomous Women's House Zagreb. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Women's Room. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> B.a.Be. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Women's Room and B.a.Be. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>9</sup> Women's Room. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>10</sup> Autonomous Women's House Zagreb, Center for Women Adela, Safe House of Vukovar, Shelter for victims of domestic violence "Iris", Shelter for victims of domestic violence "Rainbow", Safe House "Istria" (three shelters), Association for protection of the family – U.Z.O.R., Women's Group "Korak" Karlovac, Women Help Now.
- <sup>11</sup> Caritas Šibenik Diocese, Caritas Zagreb, Caritas Rijeka, Caritas Splitsko, Shelter for victims of domestic violence Osijek.
- <sup>12</sup> B.a.Be. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid: The data refers to the activity of the shelter B.a.Be. Safe House Vukovar – Srijem County over the last year period.
- <sup>14</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 77.
- <sup>15</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 21.
- <sup>16</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 77.
- <sup>17</sup> Women's Room. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.

# CYPRUS

(REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS); Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family (SPAVO)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 803,147  
Female population: 405,095  
Member of Council of Europe: 1961  
Member of European Union: 2004  
CEDAW ratified: 1985  
CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002  
CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: No  
ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Cyprus. The helpline is free of charge but does not operate on a 24/7 basis. In 2012, the helpline received 1,735 calls from women survivors of violence. Furthermore, there is only one women's shelter in Cyprus with nine shelter places available, and 89% of shelter places recommended are still missing. In 2012, the women's shelter accommodated 20 women and 28 children. There are no centers available for women victims of sexual violence in Cyprus. Hence, Cyprus does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on the provision of national women's helpline and women's shelters.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Cyprus named Center for Emergency Assistance Helpline. It is run by the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family (SPAVO), and provides support to women survivors of domestic violence, with female callers younger than 18 referred to the Social Welfare Services.<sup>1</sup> The national women's helpline (1440) is free of charge but does not operate 24/7. Hours of operation are 8:00-22:00. The helpline does not offer multilingual services and is limited to the use of Greek and English. It is predominantly funded by the state (50%), private donations (20%) and foreign donations (30%).<sup>2</sup>

**Based on this information, Cyprus does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations to provide a helpline that operates 24/7.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>3</sup>
1	Yes	No	1,735 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There is one women's shelter in Cyprus with approximately nine shelter places available.<sup>4</sup> The shelter was opened in Nicosia in 1997 by SPAVO. The shelter serves women survivors of domestic violence. It is free of charge and accepts children of the survivors, up to 18 years for boys and girls. Women can stay in the shelter for up to eight weeks. In cases where a woman may find it impossible to leave the shelter, allowing for additional stay time is considered on an individual basis.<sup>5</sup> The shelter receives some level of state funding.<sup>6</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 80 women's shelter places are needed in Cyprus. With approximately 71 women's shelter places missing (89%), Cyprus does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (January-September 2013) <sup>7</sup>
1	80	9	71	89%	89,239	20 women and 28 children accommodated

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There is one women's center in Cyprus run by SPAVO that provides support specifically for survivors of domestic violence and their children.<sup>8</sup>

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In 2012, the Advisory Committee for the Preventing and Combating of Violence in the Family conducted a national survey on the 'Extent, frequency, nature and consequences of domestic violence against women in Cyprus'.<sup>9</sup> The survey conducted only included Greek-speaking Cypriot women, and the prevalence and impact of violence against non-Greek speaking women in Cyprus was not examined. No national surveys on other forms of violence against women have been carried out in Cyprus.<sup>10</sup> According to the 2013 EWL Barometer on Rape, rape and sexual violence are among the most underreported forms of violence in Cyprus, as is the case in the rest of Europe. Furthermore, the document suggests that reporting rate is particularly low in Cyprus, along with other countries including Ireland, Turkey, Malta, Italy and Hungary. With positive changes in reporting rates since 1990, latest numbers indicate that 36 cases were reported in 2010, and 38 cases in 2011. Despite increase in reporting rates in Cyprus, conviction rates remain very low, with 0.3 rate per 100,000 in 2003, and 0.6 in 2007.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, in 2008 the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) conducted a national study on date rape cases among young women. Taking into account a population of 500 women female students in tertiary education in the age bracket 18-24, the study showed that, despite percentages of cases of date rape attempts (1.3%) and date rape cases (1.9%) being relatively low, 12.2% of the women surveyed claimed to have had an 'unwanted sexual experience'. These were, for a majority, linked to pressure by partners or a fear of being left by partners if they did not consent to sexual activity.<sup>12</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no centers for women survivors of sexual violence in Cyprus.<sup>13</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 80.
- <sup>2</sup> Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family; Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 81.
- <sup>6</sup> Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family; Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 81.
- <sup>9</sup> [[www.familyviolence.gov.cy/upload/research/erevna\\_2012oct\\_viol-ag-women\\_summary\\_en.pdf](http://www.familyviolence.gov.cy/upload/research/erevna_2012oct_viol-ag-women_summary_en.pdf)] (Executive summary)
- <sup>10</sup> Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>11</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL 2013 Barometer on Rape in the EU. Pg. 23.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family; Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.



# CZECH REPUBLIC



COUNTRY EXPERTS: proFem – Central European Consulting Centre, ROSA – Centre for Battered and Lonely Women

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 10,487,178

Female population: 5,340,391

Member of Council of Europe: 1993

Member of European Union: 2004

CEDAW ratified: 1993

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2001

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in the Czech Republic. There are a total of four women's shelters with 96 shelter places available. In 2012, the shelters accommodated 91 women and 90 children. Currently, 91% of women shelter places are missing. As a result, Czech Republic does not yet meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendation on provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelters. Furthermore, there are 26 women's centers (11 women's centers and 15 intervention centers), and two women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in the Czech Republic.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*I am 38 years old* and have two children, an eight year old daughter and thirteen year old son. I experienced different forms of violence by my husband for 11 years. My husband abused me physically, sexually, psychologically and economically. Leaving the violent relationship was difficult for me, because I had no place to live and had no financial support. I tried to leave my husband before, and reached out to a close friend for help, however, my husband found out and I was unsuccessful. I finally reported his violence to the police and also received support from an NGO. I was happy with the support I received from the police and the NGO. I am currently on my way to rebuilding my life. I am going through the divorce and resolving property issues with the help of free legal assistance through an NGO. I still suffer from depression and take medicine. My daughter suffers from a speech impediment and anxiety, while my son has been in trouble at school from being aggressive. I live with my parents, who are also trying to understand my situation. My greatest hope is to be able to improve my life and the life of my children.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Provision of specialized women's services in the Czech Republic is scarce. There is a limited focus in the EU Member State on specialized service provision and the majority of social services are of general nature (see section below on additional services). The most significant issue is limited funding to specialized initiatives. This is a general phenomenon in the Czech Republic and the deficiency extends to other areas of intervention as well such as training of professionals working with women survivors of violence.<sup>2</sup>

### ▶ WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>3</sup>

There is no national women's helpline in the Czech Republic.

**Based on this information, Czech Republic does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### ▶ WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>4 5</sup>

There are four women's shelters in the Czech Republic with approximately 96 shelter places available. They are called ROSA Asylum Shelter for Women Victims of Domestic Violence, ACORUS Asylum Shelter, Asylum Shelter Helena, and Asylum Shelter Magdalenium. The first shelter was opened in Prague in 1996. All four are specialized women's shelters and are located in main cities, Prague and Brno. The shelters accept children of the survivors and there is no age limit for the children, who stay in the shelter with their mothers. Women can be accommodated for up to 12 months. Funding is provided by the state (78%), private donations (20%) and by the victims themselves (2%).

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 1,049 women's shelter places are needed in the Czech Republic. With approximately 953 women's shelter places missing (91%), Czech Republic does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>6</sup>
4	1,049	96	953	91%	109,241	181 (91 women and 90 children) accommodated

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are 26 women's centers in the Czech Republic. This includes 11 women's centers and 15 intervention centers. Most of the centers provide counselling, information and advice, intervention safety support, legal advice and court accompaniment, among other services and activities.<sup>7</sup>

## ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in the Czech Republic is available from the prevalence of violence survey International Research on Violence against Women in Czech Republic: 2003 Contribution to Sociological Exploration of Violence in the Family published in 2004. The survey states that an estimated 38% of women had experienced physical or sexual violence from their partner (current or former husband or boyfriend) and almost the same proportion (37%) from a man other than their partner. Sexual violence committed by male intimate partners is estimated to affect 11% of women in their lifetime.<sup>8</sup> Most forms of violence occurred more frequently within intimate partnerships, with exception to sexual violence, where nearly the same percentage of respondents disclosed having experienced sexual violence by partners and non-partners.<sup>9</sup>

Rape is estimated to remain largely unreported to the police by the victims. Despite high prevalence rates, rape is assessed to be reported in 8% of cases, with one to two rapes reported per day. Rape within the domestic or intimate partner context is subject to even lower reporting rates of 2%.<sup>10</sup> It is estimated that approximately 18,000 rapes are committed annually in the Czech Republic, with those reported rarely investigated and victims receiving inadequate support from criminal authorities or other services.<sup>11</sup>

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are two women's rape crisis centers in the Czech Republic.<sup>12</sup> The first center called Élektra was set up in Prague in 1995. The second center called Persefona was established in Brno in 2007.<sup>13</sup> Since 2013, center Élektra, due to cuts in funding, has limited its service center and ended its helpline service.<sup>14</sup>

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There is a helpline named SOS helpline ROSA in the Czech Republic providing crisis support. In 2012, the helpline received 3,630 calls.<sup>15</sup> In addition to women's centers for survivors of sexual violence, La Strada in Prague offers services for survivors of trafficking.<sup>16</sup>

# CZECH REPUBLIC



The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs reports the existence of approximately 100 asylum shelters in the Czech Republic. Some of the shelters have a target group of victims of violence, however, these are not considered to be specialized shelters for women survivors of violence, instead asylum shelters in the Czech Republic address a variety of social issues including homelessness.<sup>17</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point proFem – Central European Consulting Center in the Czech Republic.
- <sup>2</sup> proFem – Central European Consulting Center. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 85.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Rosa – Center for Battered and Lonely Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 85.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid. Pg. 83.
- <sup>9</sup> Sociologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky. (2004). Mezinárodní výzkum násilí na ženách – Česká republika/2003; příspěvek k sociologickému zkoumání násilí v rodině. Pg. 149.
- <sup>10</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 25.
- <sup>11</sup> Comparing Sexual Assault Interventions Project (COSAI) – Czech Republic Case Study Report. (Daphne Programme 2007-2013). Pg. 4.
- <sup>12</sup> Rosa – Center for Battered and Lonely Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 85.
- <sup>14</sup> Rosa – Center for Battered and Lonely Women. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.

# DENMARK (KINGDOM OF DENMARK)



**COUNTRY EXPERTS:** Lene Johannesson (CEO) and Mette Volsing (special consultant) - LOKK (National Organisation of Women's Shelters in Denmark)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 5,519,441

Female population: 2,783,458

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

Member of European Union: 1973

CEDAW ratified: 1983

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No<sup>1</sup>

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Denmark and 45 women's shelters with 430 shelter places available. In 2012, the helpline assisted 3,926 callers and in the same year, 42 of the 45 women's shelters accommodated 1,982 women and 1,982 children. Currently, Denmark fulfils the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on national women's helpline provision, but with 22% of women's shelters missing, it still does not meet the recommendations for women's shelter provision. In addition, there are three women's centers in Denmark providing information and legal advice to women survivors of violence, as well as five health centers assisting women survivors of rape and/or sexual assault.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>2</sup>

*The woman*, who was interviewed for this story in October 2013, had been staying with her son at a shelter and later at a transition apartment of the shelter since May 2012.

When asked about what she found most helpful, the woman said that she had been helped through counseling and information given to her about her rights, obligations and options in relation to the social system regarding social welfare, requirements for activation, educational benefits, among others. She has found it helpful to have received counselling from the shelter staff, the psychologist and in self-help groups; having a safe place, where she could talk about the experience of violence. It had also been useful for her to talk with the other women staying at the shelter. Furthermore she had profited from conversations with the staff about the violence that her son had been exposed to, and she appreciated the direct support given to her son concerning the violence. She appreciated the support to foster a healthy relationship with her child in this difficult situation. The staff at the shelter assisted her with relocation from the shelter by assisting her with the application process for the kindergarten, school and an apartment. She had also been supported in forming social relationships with other residents at the shelter.

The woman has stayed in the shelter three times. She has been exposed to violence by the father of her child over a long period of time, while they had been living in three different countries. Psychologically she has been very affected by the violence, combined with already having survived a turbulent childhood. The perpetrator has been sentenced to deportation because of the violence against her and other serious criminal acts. She is saddened by the fact that her child will grow up without a father, having grown up fatherless herself. She has done her best in hopes that her child would have a father, yet she knows that in the end this is the consequence of the perpetrator's violent acts.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Denmark named LOKK Hotline. It was founded in 2002 and is run by an independent women's NGO National Organization of Shelters for Battered Women and their Children (LOKK). The phone number is (70 20 30 82). It operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The helpline assists women survivors of all forms of violence and offers multilingual support.<sup>3</sup>

**Based on this information, Denmark meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>4</sup>
1	Yes	Yes	3,926 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 45 women's shelters in Denmark with approximately 430 shelter places available. The first shelter was opened in 1978. The majority of the shelters are run by independent women's NGOs, some by the state and at least one by a religious based NGO. All shelters accept children of the women survivors with some age limits of 15 years for boys and 18 years for girls. Funding for the shelters is predominantly provided by the state (50%), volunteer work (30%) and through private donations (20%).<sup>5</sup>

Although the shelters accommodate women as long as is needed, there is some level of hesitancy among local municipalities to allow women to stay for a longer time due to higher costs associated with longer stay. However, there are cases involving longer stay, because of difficulties with finding alternative accommodation such as an apartment, especially in Copenhagen. A few shelters have transition apartments provided for women survivors of violence, who are in need of temporary housing and long-term support.<sup>6</sup>

The women's NGO (LOKK) cooperates with the National Board of Social Services to coordinate the collection of data from the shelters based on a questionnaire that social workers use in their interviews with women and children staying at the shelters. According to this data, 1,982 women and the same number of children were accommodated in women's shelters in the year 2012. The average stay was 60 days. The exact number of women who could not be accommodated due to unavailable space is not easy to identify: According to the statistics, the shelters had to decline access in 4,302 cases; however, this number does not reflect the whole picture. Generally, it can be said that there are not enough spaces in the capital area, but there are generally places available in the country side.<sup>7</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 552 women's shelter places are needed in Denmark. With approximately 122 women's shelter places missing (22%), Denmark does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>8</sup>
45	552	430	122	22%	12,836	1,982 women and 1,982 children accommodated

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are three women's centers in Denmark. All of the centers provide information and advice, independent domestic violence advice and legal advice. Two of the centers provide counseling services.<sup>9</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According the EWL Barometer on Rape, there were 381 cases of rape in 2012 (373 victims were women and 8 were men). The total number of female victims of sexual offences in Denmark was 2,070.<sup>10</sup> The national data does not provide relationship level disaggregation.<sup>11</sup>



Based on data from the rape crisis centers and police, the Crime Prevention Council in Denmark collates statistics, it is estimated that every year, 2,000 rapes are committed in Denmark and that 500 cases are reported to the police, that in 300 cases charges are brought against the perpetrators and that only 150 cases result in a conviction.<sup>12</sup>

The regional health centers provide yearly reports, though these reports are not nationally coordinated. They include reported and unreported cases of rapes by partners or former partners, “contact rape” and rape by persons unknown to the victim.<sup>13</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN’S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are five regional health centers for survivors of rape and sexual assaults in Denmark.<sup>14</sup> The services are run by healthcare institutions. The centers are predominantly funded by the state (90%) and through volunteer work (10%).<sup>15</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> LOKK. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: According to Mette Volsing (LOKK), the information on the Council of Europe Home Page stating that Denmark has signed the Convention on 11 October 2013 refers in fact to the date of the first lecture in the Parliament. According to Information provided by Mette Volsing, the Parliament has decided on 18 February 2014 to sign the Convention, whereas ratification is to be expected in June 2014.
- <sup>2</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point LOKK, located in Denmark.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 91.
- <sup>4</sup> LOKK. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 91.
- <sup>6</sup> LOKK. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid: Data refers to 42 out of 45 women's shelters in Denmark.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). See also Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg.91.
- <sup>10</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 26: Victims of reported criminal offences: Key Figures – Statistics Denmark: [<http://dst.dk/en/Statistik/emner/kriminalitet/ofre-for-anmeldte-forbrydelser.aspx>]
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid. Pg. 26.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. Pg.27.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. Pg. 26.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg.91.



# ESTONIA (REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Eha Reitemann (Estonian Women's Shelters Union)  
**GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION**

Population: 1,340,271  
 Female population: 722,960  
 Member of Council of Europe: 1993  
 Member of European Union: 2004  
 CEDAW ratified: 1991  
 CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: No  
 CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
 signed: No  
 ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Estonia. The helpline operates on a 24/7 basis (as of 2014) and is free of charge. Furthermore, there are 12 women's shelters with approximately 86 shelter places available. Currently, 36% of recommended shelter places are missing in Estonia. As a result, Estonia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline, but does not meet the recommendations on provision of women's shelters. Women's shelters also provide non-residential services in form of counselling centers.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>1</sup>

There is one national women's helpline in Estonia set up in 2008 and run by the Estonian Women's Shelters Union, an independent women's NGO. The phone number is (1492). Up until 2013, the helpline operated 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. As of 2014, the helpline operates 24/7. The helpline is free of charge and provides multilingual support in Estonian and Russian. It provides support to women survivors of all forms of violence against women using a gender specific approach. The helpline receives funding through the Norway Grants scheme.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on this information, (as of 2014), Estonia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics
1	Yes	Yes (as of 2014)	-

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>3 4</sup>

There are 12 women's shelters in Estonia with approximately 86 shelter places<sup>5</sup> available. They are run by women's NGOs and provide support to women survivors of all forms of violence against women using a gender-specific approach. The first shelter was opened in 2002 and the last shelter opened at the end of 2013. All the shelters accept children of women survivors and women and children may be accommodated for as long as needed. The shelters are predominantly funded by the state (80%), on a project basis.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 134 women's shelter places are needed in Estonia. With approximately 48 women's shelter places missing (36%), Estonia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>6</sup>
12	134	86	48	36%	15,585	167 women and 114 children were accommodated



### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>7</sup>

There are no stand-alone women's centers in Estonia. Women's shelters provide non-residential services as there are separate facilities at the shelters allocated for counseling.

### ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Estonia is available from the survey titled Safety Survey - Methodological Report<sup>8</sup> published in 2010. It is a sample survey of violence against women and men, with data obtained on violence against women and men committed by current and former partners. The survey findings are available in Estonian with a summary in English.

The survey measured the experience of violence among 15–74 year-old residents of Estonia. The data is gender-disaggregated for the victim, but not for the perpetrator.

The report uses the term 'sexual intimate partner abuse' instead of 'sexual violence' and defines it as "physical abuse directed against the intimate partner [that] includes coercing a partner into sexual intercourse by means of physical strength or threats, by a current or previous partner."<sup>9</sup> Findings for lifetime experience of violence indicate that 7% of women were victims of sexual violence compared to 38% who disclosed having been victims of physical violence.<sup>10</sup>

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>11</sup>

There are no women's centres for survivors of sexual violence in Estonia.

### ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Existing women's shelters lack the capacity to accommodate all women survivors of violence and their children, who seek accommodation. For this reason, in some instances, mother and child shelters, as well as other organizations running shelters, may provide accommodation.<sup>12</sup>



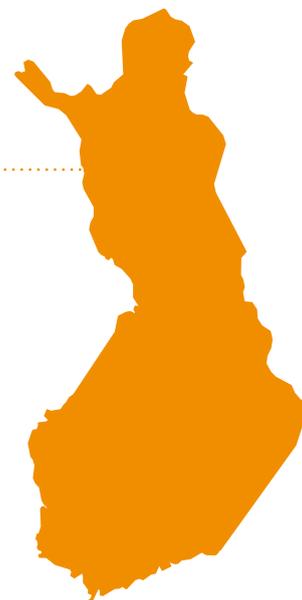
## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Estonian Women's Shelters Union. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>2</sup> <http://eeagrants.org/Who-we-are/Norway-Grants>
- <sup>3</sup> Estonian Women's Shelters Union. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>4</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 96.
- <sup>5</sup> Shelter places refer here to shelter beds.
- <sup>6</sup> Estonian Women's Shelters Union. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The data corresponds to the activity of 10 of the 12 shelters available in Estonia.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 96.
- <sup>8</sup> Statistics Estonia. (2009). Safety Survey — Methodological Report. [<http://www.stat.ee/methodology>].
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid. Pg. 49.
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 94.
- <sup>11</sup> Estonian Women's Shelters Union. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.



# FINLAND

(REPUBLIC OF FINLAND)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Women's Line Finland, Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 5,311,276

Female population: 2,706,640

Member of Council of Europe: 1995

Member of European Union: 1989

CEDAW ratified: 1986

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Finland that is free of charge, but does not operate 24/7. The helpline is not funded by the state. Furthermore, there are two women's shelters in the country with no more than 16 shelter places available. Currently, 97% of recommended shelter places are missing. Based on this information, Finland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelters. There are 19 additional shelters in Finland providing support to women and men survivors of domestic violence. In 2013, 12 of these shelters helped 2,158 survivors of violence, of which 953 were women, 1,153 children, and 52 were men. Furthermore, there is one center for women survivors of sexual violence.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>1</sup>

There is one national women's helpline in Finland. The organization running the helpline is called the Women's Line and is an independent women's NGO. The phone number of the helpline is (0800 02400). The helpline is free of charge, but does not operate 24/7. The helpline operates 16:00-20:00 Monday to Friday and 12:00-16:00 on Saturdays. Assistance is offered to women survivors of all forms of violence with multilingual support. The helpline is funded primarily by volunteer work (70%) and private donations (30%).

**Based on this information, Finland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2013)
1	Yes	No	1,379 calls <sup>2</sup>

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>3</sup>

There are two women's only shelters<sup>4</sup> in Finland with approximately 16 shelter places available. Both of the shelters accept children of the survivors. There are 19 other shelters for survivors of domestic violence in Finland, for an official total of 21.<sup>5</sup> The shelters accommodate women survivors of violence. The shelters are not funded by the state, but by the local municipalities. Funding for shelters is quite unstable because it is based on the municipality's client-specific financial obligations and out-tasking agreements with the municipality.<sup>6</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 531 women's shelter places are needed in Finland. With approximately 515 women's shelter places missing (97%), Finland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
2	531	16	515	97%	331,955	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>7</sup>

There is no information available on women's centers in Finland.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Finland is available in the prevalence of violence survey<sup>8</sup> published in 2006. It is a study on the prevalence of men's violence against women and data was obtained on violence against women by male intimate partners and non-partners.<sup>9</sup>

The types of perpetrators included in the survey were present spouse or partner, ex-spouse or partner, or a man outside the partner relationship.<sup>10</sup> Perpetrators who were not spouses or partners included strangers, acquaintances, dating partners or colleagues. A difference is made between sexual assaults outside a partnership and within a partnership. Outside of the partnership context, sexual assaults refer to a way of behavior that the woman perceived as sexually threatening, forcing her into sexual intercourse and attempted forced sexual intercourse. Sexual violence in a partner relationship context refers to putting pressure, forcing or trying to force the woman into sexual intercourse.<sup>11</sup>

The results indicate that 43.5% of the women (ages 18-74) had at least once experienced a man's physical or sexual violence or the threat of it after the age of 15. Sexual violence during the women's lifetime, outside of the partnership (21.2%), was more often disclosed than violence experienced from a former partner (17.3%). Lifetime sexual violence within a current partnership was most seldom disclosed (4.3%).<sup>12</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>13</sup>

There is one women's center for survivors of sexual violence in Finland. The center is run by an independent women's NGO, Tukinainen. The center operates a helpline (0800 97899), operating Monday-Thursday from 9:00-15:00, and on weekends and holidays from 15:00-21:00. The helpline also offers legal consultation under the telephone number (0800 97895) from 13:00-16:00 from Monday-Thursday.<sup>14</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In addition to the two women's only shelters, there are 12 other shelters for survivors of domestic violence under the umbrella organization, the Federation of Mother and child homes and Shelters (FMS). FMS is a national child welfare organization founded in 1945 to help single mothers and their children. As society has changed, FMS has grown to providing support for families in different vulnerable situations, one of the main areas being prevention of domestic violence and violence against women. In 2013, the shelters helped 2,158 survivors of violence, of which 953 were women, 1,153 children, and 52 men. The stay in shelters varies from one night to two months or longer, but is on average about two-three weeks. In addition to accommodation, the shelters also provide non-residential support (counselling, group therapy) to survivors of violence as do some member organizations providing non-residential services only.<sup>15</sup>

There are also 17 mother and child homes, seven of which are specialized for mothers to end substance abuse. These homes are for pregnant women or mothers with babies that are living in vulnerable situations (dads are welcome with them) and need assistance in everyday life.<sup>16</sup>

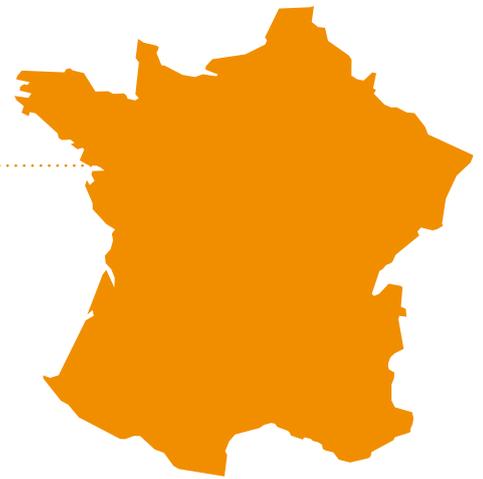
There is another helpline that operates 24/7 and is toll free, however, the target group is not the majority of Finnish women. It is for women who self-identify themselves as being part of a minority (ethnic, cultural). It is based in a women's shelter (Monakoti) and the workers in the shelter answer the phone when available. The helpline is run by Monika-Naiset Liittöry. Assistance is offered in several languages. In 2013, the helpline received 1,725 calls.<sup>17</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 100.
- <sup>2</sup> Women's Line Finland. (2014) Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 101.
- <sup>4</sup> Mona-koti in Helsinki for immigrant women and Kvinnojouren Jacobstad.
- <sup>5</sup> Refuge services for victims of intimate partner and domestic violence. Reports of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2010:1
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Information provided by the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters. (2014).
- <sup>8</sup> Piispa, Minna et al. (2006). Violence against Women in Finland - Summary. [National Research Institute of Legal Policy, European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control]. Helsinki.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid. Pg. 181.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 98-99.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. Pg. 101.
- <sup>14</sup> Access: 13.3.2014. [www.tukinainen.fi]
- <sup>15</sup> Information provided by the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters. (2014).
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.



# FRANCE (FRENCH REPUBLIC)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 65,820,916<sup>1</sup>  
 Female population: 33,932,265<sup>2</sup>  
 Member of Council of Europe: 1949  
 Member of European Union: 1957  
 CEDAW ratified: 1983  
 CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000  
 CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
 signed: 11 May 2011  
 ratified: No

## SUMMARY

In France, there is one national women’s helpline, which is free of charge but does not operate on a 24/7 basis. In 2012, the helpline received 30,938 calls, among which 15,553 were related to cases of domestic violence. Furthermore, there are 52 women’s shelter with approximately 1,729 shelter places available to accommodate women survivors of violence. Currently, 74% of required shelter places are still missing in France. Overall, France does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of national women’s helpline and women’s shelters.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

While there is still a significant lack of available support services for women survivors of violence in France, there has been increased political will to address the societal issue of gender-based violence. This has notably been observed through the recent establishment of a Women’s Affairs Ministry, as well as increased state funding for the national women’s helpline that could recently extend its services to weekend days and become free of charge for calls received from both landlines and mobile phones.<sup>3</sup>

## WOMEN’S HELPLINE<sup>4 5</sup>

There is one national women’s helpline in France called 3919-Domestic Violence Info (Violences Conjugales Info). The helpline was established in 1992 and is operated by the National Federation for Women’s Solidarity (FNSF – Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes). The helpline (3919) does not operate 24/7, but from 9:00-22:00 Monday through Friday, 9:00-18:00 on weekend days<sup>6</sup>, and 09:00-18:00 on public holidays. The helpline is closed on January 1, May 1, and December 25. As of 2014, the helpline is free of charge for calls received from both landlines and mobile phones (whereas prior to this, only calls made from landlines were free of charge<sup>7</sup>). Multilingual support is provided in French, Arabic, Spanish and certain African languages.

Additionally, the national helpline Viols-Femmes-Information (0800 05 95 95) offers listening and support to women victims of sexual violence and provides them with information on the different options available to them. Anonymity is the rule, and the helpline is free of charge and runs from 10:00-19:00, from Monday to Friday. Over its 26 years of existence, the helpline has received more than 41,000 calls from survivors of different forms of sexual violence (sexual assault or rape). In 2011, the helpline received 8,606 calls, among which 4,197 calls were related to cases of rape or sexual assault.<sup>8</sup>

**Based on this information, France does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

National Women’s Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>9</sup>
1	Yes	No	30,983 calls received, among which 15,553 calls were related to cases of domestic violence

### ▶ WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>10 11</sup>

There are 52 women's shelters in France, with approximately 1,729 shelter places available. All of the shelters accept children of the survivors accommodated in the shelters, allowing more than six month stay for women and their children. The shelters receive some level of state funding.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 6,582 women's shelter places are needed in France. With approximately 4,853 women's shelter places missing (74%), France does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
52	6,582	1,729	4,853	74%	38,069	-

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are numerous women's centers in France. However, there is no information available on the total number of these centers in the country.<sup>12</sup>

## ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in France is available from the prevalence of violence survey, National Survey on Acts of Violence against women in France, conducted in 2000.<sup>13</sup> The research was conducted over a period of 12 months and aimed to measure the frequency of violence experienced by women, ages 20-59.<sup>14</sup>

The data in this survey was disaggregated according to various criteria including age, socio-professional categories, activity status and civil status.<sup>15</sup> The study included acts of violence against women committed by any perpetrator in the public space, in the work environment, intimate partner violence, and violence in the family environment.<sup>16</sup> In the survey, sexual violence is defined as forced sexual intercourse, forced sexual acts, non-desired touching, forced sexual intercourse with any person. In the work place, sexual violence includes harassment such as unwelcome sexual propositions, imposition of pornographic images, voyeurism or exhibitionism, and acts of insistent following.<sup>17</sup> The findings indicate that, in the last 12 months, 0.9% of women disclosed having experienced sexual violence.<sup>18</sup>

In terms of sexual harassment, findings show that 8.3% of cases of sexual harassment happened in the public sphere. This includes acts of being followed, exhibitionism, sexual propositions and aggressions. Furthermore, 21.9% of the respondents disclosing having experienced this form of violence were 20-24 year old.<sup>19</sup>

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There is no information on the actual number of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in France. However, it is known that not many of such centers exist in France.<sup>20</sup> The website of the Rape Crisis Network Europe states that no rape crisis centers exist in France, however, a helpline run by CFCV (a collective of feminist organizations against rape) supports women survivors of sexual violence.<sup>21</sup>

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In addition to the places available in the women's shelters, about 1,480 places are available in other non-specialized shelters that accommodate women survivors of violence, among others.<sup>22</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Insee. Population totale par sexe et âge au 1er janvier 2014, France hors Mayotte. (2014). [[www.insee.fr/fr/themes/detail.asp?reg\\_id=0&ref\\_id=bilan--demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop\\_age2b.htm](http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/detail.asp?reg_id=0&ref_id=bilan-demo&page=donnees-detaillees/bilan-demo/pop_age2b.htm)]
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes (FNSF). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 106.
- <sup>6</sup> [[www.solidaritefemmes.org/ewb\\_pages/v/vfi.php](http://www.solidaritefemmes.org/ewb_pages/v/vfi.php) , <http://stop-violences-femmes.gouv.fr>]
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 106.
- <sup>8</sup> Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes (FNSF). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 106.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. Pg. 107.
- <sup>13</sup> Jaspard, Maryse et al. (2000). Enquête nationale sur les violences envers les femmes en France (Enveff).
- <sup>14</sup> Présentation méthodologique de l'enquête Enveff 2000 en Métropole. Pg. 6.
- <sup>15</sup> L' enquête nationale sur les violences envers les femmes en France (ENVEFF). Pg. 6-7.
- <sup>16</sup> Présentation méthodologique de l'enquête Enveff 2000 en Métropole. Pg. 3.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 103.
- <sup>19</sup> L' enquête nationale sur les violences envers les femmes en France (ENVEFF).
- <sup>20</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 107.
- <sup>21</sup> Rape Crisis Network Europe. [[www.rcne.com/contact/countries/france](http://www.rcne.com/contact/countries/france)]
- <sup>22</sup> Fédération Nationale Solidarité Femmes (FNSF). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.



# GEORGIA



COUNTRY EXPERT: Alla Gamakharia (Cultural Humanitarian Fund “Sukhumi”)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 4,371,535

Female population: 2,309,782

Member of Council of Europe: 1999

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1994

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: No  
ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There are two national women’s helplines in Georgia, both offering free of charge 24/7 support to women survivors of violence. Furthermore, there are only two women’s shelters in Georgia. In the past, one women’s shelter run by an independent women’s NGO had to close at the end of 2012, due to lack of funding. There is no information available on the number of places available in the remaining two women’s shelters. Lastly, there are no women’s centers to provide support to women survivors of sexual violence in Georgia.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*I am 23 years old* and I am the mother of two children aged five years and 10 months. I was also a mother of a third child, who sadly passed away aged three. For four years, I was a victim of physical abuse perpetrated by my husband. I got married very young, and for years I was too embarrassed to talk about my problems with my family. I was even too embarrassed to talk to my own parents about my problems. It is only when my second child, a son, was born disabled subsequent to beatings I endured during my pregnancy that my parents found out about the abuse. My child spent the first years of his life in the hospital, where he died at age three. Although my parents wanted to take me back home with them, I refused. I still loved my husband and I could not imagine my life without him.

One day, while I was pregnant with my next child, I visited a friend in a collective center. As women were encouraged to join in a meeting, I became interested and decided to join in as well. The meeting was organized by a local NGO. There, we received information on violence, the different forms that violence can take, and the laws designed to protect victims of domestic violence. A few days after this meeting, I decided to call the NGO to tell them about my situation and to receive information on the different steps I could take. I was referred to a lawyer and a psychologist. I decided to file for divorce and I went back to live with my parents.

Today I live with my two children, together with my parents. My ex-husband has asked me to forgive him and to move back in with him; this is an option that I now cannot even think of. Violence has destroyed my life and one of my children, who have never truly known the warmth of a family and the affection of two parents. It has destroyed the life of my son who died in hospital at the age of three.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>2</sup>

There are two national women's helplines in Georgia. One of the helplines is called the National Domestic Violence Hotline. The phone number is (309 903). The helpline was established in 2010 with assistance from UN Women, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the State Fund for Protection and Assistance of Survivors of Human Trafficking (ATIPFUND). The helpline is run by the state, operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The helpline supports women survivors of domestic violence and sexual violence. Assistance is provided in Georgian with Russian translation as needed.

Another women's helpline in Georgia is run by the Tbilisi Crisis Center of "Sakhli" Advice Center for Women. The phone number is (+995 5 952 321 01). The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The helpline supports women survivors of gender-based violence and refers callers to available free of charge psychological, medical and legal services, or social assistance centers.

**Based on this information, Georgia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics
2	Yes	Yes	-

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>3</sup>

There are two women's shelters in Georgia. The first shelter was opened in 2003 by the Antiviolence Network of Georgia. The shelters accommodate women survivors of domestic violence. The shelters accept children of the survivors with no age limit. The length of stay at the shelters is usually three months. A women's shelter run by an independent women's NGO "Sakhli" Advice Center for Women was closed at the end of 2012, due to lack of funding. Prior to closing, funding was provided by UNHCR. As a result there are 20 less shelter places available to women survivors of domestic violence and their children in Georgia as of that time.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 437 shelter places are needed in Georgia. There is no information on the number of shelter places available. As a result, there is no information on Georgia meeting the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
2	437	-	-	-	-	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are five women's counselling centers in Georgia providing support to women survivors of violence and their children.<sup>4</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN<sup>5</sup>

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Georgia is available from the prevalence of violence study titled National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Georgia, published in 2010. During the survey, interviews were conducted with 2,385 women between the ages of 15-49. Data provided in the survey results is gender disaggregated, with women as victims and men as perpetrators in intimate partnerships, as well as non-partners. Various forms of violence are measured: physical, emotional, sexual, and economic, as well as "acts intended to control women's behavior by either their husbands, or partners or by non-partners". In the report, sexual violence includes forced sexual intercourse, sexual intercourse because women are afraid of the man's reaction, and women being forced to partake in something sexual that they found to be degrading or humiliating.

The findings indicate that approximately 3.9% of women reported having experienced sexual violence, out of which 36% were unmarried and 64% were married. Furthermore, 0.7% of women declared having experienced violence during their first sexual intercourse. The majority of the victims of sexual violence reported being forced into sexual intercourse (3.5%) or having sexual intercourse because they were afraid of the man's reaction (3.0%). Data on the various forms of physical and sexual violence

show that victims are rarely subjected to only one form of violence, but generally experience a number of forms together. The research also illustrates that victims of physical and sexual violence are more likely to give poorer assessments of their own health compared to those who have never experienced such violence.

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>6</sup>

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Georgia.

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Additionally to the two national women's helplines, six hotlines are operated in regions of Western Georgia: Kutaisi, Khoni, Senaki, Tskhaltubo, Poti and Zugdidi. The hotlines are operated by women's support centers, and are part of the Fund "Sukhumi". Women survivors may call the helplines only during daytime to ask for advice and information, and to arrange meetings with available psychological and legal services. Calls to the helplines are not free of charge.<sup>7</sup>

Shelter places to accommodate women survivors of violence are also provided by NGOs in shelters that are not women's shelters. This includes the National Network of Violence that provides 10 shelter places in Tbilisi, the Samtskhe - Javakheti Democracy Women's Society – Javakheti that provides eight places in Akhaltsikhe, and the "Agrobusiness Center" that provides nine places in Tbilisi. Additionally, there are 20 shelter places available in state shelters located in Tbilisi, Batumi and Kutaisi. State shelters accommodate survivors of violence, including of trafficking.<sup>8</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Fund "Sukhumi", located in Georgia.
- <sup>2</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 113.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid. Pg. 113.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Chitashvili, Prof. Marine et al. (2010). National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Georgia. Tbilisi.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 113.
- <sup>7</sup> Cultural Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi". (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.



# GERMANY (FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY)



**COUNTRY EXPERTS:** ZIF Zentrale Informationsstelle Autonomer Frauenhäuser, BFF Bundesverband FrauenberatungsstellenFrauennotrufe e.V.; FHK Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V., Gesine - Netzwerk Gesundheit, Papatya - Anonyme Kriseneinrichtung für Mädchen und junge Frauen

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 80,585,700<sup>1</sup>  
 Female population: 41,133,900<sup>2</sup>  
 Member of Council of Europe: 1995  
 Member of European Union: 1957  
 CEDAW ratified: 1985  
 CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002  
 CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
 signed: 11 May 2011  
 ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Germany operating since March 2013. There are 353 women's shelters in Germany. In 345 of the women's shelters, there are 6,800 shelter places available. Germany fulfils the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on the provision of women's helpline; however, with 16% of women's shelter places still missing, it does not fulfil the recommendations on women's shelter provision yet. Although detailed information on service users of women's shelters is not available, in 2013 approximately 9,000 women could not be accommodated due to lack of space and/or resources. Additionally, there are 310 women's counseling centers in the country, with 183 of them being rape crisis centers, majority of which are coordinated by BFF (Bundesverband Frauenberatungsstellen und Frauennotrufe - federal association of rape crisis centers and women's counseling centers in Germany).

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Germany named Violence against Women Support Hotline (Hilfetelefon Gewalt Gegen Frauen). The phone number is (08000 116 016). The helpline opened in March 2013 and is operated in cooperation with the Federal Office for Family and Social Affairs (in the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior, Women's and Youth Affairs - BMFSFJ). It operates 24/7, is free of charge and covers all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, cyber violence or sexual harassment in the workplace. Multilingual support is provided in cooperation with a translation service. Additionally, women who are hearing impaired may receive assistance via relay service.<sup>3</sup>

**Based on this information, Germany meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics <sup>4</sup>
1	Yes	Yes	-

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 353 women's shelters<sup>5</sup> in Germany with approximately 6,800<sup>6</sup> shelter places available. The first shelters were opened in West Berlin and Cologne in 1976. Majority of the shelters are coordinated by the autonomous feminist shelter network ZIF and by the Frauenhauskoordinierung e.V. The shelters accommodate women survivors of violence and their children. The typical accommodation period in the shelters is between three to six months. There is some level of state funding provided for the shelters.<sup>7</sup>

Women with dependent residency permits, students, employed women and other women, who are not eligible for state financial support or who do not have any or insufficient income, either have to pay for their stay in the women's shelter and the support they receive, or the shelter must cover the expenses without receiving reimbursement from the state. In larger cities and urban areas, there is a devastating lack of places in women's shelters and at minimum 9,000 women could not be provided space in a women's shelter in 2013.<sup>8</sup> There is also not enough shelter space for women with disabilities - only 10% of women's shelters are barrier free. Because of the above mentioned shortcomings concerning availability and funding of the support system, the German women's shelters started the campaign: 'Schwere Wege Leicht Machen'<sup>19</sup> (making rough paths easier) in 2013. The campaign will be continued at least until spring 2014.<sup>10</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 8,059 women's shelter places are needed in Germany. With approximately 1,259 women's shelter places missing (16%), Germany does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
353	8,059	6,800	1,259	16%	11,851	-

#### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are approximately 310 women's centers, in Germany that support women survivors of violence.<sup>11</sup> All of the centers offer counselling, information and advice, and most provide independent domestic violence advice. Only some of the centers can offer intervention safety support, legal advice and court accompaniment, while few provide outreach and resettlement support.<sup>12</sup>

#### SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on the prevalence of sexual violence in Germany is available from the prevalence of violence survey, Health, Well-Being and Personal Safety of Women in Germany<sup>13</sup>, conducted in 2003; the survey focuses on violence against women. Data was collected from 10,264 women ages 16-85 by completing a written survey as well as oral interviews. The data provided in the summary is gender disaggregated for victim and perpetrator and includes separate findings on intimate partner violence. Violence against women perpetrated by persons known or unknown to her, male and female intimate partners including current and former, since the age of 16, as well as childhood and adolescence abuse experienced up to the age of 16 are also measured in the survey.

A distinction between physical violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment is made. In the questionnaire, the multiple forms of sexual violence are detailed.<sup>14</sup> Overall, it involves rape, attempted rape, and various forms of sexual coercion. Since the age of 16, 12% of women have experienced some form of sexual violence. Forty percent of the respondents experienced either physical or sexual violence or both, after the age of 16.<sup>15</sup>

The respondents identified the different types of perpetrators.<sup>16</sup> Partners, former partners and lovers were most common perpetrators (49%), followed by casual acquaintances (22.5%), friends, acquaintances and neighbors (19.8%), unknown persons (14.5%), acquaintances from work, training or school (11.8%), family members (10.1%) and also professional caregivers, assistants, others (3.8%). Concerning the gender of perpetrators of violence, male assailants were the most common. Sixty-nine percent of women suffering from sexual violence stated that the attacks took place in their own home. Furthermore, 20% of sexual attacks took place in public places such as streets and parks.<sup>17</sup>

According to the European Women's Lobby Barometer on Rape in the EU, about 8,000 sexual violence crimes are reported annually, whereas the number of unreported cases is estimated to be much higher. The percentage of cases reported to the police is estimated to be only 8%.<sup>18</sup>

Also related to administrative data on sexual violence, there are three state agencies publishing data on sexual crimes: the Federal Criminal Police Office (reported cases), the Prosecution (prosecuted cases) and the Penal system (convictions).<sup>19</sup> As the data come from different sources and do not use the same categories, the data sets cannot be compared.<sup>20</sup>

According to ZIF, it is absolutely essential to revise § 177 (sexual assault, rape) et.seq. and § 179 StGB (sexual abuse of defenseless persons) in accordance with European and international human rights legislation in cooperation with the German Institute for Human Rights.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore the medical and psychological emergency services for rape victims are not guaranteed in all parts of the country and need to be assured.<sup>22</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are 310 women's counseling centers in Germany, 183 of them are rape crisis centers. More than 160 of these centers are coordinated by the feminist network BFF (Bundesverband Frauenberatungsstellen und Frauennotrufe - federal association of rape crisis centers and women's counseling centers in Germany). In 2012, a review of the current situation of the women's shelters, specialized counseling and rape crisis centers and other support services in Germany was published. In December 2012, a hearing took place within a parliament commission responsible for issues concerning women's shelters, women's counseling centers and rape crisis centers. The state funding of the support system is not sufficient and the access to protection, counseling and support is difficult for survivors of violence against women, especially for migrant women, women with disabilities or women living in rural areas.<sup>23</sup>

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Since June 2010, GESINE-Network is managing the 'Kompetenzzentrum Frauen und Gesundheit NRW' (Competence Centre Women and Health, Northrhine-Westfalia) together with a group of public health professionals from the University of Bielefeld. The center is financed by the provincial government. Within the tasks of the center, GESINE is able to disseminate its expertise by supporting the implementation of medical intervention programs addressing domestic violence in several cities and regions of Northrhine-Westfalia. Coordinators and trainers of the program are trained and coached by GESINE to recruit medical doctors and other professionals working in the health system, to provide advanced trainings for the recruited medical professionals and to organize an interdisciplinary network working to address health consequences of domestic violence. The measures implemented will be subject to an evaluation in the future.<sup>24</sup>

Papatya is a German organization maintaining a support and crisis intervention center and an online counseling platform called SIBEL for girls and young adults who are forced into marriage or fear being displaced to their country of origin. Papatya has set up a coordination-center against displacement. The center provides support services for girls and young women concerned and collects data for record keeping and documentation. Although this is a very important and relevant initiative, Papatya has struggled with low funding.<sup>25</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Statistisches Bundesamt Wiesbaden. (30 June 2013). [[www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/Bevoelkerung/Bevoelkerungsstand/Tabellen/Zensus\\_Geschlecht\\_Staatsangehoerigkeit.html;jsessionid=A70BEE6FD0814AF76CC70A861E9425DE.cae2](http://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/Bevoelkerung/Bevoelkerungsstand/Tabellen/Zensus_Geschlecht_Staatsangehoerigkeit.html;jsessionid=A70BEE6FD0814AF76CC70A861E9425DE.cae2)]
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> See homepage of the Helpline: [[www.hilfetelefon.de/de/startseite](http://www.hilfetelefon.de/de/startseite)]. Next to assistance in German, the website provides also information in Spanish, English, French, Russian and Turkish. It also has a translation into a simple, easily understandable German, and a video in sign language for women with hearing impairments.
- <sup>4</sup> ZIF. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The publication of statistics is expected to take place in May 2014.
- <sup>5</sup> See the Report of the Federal Government on the Situation of Women's Shelters and other services for women affected by violence and their children: 'Bericht der Bundesregierung zur Situation der Frauenhäuser, Fachberatungstellen und anderer Unterstützungsangebote für gewaltbetroffene Frauen und deren Kinder.' (2012). (In the following: 'Lagebericht 2012'). Pg.43/B2. According to information provided by ZIF (2014), the numbers included in this report are estimates, as there are no official statistics taking all women's shelters into account.
- <sup>6</sup> Information refers to 345 shelters.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 119.
- <sup>8</sup> Information provided by ZIF (2014): This is an estimate based on existing data. For instance, the Report of the Federal Government on the Situation of Women's Shelters and other services for women affected by violence and their children states that in 2010, 8,905 applications had to be rejected. See 'Lagebericht 2012'. Pg. 66.
- <sup>9</sup> [www.schwerewegeleichtmachen.de/cms/front\\_content.php?idcat=4&idart=5&lang=1](http://www.schwerewegeleichtmachen.de/cms/front_content.php?idcat=4&idart=5&lang=1)
- <sup>10</sup> Information provided by ZIF (2014).
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 120.
- <sup>13</sup> Health, Well-Being and the Personal Safety of Women in Germany: A Representative Study of Violence against Women in Germany. (2003). [Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth].
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. Pg. 45: Specifically, interviews included the following: 1. Someone forced me to have sexual intercourse and penetrated me with his penis or another object against my will, 2. Someone attempted to penetrate me with his penis or with another object against my will but this attempt was not completed, 3. Someone forced me into intimate physical contact, stroking, petting or the like, 4. I was forced to take part in other sexual acts or practices that I did not want, 5. Someone forced me to watch pornographic films or pictures, and to act them out, although he/she knew I did not wish to do so.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. Pg. 9.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. Pg. 14.
- <sup>17</sup> Health, Well-Being and the Personal Safety of Women in Germany: A Representative Study of Violence against Women in Germany. (2003). [Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth].
- <sup>18</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 34.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid. Pg. 34.
- <sup>21</sup> Information provided by ZIF (2014). The BFF, the federal association of rape crisis centers and women's counseling centers in Germany, is cooperating with the German Institute for Human Rights regarding a revision of § 177 StGB (penal code).
- <sup>22</sup> Information provided by ZIF (2014).
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Information provided by Gesine (2014). See also: [<http://frauenundgesundheit-nrw.de/themen/interventionen-bei-gewalt>]
- <sup>25</sup> Information provided by Papatya (2014).



# GREECE (HELLENIC REPUBLIC)



COUNTRY EXPERT: European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 11,282,751  
 Female population: 5,695,655  
 Member of Council of Europe: 1949  
 Member of European Union: 1981  
 CEDAW ratified: 1983  
 CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2001  
 CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
 signed: 11 May 2011  
 ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There are two national women’s helplines in Greece. Both helplines operate on a 24/7 basis, while only one of them is free of charge. Between September 2012 and December 2013, one of the helplines received 2,797 calls. Furthermore, there are only 13 women’s shelters with approximately 223 shelter places available for women survivors of violence. Currently, 80% of recommended shelter places are missing in Greece. Overall, Greece meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women’s helpline, but does not meet the recommendations for women’s shelter provision. Additionally, there are 37 women’s counselling centers in Greece, with 15 expected to be opened in the future. Finally, there are no centers for women survivors of sexual violence.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN’S HELPLINE<sup>1</sup>

There are two national women’s helplines in Greece. The first is operated by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality, which is part of the Ministry of the Interior. The phone number of the helpline is (15900). Women survivors may also seek help via email by contacting ‘sos15900@isotita.gr’. The helpline operates 24/7, but is not free of charge. It offers services in Greek, English and French. If there is need for another language, contact is made with interpreter service. The helpline covers all forms of violence against women.

The second helpline is operated by the National Center for Social Solidarity (E.K.K.A.). The phone number is (197). Women survivors may also seek help via email by contacting ‘helpline197@ekka.org.gr’. The helpline is free of charge and operates 24/7. It offers multilingual support in English and contact with interpreter service is made, if needed.

The first helpline is funded by the state and by the European Social Fund through the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2007-2013. The second helpline is funded by the state and receives majority of its funding from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

**Based on this information, Greece meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

National Women’s Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (September 2012 – December 2013) <sup>2</sup>
2	Yes (1)	Yes (2)	2,797 calls received

### WOMEN’S SHELTERS<sup>3 4</sup>

There are 13 women’s shelters in Greece with approximately 223 shelter places available. This includes two shelters run by the National Center for Social Solidarity (E.K.K.A.). Six shelters were recently opened and are run by the local municipalities of Piraeus, Ioannina, Rhodes, Lamia, Thessaloniki and Athens. The remaining shelters are called FOIVI, FRONTIDA, Hellenic Care of Volos Charity Association, Drama Ladies’ Union and Association of Members of Heraklion and Heraklion Prefecture Female Boars. Of all the



shelters, five are located in the Attica region, while the remaining eight are in located in Thessaloniki, Volos, Drama, Lamia, Rhodes, Ioannina and Heraklion (Crete). One of the shelters is not a secure shelter but an open house for women survivors of violence, the address of which is publicly available. The shelter accommodates women survivors of abuse who are not at imminent risk.

All shelters accept children of the survivors and the period of stay in most shelters is up to three months. Two of the shelters are fully funded by the state, and the six shelters run by local municipalities are funded by the state and the European Social Fund through the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2007-2013. The remaining five shelters do not receive any state funding.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 1,128 women’s shelter places are needed in Greece. With approximately 905 women’s shelter places missing (80%), Greece does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women’s Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
13	1,128	223	905	80%	50,595	-



#### ▶ WOMEN’S CENTERS<sup>5 6</sup>

There are 37 women’s counseling centers in Greece, and another 15 are expected to operate in the near future. Some of the centers are run as non-residential services provided by some of the women’s shelters. All of the centers provide counseling, information and advice, while few offer legal advice, court accompaniment and outreach. Some of the centers provide specialist child support.

#### ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The information on prevalence of sexual violence in Greece is available in the prevalence of violence study titled Domestic Violence against Women: The First Epidemiological Research in Greece,<sup>7</sup> published in 2003. The focus of the survey is on violence against women by spouses or intimate partners.<sup>8</sup> Only a page summary is available in English, containing limited information. The sample comprises information collected from 1,200 women between the ages 18-60 years, residents of urban, semi-urban and rural regions located in Greece. The data is gender disaggregated for victim (female) and perpetrator (male). Overall, survey findings show that 3.5% of women have been victims of sexual abuse in their lifetime. However, it is likely that the relatively low percentage of reported sexual abuse gives a highly underestimated account of the magnitude of the problem in Greece. Among the 5.3% of women previously married or in intimate relationships, 39.7% reported having experienced domestic violence perpetrated by a former partner.<sup>9</sup>

Police data for 2012 and six months of 2013 show that there were 167 rapes reported and 79 rape attempts reported in 2012, and 64 rapes and 33 rape attempts for the 6 months of 2013.<sup>10</sup>

#### ▶ WOMEN’S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

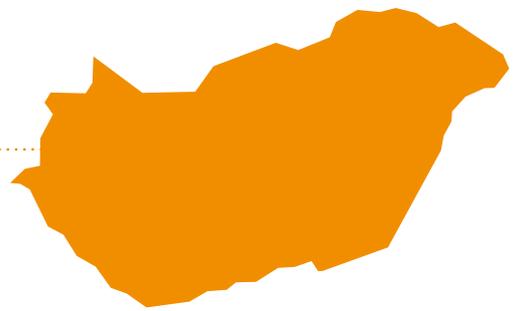
There are no women’s centers for survivors of sexual violence in Greece, although some of the counselling centers may provide counselling for women survivors of sexual violence.<sup>11</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid. The data refers to the activity of the helpline operated by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality.
- <sup>3</sup> European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>4</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 126.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pg. 126.
- <sup>6</sup> European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>7</sup> Domestic Violence against Women: The First Epidemiological Research in Greece. (2003). [Research Center for Gender Equality KETHI].
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid. Pg. 3.
- <sup>9</sup> European Anti-Violence Network (EAVN). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013.
- <sup>10</sup> Hellenic Police statistics (available in Greek) - [astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=30634&Itemid=1149&lang](http://astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=30634&Itemid=1149&lang)
- <sup>11</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2012). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 126.



# HUNGARY



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Judit Wirth, Julia Spronz, Enikő Pap  
(NANE Women's Rights Association)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 9,908,798<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 5,192,845<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1990

Member of European Union: 2004

CEDAW ratified: 1980

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There are two national women's helplines in Hungary. One of the helplines is free of charge, but neither operates on a 24/7 basis. In 2012, both helplines received 830 calls combined from women survivors of violence. Furthermore, there are no specialized shelters for women survivors of violence in Hungary. As a result, Hungary does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelters. Additional services, such as a hotline and crisis centers exist that may also provide assistance to women survivors of violence and their children.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>3 4</sup>

There are two national women's helplines in Hungary. One of the national women's helplines is operated by NANE Women's Rights Association and was set up in 1994. The number of the helpline is (06 80 505 101). It does not operate 24/7, but is free of charge. The hours of operation are 18:00-22:00, four days per week. The helpline assists women survivors of all forms of violence, but specializes in domestic violence. Support is available in Hungarian only. The helpline is supported with some form of state funding (allocated from 1% of personal income tax by the taxpayers)<sup>5</sup> and the Open Society Foundation. Until 2013, the helpline was also supported by Magyar Telekom (the company had been supporting the helpline since 1998).

The second helpline is called KERET Coalition's Helpline and was established in 2011. The helpline is also run by NANE Women's Rights Association. The number of the helpline is (+36 40630 006). It does not operate 24/7 and callers from any type of phone are charged a local rate. The helpline specializes in sexual violence. Assistance is provided in Hungarian only. The helpline is supported by the Open Society Foundation.

**Based on this information, Hungary does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>6</sup>
2	Yes (1)	No	700 calls received by NANE; 130 calls received by KERET (operated by NANE)

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>7</sup>

There are no specialized women's shelters in Hungary.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 991 women's shelter places are needed in Hungary. With no women's shelters available, Hungary does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
0	991	0	991	100%	-	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>8</sup>

There are no women's centers for survivors of violence in Hungary.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In 2004, a study on sexual violence in Hungary was published.<sup>9</sup> The survey involved 512 female respondents, of which 1.2% disclosed having been victims of sexual violence, with 30% having experienced sexual violence more than once. A significant finding of the survey included results from comparing estimated rates (prevalence rates) with reported rates, showing that women are highly unlikely to report sexual violence to the police. Instead, only one out of 24 sexual assaults is reported to the police.<sup>10</sup>

Official police data shows 192 cases of violent sexual intercourse in 2012, a decrease from 196 in 2011, and 246 in 2010. In 2011, the registered number of sexual violence offenders was 193.<sup>11</sup>

In 2010, there was a highly publicized case of rape involving a woman being raped by five policemen, all of whom were later acquitted. This case contributed to the widely held view that the radical drop in reporting of cases of violent sexual intercourse between 2010 and 2011 is in fact due to the way cases are handled by the police, the court and the media.<sup>12</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>13</sup>

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Hungary.

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In addition to the two women's helplines mentioned above, there is one state-run hotline called Országos Kríziskezelő és Információs Telefonszolgálat - OKIT (National Crisis-Intervention and Information Phone). The hotline was opened in 2005. The number (0 680 205 520) is free of charge, and it operates on a 24/7 basis. The hotline provides information to women survivors of violence about locating available space in a crisis center at the time of their call.<sup>14</sup> Information on specific domestic violence training received by the staff or whether the state-run hotline works using a gender-perspective is not available.

According to a recent Human Rights Watch report, there are a total of 122 shelter beds available in 14 nation-wide shelters, referred to as 'crisis centers', in Hungary. However, only 28 of these beds are available in a secure shelter that service women survivors of domestic violence specifically, although it has been noted that the address of the shelter has been given away during court proceedings related to domestic violence, making the perpetrator aware of where the victim is staying. Most shelter beds are available in apartments attached to public temporary mothers' homes or temporary family homes (these accommodate families, including fathers). The crisis centers allow for a maximum stay of 60 days, where women with children may apply for extended stay and be transferred to the public mothers' home or temporary family home, while women without children may need to move to a homeless shelter. As a result, women often return to the aggressors.<sup>15</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Central Statistical Office of Hungary. (KSH). [[www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat\\_eves/i\\_wnt001b.html](http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_wnt001b.html)]
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 131.
- <sup>4</sup> NANE Women's Rights Association. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid: In Hungary, taxpayers have the possibility to direct 1% of their personal income tax to any NGO they want.
- <sup>6</sup> NANE Women's Rights Association. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 131.
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 131.
- <sup>9</sup> Virág, György. (2004). Szexuális erőszak. In: Irk, F. (ed.): Áldozatok és Vélemények II. Kötet. [Victims and Opinions, Vol. II] OKRI, Budapest. Pg. 71-83.
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 128.
- <sup>11</sup> Tájékoztató a 2012. évi bűnözésről I. Information on the Criminal Statistics of 2012. Coordination and Statistical Department of the Ministry of Interior and Head Department of Informatics of the Chief Prosecution. [[www.mklu.hu/repository/mkudok5892.pdf](http://www.mklu.hu/repository/mkudok5892.pdf)]
- <sup>12</sup> NANE Women's Rights Association. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Ibid. Pg. 131.
- <sup>14</sup> NANE Women's Rights Association. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>15</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2013). Unless Blood Flows: Lack of Protection from Domestic Violence in Hungary. [[http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/hungary11113\\_ForUpload.pdf](http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/hungary11113_ForUpload.pdf)]



# ICELAND

(REPUBLIC OF ICELAND)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Anna Þóra Kristinsdóttir and Guðrún Jónsdóttir (Stígamót)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 319,575<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 159,211<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1950

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1985

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2001

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Iceland. There is one women's shelter accommodating women survivors of domestic violence, with 22 shelter places available. Currently, 31% of recommended shelter places are missing in Iceland. Furthermore, there are six rape crisis centers in the country. Overall, Iceland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on the provision of national women's helpline and women's shelters.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*Anna's story begins when she was only five years old.* At the time, a friend she used to play with lived with his family in a nearby apartment. One day, as Anna was visiting her friend, she was sexually assaulted by three men in the apartment building. By the time the police and the ambulance had come, the abusers were gone and they were never prosecuted. Brutally injured, she had to stay in hospital for a week, where she had to undergo genital reconstructive surgery. From the age of seven, Anna was sexually abused by the man hired by her parents to help around the house and watch over her. After five years, she finally opened up about what was happening to her, her abuser was let go and sued. By this time, she had become accustomed to taking drugs and alcohol to deal with the abuse she had suffered.

When she was 15, Anna met her biological father. Despite knowing of his bad reputation, she decided to follow him and live with him. A drug user, Anna initially enjoyed her life with her father. After three months of living together, Anna started being the victim of abuse from her father. From this point on began years of emotional, physical and sexual violence. While her father's wife knew about the abuse taking place, she never dared speaking out and they frequently changed houses to escape child protection services, especially with Anna's mother and other family members seeking to intervene and to find Anna. Aged 18, her father locked her out in a storage room for several days, after severely sexually attacking her. Following this, she remained in the hospital for three months and had to undergo surgery to remove her uterus and ovaries, mutilated during the attack. She eventually returned to her father's house.

Beaten up on a daily basis, forced into prostitution due to lack of money, Anna started using harder drugs and eventually sank into heroin addiction. When looking for help, she felt stigmatized and rejected as the police told her she could only blame herself for the situation.

While on drug rehabilitation, Anna was referred to a women's shelter where she finally found the support she needed. "They helped me with everything. I realized what rape was, I had no idea before. I started to differentiate between right and wrong, I didn't know how to before. After so much abuse, one needs a lot of guidance to face life and learn how to communicate". Anna is now 29 years old. She is seeing a counselor from the shelter and a female psychologist specialized in therapy for abuse survivors. She is clean from drugs and is currently seeking treatment for bulimia. Though she suffers from being categorized as a second-class citizen due to her former drug addiction, she wants to become a stronger and independent woman, and to be able to fight for her rights. "No matter how hard you are stepped on, no one is a loser. We are survivors, that's just the way it is."

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

As of 2014, there is only one women's shelter in Iceland. Largely, women's services in Iceland are operating with insufficient funding. Furthermore, there is a shortage of shelters, as the one shelter is located in the capital, therefore limiting the access of women residing outside of Reykjavik. Existing programs also face challenges, especially in their provision of services for women with disabilities. Challenges include funding, training and capacity.<sup>4</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>5</sup>

There is no national women's helpline in Iceland.

**Based on this information, Iceland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There is one women's shelter in Iceland, with at least 22 shelter places to accommodate women survivors of domestic violence.<sup>6</sup> The shelter was opened in 1982 by Kvennaathvarfið, and accepts and accommodates all survivors who seek help and their children regardless of age. The shelter is run by an independent women's NGO.<sup>7</sup> The women's shelter is mainly funded by the Government of Iceland and the Municipality of Reykjavik.<sup>8</sup>

Up until the end of 2013, the women's organization Stígamót was running a shelter for women wishing to exit prostitution and trafficking, called Kristínarhús. The shelter had a five-room capacity. A two-year pilot project, Kristínarhús was closed at the beginning of 2014, due to lack of necessary funding to sustain its activities.<sup>9</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 32 women's shelter places are needed in Iceland. With approximately 10 shelter places missing (31%), Iceland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
1	32	22	10	31%	14,526	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are at least two women's centers in Iceland. One of the centers, founded in 1984, is Kvennaráðgjöfin. It offers services like legal and social work counseling for women. Women can visit or call during opening hours. The telephone number of Kvennaráðgjöfin is (552 1500). The shelter for women survivors of domestic violence Kvennaathvarfið also provides a helpline (561 1205) that can be called during opening hours, which offers counseling.<sup>10</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on the prevalence of sexual violence in Iceland can be found in the prevalence of violence survey titled Research on Violence against Women: The Experience of Women Age 18-80 in Iceland.<sup>11</sup> The survey findings are available in Icelandic; however, an English document from the Ministry of Welfare on the topic of violence against women in Iceland provides data from the survey in one of the sections of the document.<sup>12</sup> For the survey, 2,050 women between the ages of 18-80 were

interviewed. The findings show that an estimated 24% of women in Iceland have experienced sexual abuse. Furthermore, around 13% of women reported sexual violence in the form of rape or attempted rape<sup>12</sup> and 6% have experienced sexual violence by their partner in the last 12 months.<sup>14</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>15 16</sup>

There are six rape crisis centers in Iceland. Three of them are Stígamót, Aflið, Sólstafir, and are run by independent women's NGOs. Drekaslóð, which is a counseling center that deals with all types of violence, also provides assistance to survivors of sexual violence.

Furthermore, there are sexual assault units located at hospitals in Reykjavík and Akureyri, called Neyðarmóttaka vegna nauðganna. The two rape crisis units are run by the Icelandic government.

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES<sup>17 18 19</sup>

Though no national women's helpline is available in Iceland, there are individual organizations running helplines that can assist women survivors of violence.

Stígamót was opened in 1990 and is an education and counseling center for survivors of sexual abuse and violence. The center provides free individual counseling for survivors of rape, sexual molestation, sexual harassment, pornographic exploitation and prostitution. Up until the end of 2013, the Stígamót-run shelter Kristínarhús was running a helpline (562 6868) operating 24/7 and servicing women accommodated or wishing to be accommodated at Kristínarhús. The Red Cross also runs a helpline (1717) for women and men who suffer from various problems, including depression and anxiety, among others. The women's shelter Kvennaathvarfið provides a helpline (561 1205) that operates 24/7 and provides support and information on violence against women. Lastly, rape victims can call rape crisis units in hospitals on a 24/7 basis.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> [www.hagstofa.is/?PageID=2593&src=https://rannsokn.hagstofa.is/pxis/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=MAN02001%26ti=Mannfj%F6ldi+eftir+kyni%2C+aldri+og+sveitarf%E9l%F6gum+1998%2D2013+%2D+Sveitarf%E9lagaskipan+hvers+%E1rs%26path=.../Database/mannfjoldi/sveitarfelog/%26lang=3%26units=Fj%F6ldi](https://www.hagstofa.is/?PageID=2593&src=https://rannsokn.hagstofa.is/pxis/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=MAN02001%26ti=Mannfj%F6ldi+eftir+kyni%2C+aldri+og+sveitarf%E9l%F6gum+1998%2D2013+%2D+Sveitarf%E9lagaskipan+hvers+%E1rs%26path=.../Database/mannfjoldi/sveitarfelog/%26lang=3%26units=Fj%F6ldi)
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Stígamót, located in Iceland.
- <sup>4</sup> Stígamót. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Kvennaathvarfið. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 137.
- <sup>8</sup> Kvennaathvarfið. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>9</sup> Stígamót. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 137.
- <sup>11</sup> Karlsdóttir, Elísabet and Ásdís A. Arnalds. (December 2010). Rannsókn á ofbeldi gegn konum Reynsla kvenna á aldrinum 18-80 ára á Íslandi. [Rannsóknastofnun í barna- og fjölskylduvernd].
- <sup>12</sup> Ministry of Welfare. (February 2012). Male Violence against Women in Intimate Relationships (excerpts). Reykjavík. Pg. 10.
- <sup>13</sup> Karlsdóttir, Elísabet and Ásdís A. Arnalds. (December 2010). Rannsókn á ofbeldi gegn konum Reynsla kvenna á aldrinum 18-80 ára á Íslandi. [Rannsóknastofnun í barna- og fjölskylduvernd]. Pg. 10.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. Pg. 11.
- <sup>15</sup> Stígamót. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>16</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 137.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Stígamót. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>19</sup> Kvennaathvarfið. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

# IRELAND

COUNTRY EXPERTS: Women's Aid (Margaret Martin, Director), Safe Ireland, Rape Crisis Network Ireland

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 4,588,252<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 2,315,553<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

Member of European Union: 1973

CEDAW ratified: 1985

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a



## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Ireland that is free of charge, but does not operate 24/7. In 2012, the helpline answered 11,729 calls. There are 20 women's shelters (refuges) with 138 family units available in the country. Currently, 70% of recommended women's shelter places are missing. Based on the information, Ireland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on the provision of a women's helpline and women's shelters. Furthermore, there are a number of women's centers run by various organizations. Furthermore, there are 16 rape crisis centers in Ireland and seven sexual assault treatment units.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*Ms. A. was married to a man* whom she at first found to be intelligent and charming, but who eventually started to show violent behaviour. While she was pregnant with her first baby, he shoved her against the wall because she turned on the heating and he would scream at her or hit her. He controlled all her expenses; he forced her to keep a ledger of every expense.

When she got pregnant with a second child, he would kick her. Even though he made sure not to kick her stomach, she had to go to hospital frequently, as she was bleeding, and the hospital staff was worried that she would lose the baby.

She could not explain to herself how her husband, whom she considered to be "good-looking and intelligent", could do this to her. On the outside, the violence was not visible, and the people around her were even envious that she "married so well", which made her question her sanity and find excuses for him. She even felt sorry for him because he had such a "stressful job." She blamed herself for being not attractive enough, for not being a good mother and housekeeper.

Her children were being affected by the violence. The little girl started to harm herself. Her mother told her doctor, but the husband blocked any treatment. He also started to attack the social workers, when they realized this was a situation of domestic violence.

Eventually, Ms. A. managed to rent private accommodation and counselling was supposed to start for both children but their father did not consent. The social workers started to backtrack. They said that it was not domestic violence, but "parental acrimony". Ms. A. believed that even in a case of parental acrimony, the children should be seen and heard.

Throughout dealing with the situation, the woman did not receive any support other than that from the refuge. The justice system was not helpful either, as the court granted the father unsupervised access to the children over the weekends, despite the domestic violence. When she complained to the judge that the children refused to go to their father, the judge said that the children had no other choice. When the children came back from the weekends with their father, they reported to their mother that he did not treat

them well: sometimes, he did not feed them, or he would lock the front door so they could not leave, or he would lock them outside as punishment. He was also hitting the children. At one point, the mother called the police, because the son was seriously injured. Ms. A appeared over 40 times before the court. She stated that she is in deep financial troubles, but what really bothers her is that the access to her children and their welfare were not properly considered by the courts. Even though she provided evidence of violence, a judge found that she was alienating her children from their father.

Her conclusion in her own words is the following: "In all our dealings with the justice and legal system, it has never been mentioned that what he did to me was criminal or that he could be prosecuted. I think that they minimise domestic violence. I don't think that the judges get training in how a power imbalance can develop between spouses and how vulnerable one spouse can be, for whatever reason. Or that just because somebody hits you in a way that it doesn't bruise, it doesn't mean that you're not terrified."

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Ireland for women survivors of domestic violence. It is run by Women's Aid Ireland and is called the National Free-phone Helpline (1800 341 900). It does not operate 24/7 but is open twelve hours a day, from 10:00 – 22:00. It is free of charge and multilingual support is offered in 170 languages through telephone interpreters. Funding is primarily provided by the state and covers approximately 75-80% of the costs of the helpline.<sup>4</sup> The National Free-phone Helpline also provides support to deaf women or women with hearing loss through text service under the number (087 959 7980).<sup>5</sup>

**Based on this information, Ireland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>6</sup>
1	Yes	No	11,729 calls were answered

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 20 women's shelters (termed refuges) in Ireland with approximately 138 family units for women and children.<sup>7</sup> The first shelter opened in 1974 and the last shelter, VIVA house, opened in June 2010. It offers eight self-contained units and it is run by an NGO. A new four unit refuge was completed in Kildare in 2010. According to SAFE Ireland, this shelter has yet to receive the necessary minimum funding to open. In Donegal, a new shelter is currently being built to replace the existing two unit shelter.<sup>8</sup> There are initial plans in place to increase the number of units in Dundalk and Galway.<sup>9</sup>

One of the 20 shelters is state run, while the other 19 are provided by independent women's NGOs. The shelters support women survivors of domestic violence and provide limited services for survivors of trafficking. The shelters provide access to women with disabilities. All but one shelter provide 24/7 access and all the shelters accept children of the survivors, with approximately two having an age limit for boys over 16 years old. All of the NGOs that run shelters offer access to women from the Traveler Community and all migrant women regardless of their status.<sup>10</sup> However, significant cuts to funding have meant that refuges are finding it harder to secure resources to support women with no recourse to public funds.<sup>11</sup>

In a national study of shelters conducted in 2008 by SAFE Ireland<sup>12</sup>, 45% of women clients at the shelters, who responded to questions regarding their length of stay, stayed less than one week, 16.9% stayed for one to two weeks, 14.4% stayed for three to four weeks, 7.5% stayed for five to eight weeks, 8.8% for nine to 12 weeks and 7.5% for 13 weeks or more. There were 188 members of staff working full time in the shelters in 2009.<sup>13</sup>

The state provides the majority of core funding for services, which is renewed on an annual basis. In 2011, approximately EUR 11.2 million was provided in state funding for shelters and transitional housing as well as for the provision of a wider range of support and services for women who did not need to access accommodation.<sup>14</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 459 women's shelter places are needed in Ireland. With approximately 321 women's shelter places missing (70%), Ireland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>15</sup>
20	459	138	321	70%	33,248	1,875 women and 2,892 children accommodated <sup>16</sup> ; 3,470 requests for accommodation could not be granted due to lack of space

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

The actual number of women's centers in Ireland is not available. There are currently 39 member organizations of SAFE Ireland that provide a range of crisis support, information and advocacy services in Ireland. These figures include also those centers that are providing shelters (refuges). According to the statistics of Safe Ireland, 8,449 individual women have received support from domestic violence support services in Ireland in 2012.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, there are population specific services for the Traveler Community and other minority ethnic communities. Some of these services provide support and referral services for women experiencing domestic violence.<sup>18</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Gender disaggregated data on women victims of rape is not collected by any statutory agency in Ireland. The only disaggregation in the data of the Central Statistics Offices relates to persons convicted of sexual offences.<sup>19</sup>

Gender disaggregated data is provided by NGOs – most importantly, the Rape Crisis Network of Ireland (RCNI) that has developed a high quality data collection system, that receives some funding from the Government to carry out the work.<sup>20</sup> The system is operated nationally by the RCNI.<sup>21</sup>

The most recent prevalence study of violence in Ireland is the Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland: Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse.<sup>22</sup> Published in 2005, it is a national domestic violence survey wherein data was obtained on violence against women and men committed against them by their current or former partner. Specific data on sexual violence within the report makes use of a 2002 study titled 'The SAVI Report: Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland.'<sup>23</sup> The SAVI report is the only prevalence study on sexual violence carried out in Ireland. The findings are available in English.

The SAVI report bases its findings on telephone interviews with 3,120 respondents. Sexual violence is not defined in the study. However, data categories give an indication as to the acts of sexual violence included. The categorization entailed a distinction between penetration, attempted penetration, contact abuse and non-contact abuse. The study focuses on sexual violence committed against both women and men but the data is gender disaggregated. Furthermore, the prevalence of sexual violence was divided into three categories: child sexual abuse, adult sexual assault, and lifetime experience of sexual abuse and assault.<sup>24</sup>

Most perpetrators of child sexual abuse (89%) were men. Seven percent of children were abused by a female perpetrator. In 4% of cases more than one abuser was involved in the same incident(s).<sup>25</sup> The report states that nearly one quarter (24%) of perpetrators against girls were family members, just over half (52%) were non-family but known to the abused girl. Nearly one quarter (24%) were strangers.<sup>26</sup>

Perpetrators of sexual violence against adult women were most commonly friends and acquaintances (26.8%),<sup>27</sup> followed by partners/ex-partners (23.6%).<sup>28</sup> The risk of sexual assault by a stranger was higher for adults (30% for women and 38% for men) than for children (24% for girls and 20% for boys).<sup>29</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Ireland has 16 sexual violence centers<sup>30</sup> (rape crisis centers - RCC) providing support to women survivors of sexual violence and their children. In 2011, 2,541 people visited the rape crisis centers in Ireland for counseling and support.<sup>31</sup>

RCCs provide counseling, accompaniment to make a statement to the police, accompaniment to any court cases, accompaniment to medical examinations, assistance in accessing other medical and social supports, support to non-abusing family members including partners, education and awareness raising programs. Services are available to children over 14 but mainly to children over the age of 16.<sup>32</sup>

Ireland has seven Sexual Assault Treatment units<sup>33</sup>, providing specialist care for women and men over 14 who have been recently sexually assaulted or raped.<sup>34</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Some of the domestic violence services and refuges have helplines, but they are not nation-wide.<sup>35</sup>

There are also 24 hour local helplines throughout the country which operate via the 24 hour refuge services with qualified and experienced staff. Two of these helplines have free-phone helpline numbers.<sup>36</sup> According to the statistics of Safe Ireland, a total of 50,077 helpline calls (including calls answered by the helpline run by Women's Aid) were answered by domestic violence services across Ireland in 2012.<sup>37</sup>

All RCCs in Ireland have helplines which are accessible to everyone throughout the country. In 2011, 28,615 helpline contacts were answered by Rape Crisis Centres.<sup>38</sup> The helplines are also free-phones.<sup>39</sup> As an example, the helpline run by the Dublin Rape Crisis Center operates 24 hours/365 days of the years and operates nation-wide. The number is (1 800 77 8888). It offers free confidential support, including listening and support service for women and men who have been raped, or have been victims of other forms of sexual violence at any time in their lives.<sup>40</sup> According to information of RCNI, it is free of charge most of the time but charges for calls received at night time.<sup>41</sup>

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Central Statistics Office. (2011). Population by Age 2011. [[www.cso.ie/Quicktables/GetQuickTables.aspx?FileName=CNA15.asp&TableName=Population+by+Age+2011&StatisticalProduct=DB\\_CN](http://www.cso.ie/Quicktables/GetQuickTables.aspx?FileName=CNA15.asp&TableName=Population+by+Age+2011&StatisticalProduct=DB_CN)]
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Safe Ireland located in Ireland.
- <sup>4</sup> Women's Aid Ireland. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Webpage of the helpline: [[www.womensaid.ie/services/helpline/deaforhardofhearing.html](http://www.womensaid.ie/services/helpline/deaforhardofhearing.html)]
- <sup>6</sup> Women's Aid Ireland. (2013). Focal Point Questionnaire returned 2013.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 142.  
See also the webpage of Safe Ireland : [[www.safeireland.ie/our-members](http://www.safeireland.ie/our-members)], and COSC webpage for a list of local services: [[www.cosc.ie/EN/COSC/NS/Domestic%20Violence%20Services%20for%20Women](http://www.cosc.ie/EN/COSC/NS/Domestic%20Violence%20Services%20for%20Women)]
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 142.
- <sup>9</sup> Information provided by Safe Ireland. (2014).
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 142.
- <sup>11</sup> Information provided by Safe Ireland. (2014).
- <sup>12</sup> Safe Ireland. (2009). Safety and Change. [Athlone, Ireland].
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg.142.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.Pg. 142.
- <sup>15</sup> Safe Ireland Domestic Violence Services National Statistics. (2012). [[www.safeireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Ireland-Factsheet-dec2013.pdf](http://www.safeireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Ireland-Factsheet-dec2013.pdf)]
- <sup>16</sup> The numbers refer to individual persons, who may have been accommodated more than once. For example, there were a total of 2,324 admissions into refuges in 2012, showing that 262 were admitted into a refuge more than once. In addition to accommodation in refuges, 148 individual women and 169 children lived in transitional housing; 13 women who stayed in the refuges in 2012, also stayed in transitional housing.
- <sup>17</sup> Safe Ireland Domestic Violence Services National Statistics. (2012). [[www.safeireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Ireland-Factsheet-dec2013.pdf](http://www.safeireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Ireland-Factsheet-dec2013.pdf)]
- <sup>18</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 143.
- <sup>19</sup> European Women's Lobby. (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 43.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid. Pg. 43: By February 2014, the latest statistics available on the website of RCNI were from 2011. See [[www.rcni.ie/national-statistics](http://www.rcni.ie/national-statistics)] (Accessed on 3 February 2013).
- <sup>21</sup> Information provided by RCNI. (2014). Accordingly, 15 Rape Crisis Center provide information. A range of reports are produced annually, which are published on [[www.rcni.ie](http://www.rcni.ie)].
- <sup>22</sup> Watson, D. and S. Parsons. (2005). Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland: Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse. National Crime Council 2005. [[http://www.esri.ie/pdf/BKMNEXT056\\_Domestic%20Abuse.pdf](http://www.esri.ie/pdf/BKMNEXT056_Domestic%20Abuse.pdf)]
- <sup>23</sup> McGee H, Garavan R, de Barra M, Byrne J, Conroy R. (2002). The SAVI Report: sexual abuse and violence in Ireland. Executive Summary. Dublin: Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. [<http://epubs.rcsi.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1014&context=psycholrep>]. The full report is available at: [[www.drcc.ie/about/savi.pdf](http://www.drcc.ie/about/savi.pdf)]. See also a publication of the Dublin Rape Crisis Center. (2005): SAVI revisited, available at [[www.drcc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/SAVI\\_Revisited.pdf](http://www.drcc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/SAVI_Revisited.pdf)].
- <sup>24</sup> McGee H, Garavan R, de Barra M, Byrne J, Conroy R. (2002). The SAVI Report: Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland. Executive Summary. Dublin: Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Pg. xxxiv: Child sexual violence refers to sexual abuse of children and adolescents under age 17 years.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid. Pg. xxxvi.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup> Information provided by RCNI. (2014).
- <sup>28</sup> McGee H, Garavan R, de Barra M, Byrne J, Conroy R. (2002). The SAVI Report: Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland. Executive Summary. Dublin: Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Pg.xxxvii.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid. Pg. xxxvi and xxxvii.
- <sup>30</sup> Information provided by RCNI. (2014).
- <sup>31</sup> RCNI 2011 National Rape Crisis Statistics and Annual Report available at: [[www.rcni.ie/wp-content/uploads/RCNI-AR+National-Statistics-2011.pdf](http://www.rcni.ie/wp-content/uploads/RCNI-AR+National-Statistics-2011.pdf)]
- <sup>32</sup> Information provided by RCNI. (2014)
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> [[www.hse.ie/satu](http://www.hse.ie/satu)] (Accessed on 3.2.2014).
- <sup>35</sup> Women's Aid Ireland. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>36</sup> Information provided by Safe Ireland. (2014).
- <sup>37</sup> Safe Ireland Domestic Violence Services National Statistics. (2012). [[www.safeireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Ireland-Factsheet-dec2013.pdf](http://www.safeireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/Safe-Ireland-Factsheet-dec2013.pdf)]
- <sup>38</sup> RCNI 2011 National Rape Crisis Statistics and Annual Report available at: [[www.rcni.ie/wp-content/uploads/RCNI-AR+National-Statistics-2011.pdf](http://www.rcni.ie/wp-content/uploads/RCNI-AR+National-Statistics-2011.pdf)]
- <sup>39</sup> Information provided by RCNI. (2014).
- <sup>40</sup> Webpage of RCC, the Dublin Rape Crisis Center: [[www.drcc.ie](http://www.drcc.ie)] (Accessed on 29.1.2013).
- <sup>41</sup> Information provided by RCNI. (2014).

# ITALY

(REPUBLIC OF ITALY)



**COUNTRY EXPERTS:** Anna Pramstrahler, Marcella Pirrone (D.i.Re Donne in Rete contro la Violenza, National Umbrella Organisation of Women's Shelters)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 60,192,698  
Female population: 30,972,785  
Member of Council of Europe: 1949  
Member of European Union: 1957  
CEDAW ratified: 1985  
CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000  
CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: 27 September 2012  
ratified: 10 September 2013

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Italy run by a women's NGO Telefono Rosa. In 2012, the helpline received 14,245 calls. There are 65 women's shelters in the country, 54 of which are run by independent women's NGOs, while the remaining are run by local authorities or other organizations. Data available for 37 of the women's shelters show 493 women and 490 children were accommodated in 2012. Based on the information available, Italy meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of the national women's helpline, while with 92% of women's shelter places still missing, the country still does not meet the recommendations on provision of women's shelters. Furthermore, there are 132 women's centers in Italy. Although some of the women's centers also provide support to women survivors of sexual violence, there is no clear data on the number of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence available in Italy.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Italy. The name of the helpline is 'Antiviolenza Donna' and the free phone number is (1522). The helpline was set up by the state in 2006, but is operated by an independent women's group Telefono Rosa. The helpline is free of charge and operates 24/7. The helpline assists women survivors of domestic violence and other forms of violence against women.<sup>1</sup> Multilingual support is provided.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on this information, Italy meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>3</sup>
1	Yes	Yes	14,245 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 65 women's shelters in Italy.<sup>4</sup> Fifty-four of the women's shelters are run by independent women's NGOs and 11 shelters are run by local governments or other organizations.<sup>5</sup> The first shelter was opened in 1989. Of these 65 shelters, 37 are run by the national shelter network (DiRe), and in those shelters, 453 shelter places are available.<sup>6</sup> The shelters serve women survivors of gender-based violence, including sexual violence and domestic violence. The shelters accept children of the survivors. The length of stay in the shelter is between three to six months. The shelters are predominantly funded by women's organizations but also by local governments, regional or municipal and private donations.<sup>7</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 6,019 women's shelter places are needed in Italy. With approximately 5,519 women's shelter places missing (92%), Italy does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>8</sup>
65	6,019	453 <sup>9</sup>	5,566	92%	132,876	493 women and 490 children accommodated <sup>10</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are in total 132 women's centers against violence in Italy,<sup>11</sup> (this number includes the 65 women's shelters of which also provide non-residential services to women survivors of violence). 105 of these centers are run by independent women's associations. The centers offer counseling, independent domestic violence advice and information and advice, while most provide intervention safety support, legal advice and resettlement support.<sup>12</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to the Barometer on Rape published by the European Women's Lobby in 2013, the Italian Official Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) produces data on sexual violence. On the one hand, it produces the "Citizens Safety Survey", a periodic survey where data are collected every five years, including a section on sexual violence. This section is completed only by women aged between 14 and 65 years (about 25,000 women). On the other hand, it produces the national survey "Violence against Women", a national sampling survey with about 25,000 women aged 16-70. The most recent of this survey "Violence against Women" is from 2006.<sup>13</sup> In this survey, data was collected via telephone interviews; the data is gender disaggregated for victim and the perpetrator where the victims are women and the perpetrators are male.<sup>14</sup> Physical, psychological and sexual violence against women committed by intimate partners (current and former), as well as by perpetrators outside the family (relatives, acquaintances, friends, colleagues, strangers, others) were measured.<sup>15</sup>

According to this survey, 23.7% of the women were estimated to be victims of sexual violence. Women continue to fear disclosing sexual violence and nearly 92% of rapes are never reported to the police.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, according to the survey, 21% of victims suffered sexual violence both in and outside their family, 22.6% only by the partner and 56.4% by men other than their partner.<sup>17</sup>

According to the EWL Barometer on Rape, a new survey on violence against women has been funded and carried out in 2013.<sup>18</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There is no data available on the number of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence,<sup>19</sup> however, there are 105 women's associations<sup>20</sup> that run anti-violence centers and also assist survivors of sexual violence. These centers support survivors of all forms of gender-based violence, including survivors of rape, sexual abuse and forced prostitution.<sup>21</sup>

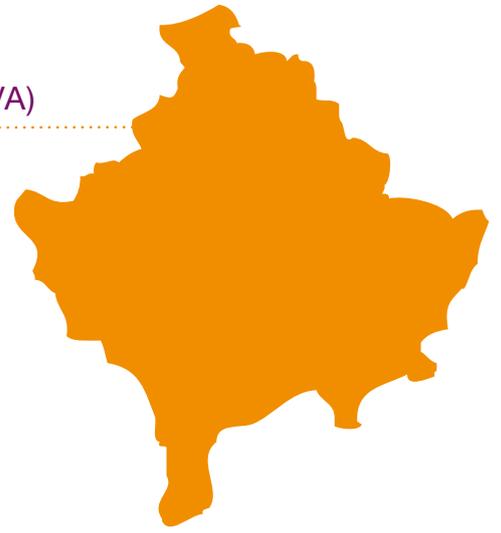
## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> According to information provided by Anna Pramstahler (WAVE Focal Point D.i.Re), it is in principle a line specifically for women; however, since the law on stalking had come into force, the helpline also provides information to men that are victims of stalking. However, the percentage of men calling the helpline is very low.
- <sup>2</sup> D.i.Re. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also: Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 148.
- <sup>3</sup> See the official statistics on the web page of the government: [[www.pariopportunita.gov.it/images/stories/documenti\\_vari/UserFiles/1522/RappStat\\_marzo2006\\_dicembre2012.pdf](http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/images/stories/documenti_vari/UserFiles/1522/RappStat_marzo2006_dicembre2012.pdf)]
- <sup>4</sup> Information provided by D.i.Re (2014). See also the independent database developed by Casa delle Donne per non subire Violenza, Bologna: [[http://comecitra.rovi.women.it/index.php?route=centri/search&filter\\_case\\_rif=true](http://comecitra.rovi.women.it/index.php?route=centri/search&filter_case_rif=true)]
- <sup>5</sup> Information provided by D.i.Re (2014).
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> D.i.Re. Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also: Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 148.
- <sup>8</sup> Statistics of D.i.Re: [<http://130.186.87.2/dire/images/pdf/dati/dati2012.pdf>]
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid: This number refers to the number of beds available.
- <sup>10</sup> According to D.i.Re, the information provided in this table only refers to the 37 shelters within the D.i.Re network, as for the remaining shelters, no data are available.
- <sup>11</sup> Information provided by DiRe. See also: [<http://comecitra.rovi.women.it/index.php?route=centri/italia>]
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 149.
- <sup>13</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 45.
- <sup>14</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 146.
- <sup>15</sup> UN Secretary-General's Database on Violence against Women. [Access: 3 February 2014 <http://sgdatabase.unwomen.org/searchDetail.action?%20measureId=26309&baseHref=country&baseHrefId=675>].
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 45.
- <sup>19</sup> Rape Crisis Center Network Europe. Access 04.03.2014: [[www.rcne.com/contact/countries/italy](http://www.rcne.com/contact/countries/italy)]: According to the information on the website, data on available rape crisis centers is not available.
- <sup>20</sup> Information provided by D.i.Re (2014).
- <sup>21</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 149.



# KOSOVO

(REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Women's Wellness Center

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 1,733,872<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 860,274<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: No

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: (Not signed)

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: (Not signed)

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There are two national women's helplines in Kosovo operating 24/7 and providing assistance free of charge. There are eight women's shelters with 130 shelter places available; hence 25% of recommended women's shelter places are still missing in the country. In 2012, 275 women survivors of violence and 257 children were accommodated at the shelters, with 16 women and three children turned away due to lack of available space. There are no stand-alone rape crisis centers for women survivors of violence; however, the women's shelters also provide non-residential support, such as counselling, to women survivors of sexual violence. As a result, Kosovo meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for provision of a national women's helpline, however, it does not meet the recommendations, when it comes to sufficient availability of women's shelter places.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*I am 47 years old* and I have two children: a daughter aged 20, and a son aged 18. For 18 years, I was a victim of abuse perpetrated by my husband. My situation was particularly difficult because of the lack of any financial autonomy and support. I was completely dependent on my husband and had no means of living on my own. From my family I received no economic support or any other forms of support as well. I did not confide in them as I was afraid of their judgement. I was also afraid of being judged by society, and by my daughter. Throughout the abuse, I was feeling depressed and I used to take medications on a regular basis. I thought that I was crazy, and that I was a bad mother. I blamed myself for the violence that I was experiencing. I lost contact with my sisters and with all the friends that I used to have.

I asked my brother for help many times. He always told me to stay with my husband. He told me that he was a good man and that I should obey him. I eventually reached out for help to the police and they took me to a shelter. Over the first six months of my stay, only one court session was held to deal with my case. The court session was the only thing that happened during this time, nothing else, not even a visit from my family or my daughter.

I have been residing in the safe house for nearly a year now. I want to be independent and start my life over. My daughter came to visit me after nine months and said she was not able to help me, instead she said the shelter I am staying in should help me find work and an apartment. I was able to find some work and my son, who does not live in the country, has promised to support me. I am currently looking for an apartment, where I can live after I leave the shelter.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Women's shelters in Kosovo have the capacity to support survivors but face very severe financial difficulties. This is partially linked to insufficient government support, as the state of Kosovo only contributes 50% of women's shelters' operating costs (or approximately 2,000 Euros a month). State funding is insufficient to support the work that women's shelters must do for women survivors of violence.<sup>4</sup>

Women's services and the future of women survivors of violence exist in the backdrop of a weak economic situation; Kosovo continues to face slow economic growth, significant trade imbalance and fiscal constraints. The industrial sector of the economy remains weak, while the unemployment continues to be very high (over 40%), and is particularly problematic among young people. The serious nature of the situation was highlighted by a World Bank study on poverty in Kosovo, which claims that in 2009, slightly more than one-third of the population (34%) lived below an absolute poverty line or EUR 1.55 per adult equivalent per day, and 12% lived below the extreme poverty line of EUR 1.02, increased further due to a significant rise in the prices for basic commodities such as bread and cereals, cooking oils, fat and vegetables. The social system in Kosovo is the least developed in the region. The budget for social assistance is lower than the needs are, while criteria to qualify for assistance remain very stern. In terms of statistics, around 31,000 families received social assistance in the amount of EUR 40-80 per family.<sup>5</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>6</sup>

There are two national women's helplines in Kosovo. One helpline is funded by the state and is called the Direct Line for Victims of Violence. The phone number is (080011112). It operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The second national women's helpline is called SOS Linja. It is operated by an NGO and is funded through foreign donations. The helpline number is (+381 39 033 00 98). It operates 24/7 and calls are free of charge. Both helplines provide multilingual support in Albanian and Serbian.

**Based on this information, Kosovo meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics
2	Yes (2)	Yes (2)	-

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are eight women's shelters in Kosovo with approximately 130 shelter places.<sup>7</sup> Seven of the shelters are run by NGOs and one is operated by the state. All of the shelters offer accommodation for the children of the women survivors of violence, with an age limit for boys of 12 years. Six of the shelters accommodate women survivors of domestic violence, one is specifically for children up to age 18, and one also offers accommodation for women survivors of trafficking. The shelter for children is specifically to accommodate children who cannot stay at the women's shelter with their mothers, due to age limits. The period of accommodation is usually between six to 12 months.<sup>8</sup> Currently, the state is working on establishing an additional shelter for women survivors of violence. At present, the shelter is partially opened and provides 20 beds for women survivors of trafficking, while additional capacity of 40 beds will be available at some point in 2014. The shelters are predominantly funded by foreign donations (80%), by the state (10%) and other (5%).<sup>9</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 173 women's shelter places are needed in country. With approximately 43 women's shelter places missing (25%), Kosovo does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>10</sup>
8	173	130	43	25%	13,337	275 women and 257 children were accommodated; 16 women and 3 children could not be accommodated due to lack of space

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are 10 women's centers that provide counseling to women survivors of violence.<sup>11</sup>

## ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Kosovo can be found in the national prevalence of violence survey titled *Security Begins at Home: Research to Inform the First National Strategy and Action Plan against Domestic Violence in Kosovo*.<sup>12</sup> The survey was published in 2008 and is a national prevalence survey on domestic violence<sup>13</sup>, in which the victims and the perpetrators are either men or women. The survey considers persons in all types of domestic relationships. Respondents included persons of all ages (18 and above), who were asked about their lifetime experiences of violence.

The survey refers to the criminal code in Kosovo for definition of sexual violence. It stipulates that any of the following non-consensual (under pressure or coercion) acts, when committed within domestic relationships, are considered crimes: sexual assault; degradation of sexual integrity; and sexual abuse of persons with mental or emotional disorders or disabilities.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, sexual acts without the victim's active consent also constitute a crime, although the notion of lack of consent is relevantly new in Kosovo. In the survey, respondents tended not to recognize sexual violence as domestic violence when occurring between cohabiting partners. Two-third of respondents agreed with the following statement: "sexual intercourse can never be violence if it happens between two adults who are married."<sup>15</sup> Therefore, data on the true extent of sexual violence Kosovo is limited. Only 2.5% of women respondents in the survey stated that they had suffered sexual violence in the family, including by intimate partners.<sup>16</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>17</sup>

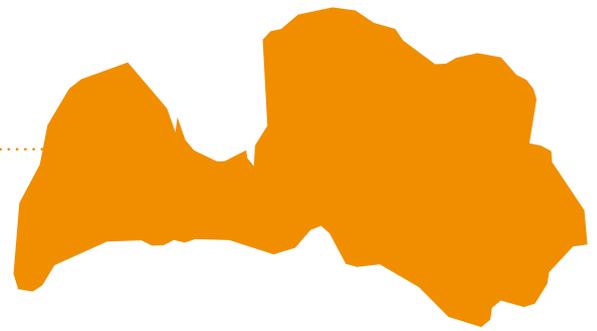
There are no stand-alone women's centers for survivors of sexual violence. Nevertheless, all of the eight women's shelters provide the needed services that include counselling sessions for women survivors of rape in addition to accommodation for women survivors of rape.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 150.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Women's Wellness Center, located in Kosovo.
- <sup>4</sup> Women's Wellness Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 154.
- <sup>9</sup> Women's Wellness Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 154.
- <sup>12</sup> Farnsworth, Nicole and Ariana Qosaj-Mustafa. (2008). Security Begins at Home: Research to Inform the First National Strategy and Action Plan against Domestic Violence in Kosovo. [Government of Kosovo]. Prishtina.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. Pg. 5.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. Pg. 33.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. Pg. 17.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. Pg. 34.
- <sup>17</sup> Women's Wellness Center. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.



# LATVIA (REPUBLIC OF LATVIA)



## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 2,254,834  
Female population: 1,214,549  
Member of Council of Europe: 1995  
Member of European Union: 2004  
CEDAW ratified: 1992  
CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: No  
CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: No  
ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline and no specialized shelters for women survivors of violence in Latvia, therefore, the country does not meet the Council Europe Taskforce Recommendations. Currently, there is one women's center available, and services for survivors of domestic violence and perpetrators are planned to begin in 2015.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is no national women's helpline in Latvia.<sup>1</sup>

**Based on this information, Latvia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are no women's shelters in Latvia.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 225 women's shelter places are needed in Latvia. With no shelter places in the country, Latvia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
0	225	0	225	100%	-	-

### WOMEN'S CENTER

There is one women's center in Latvia providing counseling, information and advice, independent domestic violence advice, legal advice and court accompaniment.<sup>3</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

There is no national survey measuring the prevalence of violence against women, including sexual violence, in Latvia.<sup>4</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Latvia.<sup>5</sup>



## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In Latvia, there are some gender neutral provisions of services and services focusing on different types of violence. These services can also be accessed by women survivors of domestic violence. Center Marta focuses on projects dealing with combating of trafficking in women. The center offers a helpline with the phone number (800 2012) as well as social integration programs for low-income women, among other services. Shelters and crisis centers also accommodate and work with survivors of domestic violence, however, they are not specifically set up to deal with issues facing women survivors of domestic violence. There are a total of two such shelters and six crisis centers. There are also no specialized centers for survivors of sexual violence. According to Ministry of Welfare, rehabilitation services for survivors of domestic violence and also perpetrators will be opened in 2015. At the time, services for women are provided by municipalities and NGOs through different project based funding.<sup>6</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 158.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid. Pg. 159.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid. Pg. 156.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pg. 159.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid. Pg. 158.



# LIECHTENSTEIN

(PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN)

COUNTRY EXPERT: Jasmine Andres-Meier (Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 36,942<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 18,628<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1978

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1995

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2001

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: No  
ratified: n/a



## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Liechtenstein operated by the women's shelter (Frauenhaus Liechtenstein). The helpline operates 24/7, but is not free of charge. In 2012, the helpline provided counselling services to 16 women. The women's shelter offers three shelter places for women survivors of violence and their children. In 2012, 19 women and 17 children were accommodated in the women's shelter. Furthermore, there are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence. On the provision of national women's helpline and the available shelter places, Liechtenstein does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Liechtenstein. First established in 1991, the helpline is operated by the women's shelter of Liechtenstein (Frauenhaus Liechtenstein) and its phone number is (+423 380 02 03). It operates 24/7 on 365 days of the year. The women's shelter operating the helpline also offers counseling free of charge for women seeking advice at the shelter directly, but the helpline itself is charged the cost of local landline calls. The availability of multilingual support depends on the language skills of the staff. Funding is predominantly provided by the state (60-70%) and through private donations (30-40%).<sup>3</sup>

**Based on this information, Liechtenstein does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012)
1	No	Yes	Counseling of 16 women <sup>4</sup>

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There is one women's shelter in Liechtenstein with three shelter places available. It was established in 1991 and is run by an independent women's organization. Children of survivors are accommodated with the age limit of 12 years for boys. There is no stay limit at the shelter. The funding predominantly stems from the state (60-70%) and private donations (30-40%).<sup>5</sup>

The Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein is a member of a network of Women's Shelters in Liechtenstein and Switzerland (DAO – Dachverband der Frauenhäuser der Schweiz und Liechtenstein). Although in Liechtenstein there is only one women's shelter, women who needs a shelter place can be (upon availability) offered a place in one of the shelters of the network in Switzerland, if the shelter in Liechtenstein does not have space available or if it is necessary for security reasons. Also, if a woman from Switzerland needs a place in the shelter in Liechtenstein because of limited capacity or her transfer to Liechtenstein is necessary for security reasons, she also will be accepted there upon availability of shelter places.<sup>6</sup>

In 2012, 19 women and 17 children were hosted in the women's shelter. Additionally, 16 women were personally counseled and supported by the staff of the shelter.<sup>7</sup>

Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately four women's shelter places are needed in Liechtenstein. With one shelter places missing (25%), Liechtenstein does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.



Women's Shelters						
Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012)
1	4	3	1	25%	12,314	19 women and 17 children were accommodated <sup>8</sup>

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTER

There is at least one women's center in Liechtenstein. The center is called Infra<sup>9</sup> and provides support to women, including legal advice and counseling about domestic violence. Legal advice in the area of marriage law, problems in partnership, divorce, and other areas is offered.<sup>10</sup>

### ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

#### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centres for survivors of sexual violence in Liechtenstein.<sup>11</sup>

### ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

'Opferhilfestelle' is a center for assistance of victims whose physical, psychological or sexual integrity has been violated by a criminal act. Every person residing in Liechtenstein whose integrity has been directly affected by a criminal act has the legal right (based on the Law on Victim's Assistance – 'Opferhilfegesetz') to counseling, information and assistance in psychological, socio-medical, or law related issues, also to be referred to therapists, medical doctors, lawyers if needed, including in matters of financial assistance and reparations.<sup>12</sup> In 2012, there were two women survivors of domestic violence, five women and three minor survivors of sexual violence, who applied for assistance at this center.<sup>13</sup>



## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Amt für Statistik-Fürstentum Liechtenstein. Bevölkerungsstatistik 30 June 2013. [[http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-as-bevoelkerungsstatistik\\_30\\_juni\\_2013](http://www.llv.li/pdf-llv-as-bevoelkerungsstatistik_30_juni_2013)]. Pg. 12.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid. Pg. 15.
- <sup>3</sup> Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein. (2014). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 161.
- <sup>4</sup> Frauenhaus Liechtenstein. Jahresbericht 2012 (Annual Report 2012). [[http://www.frauenhaus.li/Portals/0/docs/Jahresbericht\\_2012.pdf](http://www.frauenhaus.li/Portals/0/docs/Jahresbericht_2012.pdf)]. Pg. 8.
- <sup>5</sup> Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein. Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 162.
- <sup>6</sup> Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein. (2014). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Frauenhaus Liechtenstein. Jahresbericht 2012 (Annual Report 2012). [[http://www.frauenhaus.li/Portals/0/docs/Jahresbericht\\_2012.pdf](http://www.frauenhaus.li/Portals/0/docs/Jahresbericht_2012.pdf)]. Pg. 8.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> [www.infra.li](http://www.infra.li)
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 162.
- <sup>11</sup> Frauenhaus Fürstentum Liechtenstein. (2014). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 162.
- <sup>12</sup> Government of Liechtenstein. Menschenrechte in Liechtenstein- Zahlen und Fakten 2013. (2013). (Human Rights Report by the Government of Liechtenstein, 2013). [[www.regierung.li/fileadmin/mauropedrazzini/Menschenrechtsbericht\\_Zahlen\\_und\\_Fakten\\_2013.pdf](http://www.regierung.li/fileadmin/mauropedrazzini/Menschenrechtsbericht_Zahlen_und_Fakten_2013.pdf)]. Pg. 105.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.



# LITHUANIA (REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Lilija Vasiliauskienė

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 2,971,905<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 1,603,014<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1993

Member of European Union: 2004

CEDAW ratified: 1995

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2004

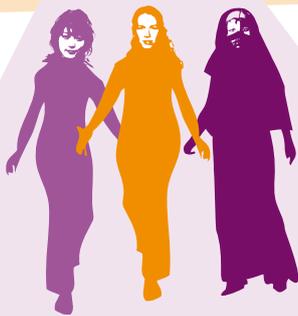
CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 7 June 2013

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is one women's helpline in Lithuania that is free of charge, but does not operate 24/7. There are no women's shelters in the country. As a result, Lithuania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendation on the provision of a women's helpline and women's shelters. Furthermore, there are 16 specialized help women's centers in the country, but no specialized services for women survivors of sexual violence exist in Lithuania.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*The woman survivor of violence is 38 years old* and has two children, a son who is 14 years old and a daughter, who is 10. For more than 10 years, the woman experienced physical, psychological and economic abuse by her husband. The children also suffered violence at the hands of their father. She is currently in the process of getting a divorce; while her husband continues to harass her. During her relationship, she was forced to quit her job and was unemployed for five years. Despite having attained a high level of education, the husband sabotaged her ability to work by limiting her access to her car, causing her to miss work, as the family lived outside of the city and public transportation was unavailable. The physical and psychological consequences of the violence caused her to minimize her working time, and eventually to quit her job, making her fully financially dependent upon the abuser. Furthermore, the systematic physical violence and threats of violence caused the woman to be socially and psychologically dependent on her abusive husband.

To escape the violence, the woman contacted the police, but the violence continued. Police officers didn't take the situation seriously, considering the abuse the woman experienced from her spouse as simply family disputes. The information about possibilities to get help at the Specialized Help Center was not provided as well as free of charge complex specialized help. Even when the woman called the police because her child was abused, the officers charged the perpetrator with an administrative fine of 10 Litas and advised the woman not to seek help at feminist organizations and stay loyal to the family. The woman decided to seek divorce and contacted a local NGO for legal assistance. The NGO contacted the children's rights agency to inform them of the violence by the father and urged the woman to contact the police should the violence continue. Consequently, the NGO provided the woman with legal assistance, including free of charge court application for divorce on the grounds of violence she and her children experienced, in addition to guidance throughout the process.

Currently the case is in court and divorce was applied for on the grounds of one spouse's (abuser's) fault which is an advantage for the woman. As the process of divorce is in progress, the woman has a positive outlook for her future and the future of her children. Though the woman's self-esteem has improved significantly since receiving specialized support, she continues to experience anxiety and her children suffer from developmental and health issues. Yet, currently she is more optimistic and her life is acquiring a positive perspective.



The woman believes that due to the support she received, she will be granted full custody of the children and right to sole residence of the family home. She also believes that the children's health will improve and they will all be able to move on with their lives. Currently employed full-time and economically independent, the woman is determined to free herself from the abusive relationship and looks towards a positive future.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

As a part of the implementation of the new Law on Protection against Domestic Violence 2011, a network of specialized help centers, based with NGOs, formed on 29 August 2012. For the first time in Lithuania, specialized help and assistance for victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence is available at the specialized help centers on 12-month program bases, as compared to the previous temporary funding. This is due to the new law obligating the state to fund services run by NGOs through a special Governmental Program. The funding is ensuring the sustainability of services and improving the institutional capacities of women's NGOs.<sup>4</sup> As a result, there are 16 NGO-based Specialized Help Centers (SHC) throughout Lithuania, providing women-friendly help and assistance to survivors of violence. The SHC's have been modeled based on the Austrian intervention center approach, where a total of nine intervention centers (one in each Austrian federal state) assist women seeking support as well as taking on a proactive approach of contacting women survivors of violence who reported violence to the police, to offer support. Despite these improvements, and funding provided on a program rather than project basis, the centers continue to struggle with limited capacity due to inadequate financial support, which allows for only two to four staff to be present at each center.<sup>5</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Lithuania called Women's Line, set up by the state in 2004. The number of the helpline is (8800 66 366). The staff also provides assistance to women regarding other issues, not related to violence. The helpline is free of charge but is not open 24/7; it operates from 10:00 to 21:00. The helpline provides multilingual support. Lastly, Women's Line is funded by the state.<sup>6</sup>

**Based on this information, Lithuania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics
1	Yes	No	-

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are no women's shelters in Lithuania.<sup>7</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 297 women's shelter places are needed in Lithuania. With no shelter places available, Lithuania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
0	297	0	297	100%	-	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are 16 women's centers in Lithuania, funded by the state, that are available in most regions of the country. The centers provide a range of support services including information, counseling and advice.<sup>8</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Lithuania is available from the prevalence of violence survey published in 2008 titled Domestic Violence against Women and Evaluation of the Condition of Victims.<sup>9</sup>

Data for survey was collected through telephone interviews with 1,000 women aged 18-74. Types of perpetrators included in the study are intimate partners (current or ex-partners) and relatives, but specific data on the prevalence of intimate partner violence is not available, and rates of violence are not disaggregated by type of perpetrator or relationship between victim and perpetrator. No information is available on the time period used to study victims' experiences of violence (such as lifetime, last 12 months). The forms of violence measured were physical, sexual, psychological and economic. The findings indicate that 15% of women have experienced violence in their current intimate partnership or in the family sphere. Of all women who experienced violence, 11.39% experienced sexual violence.<sup>10</sup>

A small survey conducted in a Vilnius maternity hospital showed that 80% of women do not recognize rape as a form of violence that can take place within a marriage. However, when asked about their experience of being "forced into having sex with their husbands against their will", 30% of women disclosed having been raped.<sup>11</sup>

Criminal statistics in Lithuania show 191 cases of rape or attempted rape registered in 2011, with 156 cases investigated that same year.<sup>12</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centres for women survivors of sexual violence in Lithuania.<sup>13</sup>

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Temporary accommodation for women survivors of violence is provided through the social care system in Municipal Social Care Centers. In Lithuania, abuse in the family is considered to be rooted in poverty and marginalization and generally is not seen as gender-based violence. For this reason, there is preference by the Lithuanian authorities to circumvent a gender specific approach to fighting violence in favor of general services for populations at risk. Therefore, provision of shelters for women survivors of violence does not include such service provision by specialized women's NGOs. Instead, Municipal Social Care Centers offer accommodation generally for all persons deemed to be in a crisis situation, including women and men and vulnerable groups such as the homeless, ex-convicts, drug users and children and young people without appropriate family support.<sup>14</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Results of the 2011 Population and Housing Census of the Republic of Lithuania. [Access: 21.012013] <http://db1.stat.gov.lt/statbank/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?Maintable=M3010202&PLanguage=1>
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Vilniaus Moterų namai - Intervention Centre, located in Lithuania.
- <sup>4</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 166.
- <sup>5</sup> Vilniaus Moterų namai - Intervention Centre. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 166-167.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid. Pg. 167.
- <sup>8</sup> Vilniaus Moterų namai - Intervention Centre. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>9</sup> Tureikyte, Danute et al. (2008). Smurto prieš moteris šeimoje analizė ir smurto šeimoje aukų Būklės įvertinimas. Tyrimo ataskaita. [BGI Consulting]. Vilnius.
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 164.
- <sup>11</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 48-49.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. Pg. 49.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 167.
- <sup>14</sup> Vilniaus Moterų namai - Intervention Centre. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.



# LUXEMBOURG

(GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG)

COUNTRY EXPERTS: Joëlle SCHRANCK,  
Martina WEHRHEIM (Femmes en Detresse asbl)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 537,039<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 268,627<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

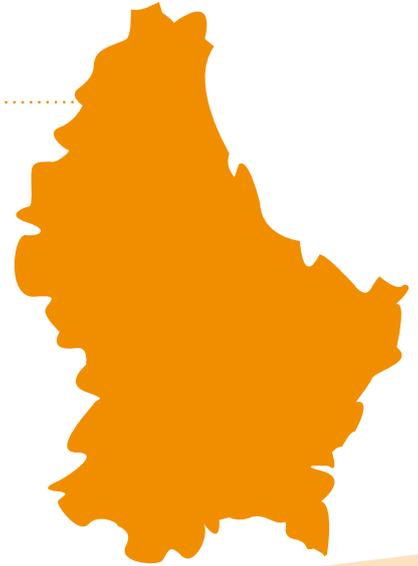
Member of European Union: 1957

CEDAW ratified: 1989

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: No



## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Luxembourg that is neither free of charge, nor operates 24/7. In 2012, the helpline received 325 phone calls. There are eight women's shelters with 150 shelter places available, a number above the recommended 54 shelter places. In 2012, women's shelters in Luxembourg accommodated 193 women survivors of violence and 228 children. As a result, Luxembourg meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for women's shelter provision, however, by not providing a free and 24/7 hour national women's helpline, Luxembourg does not meet the recommendations for helpline service provision.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

Survivor story available in the brochure 'Les Visages Multiples de la Violence envers les Femmes'<sup>4</sup>, published in 2006 by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities of Luxembourg. The survivor story was translated from French.

*Her name is Josette and she is 49 years old.* She is the mother of two adult children. After being beaten by her husband one too many times, Josette went straight from the hospital to the women's shelter. Josette's children are adults and leading their own lives, but for long, they have advised their mother to ask for a divorce. They cannot understand why their mother has put up with all this suffering for so many years.

Josette has never had a paid job; she has been a housewife and a mother all her life. Her husband abused her right from the beginning, but since the children have left the house, his violent behaviour has had no limit. Several times, Josette had to go to the hospital following one of her husband's beatings. After these 'faux pas', as he termed his own violent behaviour, he was always very kind to Josette. He bought her gifts and promised that he would change. She no longer believes his promises. For too long she hoped to see her husband change, but this was in vain. Now that the children are independent, she does not feel the responsibility to 'preserve the family unit' anymore.

A month after moving into the women's shelter, Josette asked for a divorce. As soon as she had, her husband tried to stop her by any means. Though she does not know yet what the future will bring, Josette is determined not to get back with him.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Luxembourg called Fraentelefon. It was set up in 1998 by Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l, an independent women's NGO. The helpline number is (12344). It is neither free of charge, nor does it operate 24/7.<sup>5</sup> The helpline operates from Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 3:00. The helpline provides support to women survivors of all form of violence against women. Multilingual service is available in Luxembourgish, German, English, French and at certain times Portuguese.<sup>6</sup>

**Based on this information, Luxembourg does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>7</sup>
1	No	No	325 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are eight women's shelters in Luxembourg with approximately 150 shelter places available.<sup>8</sup> The first shelter was opened in 1980 (Frauenhaus Letzeburg) by Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. The most recent shelter was opened in 2009 by Fondation Maison de la Porte Ouverte.<sup>9</sup> All eight shelters are run by NGOs and accommodate women survivors of violence. The shelters are 100% funded by the state.<sup>10</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 54 women's shelter places are needed in Luxembourg. With approximately 150 women's shelter places available, Luxembourg meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>11</sup>
8	54	150	0	0%	3,580	193 women and 228 children accommodated

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are 13 women's counseling centers available in Luxembourg.<sup>12</sup> One of the centers is called SAVVD. It is one of the seven centers run by Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. and it provides proactive service approach in cases of domestic violence. Upon issuance of a protection order, the police transfers information about the case to SAVVD, which in return contacts the person for whom the protection order has been issued to offer support, including psychological and administrative help as well as court accompaniment, if needed.<sup>13</sup> All of the women's centers provide counseling, information and advice, court accompaniment, outreach and resettlement support. Most of the centers provide independent domestic violence advice, and one center (PSYea, run by Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l.) provides specialist child support. Only one of the centers (SAVVD) offers intervention safety support and legal advice.<sup>14</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Luxembourg is available from the survey Crime and Victimization in Luxembourg: Results of the European Crime and Safety Survey.<sup>15</sup> The study is dedicated to surveying various types of crime throughout Europe with Luxembourg as one of the respondents. Therefore it does not focus on violence against women. 800 phone interviews were conducted. The crimes and acts of victimization covered included household crimes and personal crimes, which included assaults and threats committed by a known person such as partner, family member or a close friend. Additionally, prevalence of criminal sexual incidences experienced by the respondents was measured. The findings are not gender disaggregated. Separate findings for segregated age groups are available for assaults and threats, and sexual incidences, although no additional detail is available on the relationship between victim and perpetrator.<sup>16</sup>



Based on the data available, in the last five years, the rate of sexual violence for both women and men was 4.9%,<sup>17</sup> with 24.9% of the incidents of sexual violence mostly experienced by women under the age of 29.<sup>18</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTER FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>19</sup>

One center for survivors of sexual violence is available in Luxembourg. The rape crisis center is called Planning Familial, Centre Dr. M-P Molitor-Peffer. The center was established in 1982. Although it does not operate 24/7, women may call the center at any time of the day or night, and may be transferred to the police, outside of operating hours. If the situation involves rape or other forms of sexual violence needing immediate attention, the police would accompany the woman to the hospital, instead of the staff from the center.

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Additionally to the Fraentelefon (12344), Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. also runs another helpline called ViSaVi (Vivre Sans Violence). The helpline hours are Monday-Friday from 9:00 to 17:00. The number is not free of charge. The helpline assists women survivors of violence and provides advice with administrative or judicial matters, as well as conducts interviews involving application for access to a women's shelter. Furthermore, women may schedule in-person visits, when calling this helpline. In addition to assisting women survivors of violence, the helpline offers assistance with other crisis situations unrelated to violence.<sup>20</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> [www.statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=385&IF\\_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1](http://www.statistiques.public.lu/stat/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=385&IF_Language=fra&MainTheme=2&FldrName=1)
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Femmes en Détresse asbl, located in Luxembourg: The brochure is available online at [[http://www.mega.public.lu/publications/1\\_brochures/2006/visages\\_multiples\\_violence/index.html](http://www.mega.public.lu/publications/1_brochures/2006/visages_multiples_violence/index.html)]
- <sup>4</sup> Femmes en Détresse asbl., Conseil National des Femmes du Luxembourg, Fondation Maison de la Porte Ouvert, Fondation Pro Familia, Noemi asbl. (2006). Les Visages Multiples de la Violence envers les Femmes : The organization Noemi asbl is no longer in operation.
- <sup>5</sup> Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 170.
- <sup>7</sup> Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid: Statistics on women's shelters are regularly (on annual basis) collected by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 171.
- <sup>10</sup> Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid: Statistics on women's shelters are collected by the Ministry for Equality Opportunities on an annual basis.
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 171.
- <sup>13</sup> Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>14</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 171.
- <sup>15</sup> Michels, Tom. (2005). Crime and Victimization in Luxembourg: Results of the European Crime and Safety Survey. [EU ICS Working Paper Series].
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. Pg. 1-6.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. Pg. 6.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. Pg. 8.
- <sup>19</sup> Femmes en Détresse a.s.b.l. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.



# MACEDONIA

(THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA)

COUNTRY EXPERT: Savka Todorovska (National Council for Gender Equality) and Elena Dimushevska (National Network to End Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – Voice against Violence)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 2,050,671

Female population: 1,022,861

Member of Council of Europe: 1995

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1994

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 8 July 2011

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There are three national women's helplines in Macedonia, all operating on a 24/7 basis. Only two of the three helplines are free of charge. In 2012, 3,715 calls were received by the three helplines. Furthermore, there are only five women shelters in Macedonia, with approximately 22 shelter places available. Currently, 89% of shelter places are still missing in Macedonia. Lastly, there are no rape crisis centers available in the country. Overall, Macedonia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of national women's helpline, but does not meet the recommendations on provision of women's shelters.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*The woman survivor of violence is 37 years old* and has two daughters aged 14 and 10, who are still living with her. For more than 11 years, she was the victim of physical, psychological and economic abuse perpetrated by her husband. Lack of financial autonomy as well as lack of support from her family and from institutions has been the main reason for her remaining in a violent relationship for so many years.

During the years of abuse, she tried to reach out for help on multiple occasions. She first asked for help from the police, but whenever the police would come to the house, her husband would suddenly change his behaviour to make it appear as if nothing had happened. After a while, the police accused her of lying about the situation and calling them in vain. She also turned for help to the Center for Social Work, but the staff at the Center was more concerned about the well-being of her children than about her own well-being. Such experiences of trying to reach out for help with no result caused her to lose trust in state institutions. She eventually received helpful support from a non-governmental organization. Support from the NGO helped her regain self-confidence and strength to fight for her rights and protect her children. The NGO also provided her with humanitarian and financial support, for which she is extremely grateful.

The abuse she experienced had affected her physical, emotional and psychological health. Although she feels that the violence had completely 'destroyed' her, she now feels stronger than she was before. By overcoming the incredible obstacles facing women survivors of violence, she has become stronger and more independent. She has great hopes for the future, and would eventually like to help other women who find themselves in similar situations.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

NGOs in Macedonia face limited funding. Finances are also the main obstacle to women survivors when trying to access services. On one hand, lack of sustained finances can lead to services closing down, and women survivors' of violence lack of own resources due to suffered economic violence effectively prevents them from accessing those services that exist (i.e. no money for transportation). Furthermore, there is a lack of available services for women and girls survivors of other forms of violence outside of domestic violence.<sup>2</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>3</sup>

There are three national women's helplines in Macedonia: National SOS Line (15 700), National SOS Line – Phone of Trust (15 315) and SOS National Mobile Line (+389 75 141 700, +389 77 141 700 and +389 70 141 700).

The National SOS Line (15 700) was established in 1996 and operates 24/7 and is free of charge. It provides assistance to women survivors of domestic violence. Assistance is provided in Macedonian only. The helpline receives limited state funding (20%), with the remaining covered by foreign donations (30%) and volunteer work (50%).

The National SOS Line – Phone of Trust (15 315) operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The helpline offers assistance is Macedonian only, and receives funding from the state (50%) and through volunteer work (50%).

The SOS National Mobile Line operates 24/7, but only two of the three available mobile lines are free of charge. The helpline provides assistance in Macedonian only and is 80% funded through private donations and 20% volunteer work.

**Based on this information, Macedonia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>4</sup>
3	Yes (at least 2)	Yes (3)	3,715 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>5 6 7</sup>

There are five women's shelters in Macedonia with approximately 22 shelter places available. The first shelter was opened in 2001 by the Macedonian Women's Rights Center, but was closed in 2013 due to lack of funding. The most recent shelter was opened in 2011. Prior to 2010, there were eight shelters in the country. However, over 2010-2011, at least two shelters closed due to lack of financial resources. Four of the shelters are run by the state (in Skopje, Bitola, Sveti Nikole, and Kochani) and one by an independent women's NGOs in Skopje. The shelter provided by the independent women's NGO is an emergency shelter that accommodates women for 24-48 hours. All shelters accommodate women survivors of domestic violence and their children. Women are allowed a stay of seven to 12 months. The shelters are predominantly funded by the state (80%), by foreign donations (10%) and volunteer work (10%).

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 205 women's shelter places are needed in Macedonia. With approximately 183 women's shelter places missing (89%), Macedonia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
5	205	22	183	89%	93,212	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are three women's centers for survivors of violence in Macedonia. The first center was opened in 1994 in Skopje by the Women's Organization of the city of Skopje. All of the three centers are run by independent women's NGOs. A range of service is offered, including crisis support as well as advice and counseling. The centers are primarily funded by foreign donations (50%), volunteer work (30%) and private donations (20%).<sup>8</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Research for a national prevalence of domestic violence survey was conducted in 2012 in Macedonia. At this point, some findings are available in Macedonian, but the final results are not yet published, although limited information about the findings was issued in 2012.<sup>9</sup> The second most recent study was published in 1998 and it titled Domestic Violence in Macedonia.<sup>10</sup> The study provides limited data on the prevalence of sexual violence. It makes use of a survey conducted by the Humanitarian Association for Emancipation, Solidarity, Equality of Women, where university students were interviewed. In the survey, 4.25% of the students interviewed acknowledged having been victims of sexual assault.<sup>11</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>12</sup>

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Macedonia.

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

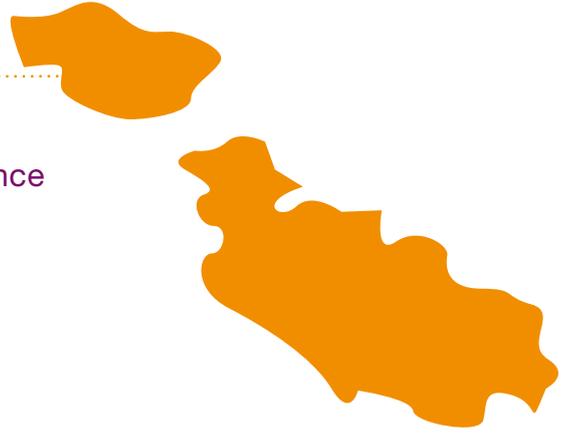
Additionally to the three national helplines, several local helplines operate in Macedonia to provide support to women survivors of domestic violence and other forms of violence.<sup>13</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point National Council for Gender Equality, located in Macedonia.
- <sup>2</sup> National Council for Gender Equality. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report Questionnaire 2013.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 175.
- <sup>6</sup> National Network to End Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - Voice against Violence. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report Questionnaire 2013.
- <sup>7</sup> National Council for Gender Equality. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report Questionnaire 2013.
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 175.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 172.
- <sup>10</sup> Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights. (1998). Domestic Violence in Macedonia.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid. Pg. 16.
- <sup>12</sup> National Network to End Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - Voice against Violence. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report Questionnaire 2013.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.



# MALTA



COUNTRY EXPERT: Commission on Domestic Violence

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 404,962

Female population: 204,143

Member of Council of Europe: 1965

Member of European Union: 2004

CEDAW ratified: 1991

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: No

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 21 May 2012

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Malta. Three women's shelters, two emergency and one second-stage shelters exist in the country with a total of 36 shelter places available. In 2012, 139 women and 110 children were accommodated in the women's shelters, with 76 women and 84 children not able to be accommodated in the shelters due to capacity limits and instead seeking accommodation elsewhere such as a homeless shelter or a hostel. Furthermore, there are no rape crisis centers in Malta. In general, despite nearly meeting the number of recommended women's shelter places, the country's service provision does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*I am 35 years old* and have two children, an eight and 11 year old. For seven years, I was abused by my husband, who used physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence against me. I stayed in the relationship for different reasons: I had no job, hence was financially dependent; I was not aware of any support that was available to women in my situation; and I feared the consequences of reaching out for help. I did not know what repercussions I would face if my husband found out.

As I finally considered leaving my husband, I first visited a lawyer, but I did not disclose the violence. I was too ashamed to admit the truth. Months later, I finally went to the police. That day, I left for good. The police referred me to the social services.

Since I left my abusive husband, I've had experiences with the police, social workers, lawyers and the court. It is very difficult for others to understand my situation. When I visited the lawyer the first time, I wished she would have realized that something was wrong. Perhaps she would have asked some probing questions. The first time I went to the police, the officers were helpful. The second time, I spoke with someone else from the police and the treatment I got was very unpleasant. I guess it depends on who is working at the time. I found some of the police and some of the social workers to be quite detached, even judgmental. Going to court was absolutely terrifying, because I had to see the abuser over and over again. I ended up signing a separation contract, the terms of which clearly favored my husband, but I signed it out of fear, but no one could see that.

The whole experience of violence by someone who was my partner has shattered my ability to trust again. I'm afraid of trying new relationships. I am scared that the moment when I let my guard down again, someone else will have me by the neck. Although I have picked up the pieces and moved on, the financial struggle I am now experiencing will be with me for years to come. During my marriage, I lost a big portion of my life. Normally those years are spent by a person working hard to secure her future and her finances.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

At the present, the Commission on Domestic Violence in Malta is conducting meetings with stakeholders, who work with victims of violence to determine any needs for amendments to the current legislation on protection of victims of domestic violence.<sup>2</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>3</sup>

There is no national women's helpline in Malta.

**Based on this information, Malta does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are three women's shelters in Malta with a total of 36 shelter places.<sup>4</sup> The shelters include two emergency shelters for women and their children survivors of domestic violence. There is also a second stage shelter for women and their children. There are also two hostels in Malta that take women when the shelters are full, or act as a moving-on place to free up spaces in the shelters providing an additional 36 bed spaces. The shelters are run by an independent NGO, a church and the state. The shelter Dar Merhba Bik (emergency shelter) was established in the 1980's, Ghabex (emergency shelter) was set up in 2000, and Dar Qalb Ta' Gesu (second stage shelter) was established in 2001. The shelters accommodate women survivors of domestic violence. The shelters accept children of the survivors, with some having an age limit for boys of 16 years.<sup>5</sup> At the emergency shelter Ghabex, women and their children can be accommodated for a period of up to three months, while at the other emergency shelter Dar Merhba Bik, the accommodation period is up to six months. At the second stage shelter Dar Qalb Ta' Gesu, the accommodation period is up to 18 months.<sup>6</sup> The shelters are predominantly funded by the state (90%).<sup>7</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 40 women's shelter places are needed in Malta. With approximately four women's shelter places missing (10%), Malta does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>8</sup>
3	40	36	4	10%	11,249	139 women and 110 children accommodated; 76 women and 84 children could not be accommodated due to lack of space <sup>9</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There is one center in Malta, the Domestic Violence Unit, supporting women survivors of violence. The Domestic Violence Unit is part of the agency Appogg, which is a state-run and state-funded social work unit working with victims of domestic violence. The center is not advertised as 'for women only', but approximately 93-97% of its clients are women. The center provides a range of support including information and advice, advocacy and outreach. Women's shelters also provide non-residential support.<sup>10</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Malta is available from the prevalence of violence survey titled Nationwide Research Study on the Prevalence of Domestic Violence against Women in Malta and its Impact on their Employment Prospects<sup>11</sup> published in 2011. Data for the survey was obtained on violence against women by their partner or former partner and others.

Data was collected from 1,200 women ages 18-59 from each of the six Maltese regions. The time period studied for victims' experiences of violence included lifetime experiences of violence and current experiences (12 months prior to interview). The forms of violence measured were physical violence, sexual violence and emotional abuse.<sup>12</sup>

Sexual violence is assessed on the basis of the three following behaviors in both present and previous intimate relationships: being forced to have sexual intercourse against one's will, having sexual intercourse because the woman was afraid of what the perpetrator might do to her if she did not, being forced to do something sexual that the woman thought was degrading or humiliating.<sup>13</sup>

In a lifetime, 9% of ever partnered women have experienced one or more acts of sexual violence. Forced sexual intercourse through physical means was the act that was most frequently mentioned by women who have ever experienced sexual violence (75%), followed by the act of having sexual intercourse because women were afraid of what their partner might do if they did not (69%). Finally, being forced to do something sexual that woman thought was degrading or humiliating was disclosed by 49% of the respondents.<sup>14</sup> There is no significant difference of experience of sexual violence between women in different age brackets.

Regardless of relationship status, 4% of respondents indicated that they have been forced to have sex or to perform a sexual act when they did not want to, since the age of 15. In 49% of the cases, the boyfriend was identified as being the perpetrator.<sup>15</sup> Fourteen percent stated the perpetrator was a stranger and 12% specified other male family members, including uncles, brothers, and cousins as the perpetrators. The father was identified as the perpetrator by one respondent.<sup>16</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Malta.<sup>17</sup>

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Although there is no specialized women's helpline in Malta, the agency Appogg runs a general support helpline for survivors of violence. The helpline is called SL179 (Support Line 179).<sup>18</sup> The helpline is free of charge and open 24/7. Information is available in Maltese and English. The helpline is partially funded by the state with support of two full time staff and approximately 100 volunteers.<sup>19</sup> In 2012, the helpline received 10,601 calls, 451 of them primarily concerning domestic violence.<sup>20</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by SOAR (Survivors of Abuse with Resilience), located in Malta.
- <sup>2</sup> Commission on Domestic Violence Malta. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 180.
- <sup>4</sup> Commission on Domestic Violence Malta. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 181.
- <sup>6</sup> Commission on Domestic Violence Malta. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 181.
- <sup>8</sup> Commission on Domestic Violence Malta. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire : There were 39 women and 13 children accommodated at the Ghabex shelter; 88 women and 75 children were accommodated at the Dar Merhba Bik shelter; and 12 women and 21 children were accommodated at the Dar Qalb Ta' Gesu shelter. In Ghabex, 4 women and 8 children could not be accommodated due to lack of space and in Dar Qalb Ta' Gesu, 72 women and 76 children could not be accommodated due to lack of space. Overall, Ghabex shelter and Dar Merhba Bik shelter allowed for 127 women and 88 children to spend 3,683 safe nights in the two shelters.
- <sup>9</sup> Women and children not accommodated may seek accommodation at homeless shelters and/or hostels.
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 181.
- <sup>11</sup> Fsadni, M and Associates. (2011). The Prevalence of Domestic Violence against Women in Malta. Commission on Domestic Violence. [[https://secure2.gov.mt/socialpolicy/SocProt/family/domestic violence/ publications.aspx](https://secure2.gov.mt/socialpolicy/SocProt/family/domestic%20violence/publications.aspx)].
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. Pg. 73.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. Pg. 91.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 181.
- <sup>18</sup> Commission on Domestic Violence Malta. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>19</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 180.
- <sup>20</sup> Commission on Domestic Violence Malta. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.



# MOLDOVA

(REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA)

COUNTRY EXPERT: Association against Domestic Violence  
"Casa Marioarei"

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 3,559,497<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 1,847,151<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1995

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1994

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2006

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a



## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Moldova operating 24/7 and providing free of charge assistance in Russian and Romanian. Over the year 2013, the helpline received 1,297 calls. There is only one women's shelter in Moldova, run by a women's NGO, with 25 shelter places available. Hence, 93% of recommended shelter places are missing. Over the year 2013, 91 women survivors of domestic violence were accommodated at the women's shelter. Lastly, there are no rape crisis centers in Moldova for women survivors of sexual violence. Although Moldova meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for national women's helpline provision, it does not meet the recommendations in terms of provision of women's shelters.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*I am 28 years old* and I am the mother of two children: a boy of eight and a girl of one year. For seven years, I was a victim of several forms of abuse perpetrated by my intimate partner. My situation was particularly difficult in that I was completely financially dependent on the aggressor. Raised in an orphanage, I had no family to turn to for support, and no other place to live other than our common apartment. I was pregnant with my second child when I left and moved into a women's shelter. For six months, I was separated from my older child. He was then living with his grandmother, and for all this time, she did not let us see each other.

During the years of abuse, I sought help several times. I tried to involve the police many times, but the police officers I had contacted would never intervene or visit the house to deal with the issue, stating that they already had enough cases to deal with and that my situation was considered a private matter. I also turned to a social worker, who happened to be a friend of the aggressor's mother, and who threatened to take my child away from me and place him at an orphanage, as I had no money to raise him. When I eventually found myself on the street, a battered woman, I decided to turn to the office of the Mayor. The office directed me to a women's shelter where, for the first time in my life, I received help and support.

The seven year long period of abuse I went through now seems like a bad dream. I remember being absolutely crushed and intimidated, having nightmares and headaches. At the time, it seemed like no one in the world could put an end to what was happening to me. Now I am out of this situation. I enjoy motherhood a lot more. I live with both my children in a rented room. There is no one to insult us, we are not in danger, the children are calm and we all sleep well. My son goes to school and I started a small sewing and clothing repair business from home, thanks to an international grant. Local public authorities also recently offered us a place to live. I know that I am now out of this terrible situation for good, and I will never let anyone control my life or that of my children ever again.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

In recent years, there have been numerous changes in Moldova to address domestic violence. In 2007, the Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence (Law No. 45) has provided foundations for increasing access to justice and safety for survivors of domestic violence. Furthermore, a Coordinating Inter-Ministerial Council in the Field of Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence was created by the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Healthcare, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Justice. Trainings and instructions on best practices in implementation of the laws on domestic violence are conducted for police officers, family doctors, social assistants and teachers.<sup>4</sup> Since 2011, domestic violence is considered a crime based on Law No. 167.<sup>5</sup>

At the community level, multi-disciplinary teams including local police officers, social assistants, family doctors and authorities of local public administrations have been created in 37 territorial-administrative units. Their goal is to identify and find solutions in cases of domestic violence. Additionally, a network of volunteer advocates against domestic violence within Association “Casa Marioarei” (includes mentors who distribute information about existing women’s services for women survivors of domestic violence) works in 19 communities throughout Moldova. Advocates liaise with local public administrations and other key players, and connect women to services available to them locally and nationally.<sup>6</sup>

Despite these promising practices, there are a number of gaps in the women’s service provision. Majority of services for women survivors of domestic violence are concentrated in urban areas, and information about their existence is not always known to women living in rural areas.<sup>7</sup> This represents a dire situation for women, considering that seven out of 10 women in rural areas and six out of 10 women in urban areas of Moldova are estimated to suffer from at least one form of spousal/partner violence over a lifetime, and 12% of women are estimate to experience all forms of spousal/partner violence.<sup>8</sup> The existing shelters and maternal centers are insufficient and hardly cover all regions. The services that provide assistance to women and children survivors of domestic violence lack adequate government funding and support; the capacity in all service types is severely limited and only one shelter exists that is solely dedicated to women survivors of domestic violence.<sup>9</sup>

### WOMEN’S HELPLINE<sup>10</sup>

There is a national women’s helpline in Moldova. The helpline is operated by an NGO La Strada. The name of the helpline is the Trust Line and the phone number is (8008 8008). The helpline assists women and girls survivors of violence. It operates 24/7 and is free of charge. Assistance is offered in Russian and Romanian.

**Based on this information, Moldova meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women’s Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2013) <sup>11</sup>
1	Yes	Yes	1,297 calls received, among which 574 calls related to cases of domestic violence

### WOMEN’S SHELTERS<sup>12</sup>

There are eight shelters in Moldova with about 106 shelter places available. Only one of them is a women’s shelter serving women and children survivors of domestic violence exclusively; the other seven shelters are public institutions and offer various services, including services to victims of violence. The one women’s shelter has approximately 25 shelter places available. The name of the shelter is Casa Marioarei, which was first opened in 2004. The shelter is run by a women’s NGO and assists specifically women survivors of domestic violence, and accepts children of the survivors. Women can be accommodated for up to six months, with each individual case considered, if there is a need to prolong the stay. The seven public institutional shelters are predominantly funded by the state (80%), foreign donations (10%), and private donations (10%). The single women’s shelter run by the Association “Casa Marioarei” is funded through foreign and private donations, and through a fundraising campaign.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 356 women’s shelter places are needed in Moldova. With approximately 331 women’s shelter places missing (93%), Moldova does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2013) <sup>13</sup>
1	356	25	331	93%	142,380	91 women survivors of domestic violence accommodated

**WOMEN'S CENTER**

There are approximately 17 women's centers or social assistance centers in Moldova providing support for survivors of violence and their children. This does not necessarily mean that all centers provide counseling or therapy, but they do provide some form of social assistance to women survivors of violence. The first center Center for Women's Information was opened in 1998 in Chisnau. Four of the centers are run by independent women's NGOs and the remaining by the state. The centers provide a variety of services and serve all groups of women in at risk situations. For example, one of the centers specializes in assisting women survivors of domestic violence and their children, while another also assists women survivors of trafficking.<sup>14</sup>

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Moldova is available from the national prevalence of violence survey published in 2011, titled Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova.<sup>15</sup>

The study looks at violence committed by husbands/partners and persons other than intimate partners. It has thus two definitions of sexual violence pertaining to each perpetrator type. Sexual violence committed by husband/partner is defined as the occurrence of at least one of the following situations: forcing the woman to have sex without her consent, forcing the woman to have sex with degrading or humiliating practices or, forcing the woman to have sex by using fear.<sup>16</sup> Sexual violence committed by persons other than husband/partner entails forced sexual intercourse under threat or by creating situations where she is unable to refuse. Attempts not resulting in sexual intercourse were not taken into consideration in the survey.<sup>17</sup>

About 19% of women were at least once victims of sexual violence committed by their husband/partner over their lifetime. The rate of sexual violence committed by former husbands/partners accounts for 41%, as compared to 16% for married women and widows.<sup>18</sup> The survey shows that the most common form of sexual violence experienced over lifetime by women who are or were in intimate relations is forced intercourse (14.4%), followed by forced sexual intercourse with humiliating and degrading elements (11.7%).<sup>19</sup>

**WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>20 21</sup>**

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Moldova.

**ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

Additionally to the Trust Line run by La Strada, the NGO Interaction also runs a Trust Line for survivors of domestic violence in the Transnistria Region. The phone number is (0800 99 800) and the helpline is considered a local (regional) line.<sup>22</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Casa Marioarei. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: Information on population statistics available from the National Statistics Office of the Republic of Moldova, chapter on population and demographic processes, data as of 1.1.2013.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Casa Marioarei, located in Moldova.
- <sup>4</sup> Casa Marioarei. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). 2013. Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence - A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 185.
- <sup>6</sup> Casa Marioarei. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid: The data refers to information available on [[www.stopvaw.org/uploads/moldova\\_reportupload.pdf](http://www.stopvaw.org/uploads/moldova_reportupload.pdf)]. Pg. 37-45.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid: The data refers to information available on the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). [Available online: [www.undp.md/presscentre/2011/ViolenceWomen\\_12Dec/index.shtml](http://www.undp.md/presscentre/2011/ViolenceWomen_12Dec/index.shtml)]
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid: The data refers to information available on [[www.stopvaw.org/uploads/moldova\\_reportupload.pdf](http://www.stopvaw.org/uploads/moldova_reportupload.pdf)]. Pg. 37-45.
- <sup>10</sup> Casa Marioarei. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid: Calls received were from victims, community leaders, groups of professionals, offenders and others.
- <sup>12</sup> C12 Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Casa Marioarei. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 189.
- <sup>16</sup> Lozneau, Diana (translation from Romanian into English). (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. [UN Development Program, UN UN Women, UN Development Fund].
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. Pg. 13.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. Pg. 37.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid. Pg. 39.
- <sup>21</sup> Casa Marioarei. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.



# MONTENEGRO



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Natasa Medjedovic (SOS Hotline Niksic), Budislavka Saveljic (Safe House Podgorica), Sabina Talovic (O.C. Bona Fide), Nada Ristanovic (SOS Hotline Bijelo Polje)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 631,536  
 Female population: 320,278  
 Member of Council of Europe: 2007  
 Member of European Union: No  
 CEDAW ratified: 2006  
 CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2006  
 CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
 signed: 11 May 2011  
 ratified: 22 April 2013

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Montenegro. Furthermore, there are three women's shelters in the country, with approximately 38 shelter places available. Currently, 40% of recommended shelter places are still missing in Montenegro. Over the year 2012, the three shelters accommodated 102 women and 99 children. Over the same period, 21 women could not be accommodated due to the lack of available space. Lastly, there are no rape crisis centers for women survivors of sexual violence. Hence, Montenegro does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelters.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>1</sup>

There is no national women's helpline in Montenegro.

**Based on this information, Montenegro does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>2</sup>

There are three women's shelters in Montenegro with approximately 38 shelter places available. The most recent shelter for women and children survivors of violence was opened in July 2012 by the women's organization Bona Fide. The shelters are predominantly funded by foreign donations (70%) and by the state in the form of temporary funding and public tenders (15%), volunteer work (10%) and private donations (5%).

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 63 women's shelter places are needed in Montenegro. With approximately 25 women's shelter places missing (40%), Montenegro does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>3</sup>
3	63	38	25	40%	16,619	102 women and 99 children were accommodated; 21 women could not be accommodated due to lack of available spaces



## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>4</sup>

There are three women's counseling centers in Montenegro. The centers are run by independent women's NGOs. Two of the centers are run by the women's shelters as part of their non-residential service provision and the additional women's crisis center also provides counseling. Additionally, all centers assist women survivors of domestic violence. One of the centers offers specialized assistance to migrant women, undocumented migrant women, women seeking asylum, and women with disabilities. Two of the three centers provide specialized support to Roma women. The centers are largely funded by foreign donations (70%), volunteer work (15%) and public tender state funding (10-15%).

## ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence is not available for Montenegro, as no representative study on violence against women in Montenegro exists.<sup>5</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>6</sup>

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Montenegro.

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There are four local women's helplines in Montenegro located in Podgorica, Niksic, Ulcinj and Bijelo Polje. The first helpline is called the SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Podgorica. The helpline was opened in 1997. The phone number is (020 232 254). The helpline does not operate 24/7 and is not free of charge. It operates 17:00-21:00 Monday through Friday. The helpline provides support to women survivors of all forms of violence. No multilingual support is provided.

The second helpline is called the SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niksic and was established in 1998. The phone numbers are (040 213 086, 040 213 358, 068 024 086). The helpline operates 24/7, but is not free of charge. Support is provided for women survivors of all forms of violence. Assistance is provided in Albanian, Romani and English.

The third helpline in Bijelo Polje provides assistance to women survivors of domestic violence. The helpline is not free of charge. The phone number is (050433660). Support is offered in Montenegrin only.

The fourth helpline in Ulcinj provides assistance to women survivors of domestic violence. The helpline is not free of charge. The phone number is (030 411 700). Support is offered in Albanian and Montenegrin.<sup>7</sup>



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niksic. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niksic. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

<sup>4</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 195.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pg. 192.

<sup>6</sup> SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niksic. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

<sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 194-195.

# NETHERLANDS

(KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS)

COUNTRY EXPERT: Liesbeth van Bemmel (Federatie Opvang)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 16,485,787

Female population: 8,329,391

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

Member of European Union: 1952

CEDAW ratified: 1991

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 14 November 2012

ratified: No



## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in the Netherlands. There are 96 women's shelters with 1,608 shelter places available. In 2011, data show approximately 11,000 women and 3,000 children accommodated at shelters in the Netherlands. At this time, only 2.5% of recommended women's shelter places are missing. Based on available information, Netherlands does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendation on the provision of a women's helpline, and nearly meets the recommendations on provision of women's shelters. Furthermore, there is no information available on the existence and numbers of women's centers, while at least one center for survivors of sexual violence has been identified that provides various support to survivors of sexual assault or rape.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*Nancy is a 34 year old mother of twins,* Wesley and Stefanie, who are nine years old. She met her husband, Dennis (33 years old), when the two were in high school. After school, the couple moved to the city, Nancy to study and Dennis to work. Their first years together were enjoyable, but after the children were born, things changed for the couple. Nancy stopped working to look after the children and Dennis began to work longer hours. Five years after giving birth to the twins, Nancy found out that Dennis had an affair, causing her to lose trust in him. This is when the physical violence started. Nancy's coming to terms with the affair, her lack of trust in Dennis and her insecurity over whether Dennis was faithful aggravated him, and verbal fights turned into physical violence, which became more frequent and more intense.

At first, Nancy took her children and moved in with her parents. She did this on four occasions, but each time Dennis called, asking her to return, she came back home. Her parents, losing patience refused to offer Nancy further support. Only when the son Wesley began to show violent behaviour in school, Nancy recognized the need to get help. She went to a support office for domestic violence, who referred her for a temporary stay at a shelter. Having serious doubts and fear about leaving Dennis and uprooting the children, she still chose to move into the shelter as a way to protect her children, who by now have also witnessed the violence against her.

The decision-making process and steps to take for moving into the shelter were difficult for Nancy, especially that she knew this would be a difficult situation for the children as well. Wesley was angry and refused to go. Nancy, overcome with emotion, thinking of her children, fearing her husband's anger when he would find out that she left with the children, had to decide which items to take with and what to leave behind. Packing her and the children's items was challenging enough. Arriving at the shelter in a taxi, frightened and nervous, Nancy and the children did not know what to expect.

The staff at the shelter expected the family and had prepared their accommodation, helping Nancy with the suitcases and showing her and the children around the building. In the first days, the family received information to familiarize themselves with the shelter, the neighbourhood, staff members and other families living there, and introductory interviews were conducted with Nancy and the children as well. During their stay, Nancy received counselling through support meetings with Farida, who was assigned as her family support worker. During her meetings with Farida (case worker), Nancy had the opportunity to talk about her situation, the past, the future, her worries about the children and her own parents. Eventually, she decided to speak with her mother to let her know about staying in the shelter, and in the end, Nancy chose to return to her husband and attempt to rebuild their relationship.

In order to assist with Nancy's and the children's return, the shelter prepared a family action plan, such as living arrangements and Dennis' attendance at group meetings. Nancy has planned to continue receiving mental health support as well, and the twins had support group meetings scheduled for children who lived with domestic violence. The experience and support received at Oranje Huis has made Nancy a stronger person, yet she knows there are still many obstacles to overcome in the future.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is no national women's helpline in the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on this information, Netherlands does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 96<sup>3</sup> women's shelters in the Netherlands with approximately 1,608<sup>4</sup> shelter places available. The shelters are run by 33 organizations, some of which were opened 150 years ago. The shelters accept children of the survivors, although in some shelters, age limits apply. Women survivors of violence can stay on average three to six months at the shelters, although if needed, the period can be extended. The shelters are predominantly funded by permanent state funding (80%) and by state public tender (20%).<sup>5</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 1,649 women's shelter places are needed in the Netherlands. With approximately 41 women's shelter places missing (2.5%), the Netherlands nearly meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2011) <sup>6</sup>
96	1,649	1,608	41	2.5%	10,252	11,000 women and 3,000 children accommodated

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There is no information available on the existence of women's centers in the Netherlands.<sup>7</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Every three years, a national representative survey on sexual health is conducted by Rutgers WPF in the Netherlands. Questions on the experience of sexual violence are included in the survey. The questions include asking respondents whether they ever have been "approached in a way that is offensive, [have been] touched against their will, forced to do sexual things, or forced to have sexual things done to [them]" by any perpetrator known or unknown to them. The respondents, who disclose having experienced sexual violence, are then asked to provide detail about the acts experienced, ranging from hurtful remarks to attempted rape and/or rape. According to results of the 2012 survey, 33% of women in the Netherlands have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. For women, the most common perpetrators of sexual violence are partners; and family, neighbors or people in their social surrounding, where victims were under the age of 16.<sup>8</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There is limited information available on the existence of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence. The Rape Crisis Network Europe has identified at least one center (Centrum Seksueel Geweld). It offers medical, forensic and psychological help to everyone who has recently experienced an assault or rape in the province of Utrecht. The center also offers a helpline that operates 24/7 (088 7555 588).<sup>9</sup>

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There is a general national helpline in the Netherlands called the Information and Help on Domestic Violence opened since 2003. The number of the helpline is (0900 126 26 26). The helpline operates 24/7, but is not free of charge. Multilingual support is provided in Arabic and Turkish. The helpline is 100% funded by the state.<sup>10</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Federatie Opvang in the Netherlands: the names in the story have been changed to protect the identity of the persons described.
- <sup>2</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 201.
- <sup>3</sup> In addition to the 96 shelters for women survivors of domestic violence, there are four shelters designated for men survivors of domestic violence and for survivors of trafficking.
- <sup>4</sup> There are a total of 2,203 individual spaces for women and their children. Of the 2,203, 27% are allocated to children of the women survivors of violence, who are also accommodated in the shelters. This means there are 1,608 spaces for women and 595 for children.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 201.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 57.
- <sup>9</sup> Rape Crisis Network Europe. Access 05.03.2014 [[www.rcne.com/contact/countries/Netherlands](http://www.rcne.com/contact/countries/Netherlands)].
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 201.

# NORWAY

(KINGDOM OF NORWAY)



## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 4,828,726  
Female population: 2,417,823  
Member of Council of Europe: 1949  
Member of European Union: No  
CEDAW ratified: 1981  
CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002  
CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: 7 July 2011  
ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Norway; instead each women's shelter (46 in total) operates a regional helpline assisting women survivors of violence. The available shelters have 815 shelter places in total. Furthermore, each shelter provides non-residential services to women survivors in the form of women's centers that offer services, including counselling. In terms of provision of national women's helpline, Norway does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations. Having more than the recommended 483 shelter places, Norway meets the recommendations for women's shelter provision. Lastly, 23 centers for women survivors of sexual violence are available in Norway that are operated by state healthcare institutions.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is no national women's helpline in Norway. Originally, a national women's helpline opened in Norway in 1978 run by the Camilla Center for Battered Women. It provided counseling and advice to rape and domestic violence survivors. The goal of setting up the helpline was to raise awareness of domestic violence in Norway and to have governments acknowledge the violation of human rights and provide funding for the operation of protective services and other measures to combat domestic violence. Since then, the Camilla Center has become a shelter and its primary service provision is no longer the helpline.<sup>1</sup>

**Based on this information, Norway does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 46 women's shelters in Norway with approximately 815 shelter places available. The first shelter for survivors of rape and abuse was opened in Oslo on the 2nd of May, 1978. The last women's shelter was opened in 1992. All of the shelters are run by independent women's NGOs. The shelters provide service for women survivors of domestic violence and their children, with an age limit for boys of 18 years. The typical length of accommodation for women and their children is four to six months, with longer stays considered on an individual basis. In the past, the shelters received 80% of their funding from the state (Ministry for Children and Equality) and the remaining 20% was covered by their respective municipalities. Since 2011, the funding scheme has been changed and the shelters are 100% funded by the municipalities, which resulted in funds being cut, as well as threatening closure of one of the larger shelters in Köngsberg. The shelter movement is currently protesting against the acceptance of men in the shelters, albeit in disaggregated sections. Legal obligations call for shelters to have physically disaggregated accommodation for women and men, however, the wording of the law is vague, resulting in structures that are separate, but considered not acceptable by the shelter movement, due to the women's and men's sections' in close proximity to one another. This resulted in protests by the local community and the shelter workers.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 483 women's shelter places are needed in Norway. With approximately 815 women's shelter places available, Norway meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
46	483	815	0	0%	5,925	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are 46 women's centers in Norway, since each one of the shelters additionally provides non-residential counseling support for women survivors of violence. The municipalities are responsible for 100% of the funding.<sup>3</sup>

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

#### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are 23 women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Norway run by the state healthcare institutions.<sup>4</sup>

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In addition to women's specific services in Norway, some general services are also available, as well as services provided by women's shelters, such as helplines run by the shelter that qualify as regional helplines. Each municipality shelter (46 in total) operates a regional helpline for survivors of domestic violence. These regional helplines operate 24/7. There is also a national helpline for all persons in crisis situations. The helpline is operated by the State Office for Compensation for Victims of Violence. The number of the helpline is (800 40 008). It operates 9:00-15:00 and is available free of charge for landline callers only.<sup>5</sup>

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Pg. 207-208.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Pg. 208.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pg.207.

# POLAND

(REPUBLIC OF POLAND)



COUNTRY EXPERT: Urszula Nowakowska  
(Women's Rights Center 'Centrum Praw Kobiet')

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 38,153,389

Female population: 19,730,046

Member of Council of Europe: 1991

Member of European Union: 2004

CEDAW ratified: 1980

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 18 December 2012

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Poland and one women's shelter exists with 26 shelter places available. As a result, Poland does not meet Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendation on helpline and shelter provision. There is also one women's center in Warsaw providing various forms of assistance to women survivors of violence. Additional services exist that do not operate with a gender specific approach or that support persons in different crisis situations, which can also be accessed by women survivors of violence.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*I am 34 years old.* All that remains of my former marriage are two wonderful children and bitter memories resembling a horror movie rather than family life. My ex-husband has been an alcoholic since 1996 and has physically and psychologically abused me. He also financially abused me, he sold our possessions to have money for alcohol, broke into my apartment and took away items, claiming they belonged to his family. In 2001, he went to an addiction clinic, but all attempts to treat him failed. When under the influence, my husband resembled the devil in human skin, who kept inventing newer and newer ways to humiliate me and our children. As if this were not enough, his mother blamed me for his addiction.

One day, I reported his abuse. He was sentenced under Article 207 of the Penal Code to one year imprisonment, suspended for three years. On several occasions, he was punished by the administrative court for disturbing the neighbors, but the neighbors never wanted to testify, so there were no witnesses and the police would not hear my children as witnesses. Some neighbors even threatened me with request for an eviction, if my husband's behavior continued. In January 2007, he was again convicted under Article 207 – this time for two years in jail. The penalty was again suspended. Despite two convictions, my husband continued to abuse me and our children. I called the police, but they were increasingly less likely to intervene and complained that their interventions had not done any good. When the police refused to intervene, I sought help from a women's centre. They did what they could, but the prosecutors did not want to bring another case because of two earlier convictions. They felt that the court should first order the execution of suspended sentences. "Why assume another case," was the argument. The probation officer filed a motion to execute the sentence. The court ruling kept getting postponed for months. In the meantime, there were about 20 police interventions in our apartment. I was frightened of staying at home and I could no longer stand the daily abuse. One day, in a court building, after another divorce hearing, he tried to push me down the stairs. I was afraid to return home. I ended



up staying with my friend and then with my parents in a neighboring province. I continued to move in and out of the apartment I shared with my husband due to the violence. Occasionally, my husband would also move out of the apartment. In October 2007, the court decided to maintain a suspended sentence. The judge was satisfied with my husband's oral statement that he had not lived with us, had not contacted us and had started to work. He kept getting new jobs before each court sitting, and quitting them after. I submitted an application for a written justification of that ruling, but was told that I was not a party, and I had no right to ask for justification.

I returned to the apartment. Despite my husband's promise to the court that he would not live with us, after a brief absence, he once again moved in by breaking the door, and removed items from the apartment. I filed a complaint for larceny and malicious destruction of property, but it was waived because his family testified that most of the things that were carried away or destroyed belonged to them, not to us. No one asked our children. I do not know why children are not allowed to testify, but are allowed to live in hell.

A new probation officer took to work very conscientiously. He gathered up all evidence carefully, and in February 2008, filed another petition asking the court to execute the sentence, but it has not been approved so far. In the meantime, my husband continued to break into the apartment and remove items. I was told I could only sue him in a civil court, but I could not afford it. Why must the aggrieved party pay to seek justice – not those who break the law! I always cry when I write about this. Nobody knows what I went through. In court, when I asked to be exempted from court fees on grounds of insufficient finances, I was advised to find someone to pay the fee for me. Recently, for some months I couldn't afford to buy glasses for my son. I was deprived of welfare benefits and free lunches for my children, because my name is on a car that belongs to my husband. My parents have to help me financially. The divorce case dragged on for three years. In the first divorce ruling, he was found to be at fault and was ordered to leave the apartment and his parental authority was restricted. He appealed, and to my surprise, the appellate court reversed the sentence and found us jointly at fault for the dissolution of the marriage, taking into account testimony of his mother.

Even after the divorce, my ex-husband continues to harass me and break into the apartment. He doesn't care about the court ruling. He feels exempt from the law. Meanwhile, I wander with my children from place to place, without money and without work. I do not know how to give my children a sense of security and faith in people. If there is justice, it might be in heaven; I am losing faith in worldly justice.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is no national women's helpline in Poland.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on this information, Poland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There is one women's shelter in Poland with approximately 26 shelter places available. It is one of the 35 Specialist Support Centers referred to below (additional services), however, it is the only center that accommodates only women and their children. The center operates with a gender specific approach. The shelter was established in 1999 and is run by the NGO Women's Rights Center. The shelter provides specialized support for women survivors of domestic violence and their children. The age limit for boys to stay at the shelter is 15 years of age. The shelter allows for a stay of up to three months with extension of stay, if necessary. It is predominantly funded by the state (70%), foreign donations (10%) and by private donations (10%), the remaining 10% support comes from volunteer staff.<sup>3</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 3,815 women's shelter places are needed in Poland. With approximately 26 women's shelter places missing (99%), Poland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
1	3,815	26	3,789	99%	1,467,438	-



## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There is one women's center in Poland run by the Women's Rights Center in Warsaw. The services offered for women include legal advice, psychological counseling, and educational seminars, for example in the area of financial management.<sup>4</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Poland is made available in the prevalence of violence survey titled Survey on Violence against Women in Poland, published in 2004. The key survey findings are available in English in a summary prepared by Beata Gruszczyńska.<sup>5</sup>

In the study, sexual violence is defined as an act of being forced into sexual intercourse, forced attempt into sexual intercourse, touched sexually against will, and/or forced into sexual activity. The findings differentiate between violence experienced by women from partners, non-partners, and any males. Outside of partners, male perpetrators included acquaintances, relatives and strangers. Over one-third of women have, during the course of their lives, been subjected to physical, sexual or both types of violence at the hands of male perpetrators. Of the women surveyed, 5.1% disclosed having experienced sexual violence by their partners at least once in their lifetime. Sexual violence was exerted more often by previous partners rather than current partners. Sexual violence at the hand of 'any male' was disclosed as being committed either by acquaintances (7.4%) or strangers (5.1%). With regards to the sexual violence committed by a previous partner, over half of the number of cases required medical assistance. The sustained injuries were often very serious. In most cases they included bruising and scraping, but also brain concussions, bone fractures or other internal injuries.<sup>6</sup>

Information available on women's reporting of rape to the police is not widely available in Poland. Data from 2011 shows 1,748 cases of rape have been reported. Investigation and prosecution of rape is done based on a private complaint brought by the victim, which may result in the low reporting rates, in addition to it entailing "burdensome procedures and an inadequate system of compensation for the victims."<sup>7</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>8</sup>

There is no information available on the existence of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Poland.

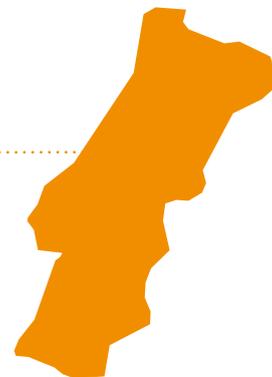
## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There are two general helplines in Poland. One, the National Emergency Service for Survivors of Family Violence Blue Line (22 668 70 00), was set up in 1995. It is run by the State Institute for Psychological Health of the Polish Psychology Association.<sup>9</sup> The second, also called National Emergency Service for Survivors of Family Violence (801 12 00 02), was set up in 2007. It is run by the State Agency for alcohol abuse problems. There are a large number of other shelters in Poland that provide support to women and men survivors of domestic violence.<sup>10</sup> These include 34 of the 35 Specialist Support Centers for all survivors of domestic violence<sup>11</sup>, Mother and Child Homes, Family Shelters and Homeless Shelters. Poland also has numerous gender neutral Counseling Centers for survivors of domestic violence with majority of them run by the state and providing support to both women and men experiencing violence.<sup>12</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Women's Rights Center, located in Poland.
- <sup>2</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 214.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Gruszczyńska, Beata. (2007). Przemoc wobec Kobiet w Polsce.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid. Pg. 5-10.
- <sup>7</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 58-59.
- <sup>8</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 214.
- <sup>9</sup> Ogólnopolskie Pogotowie dla Ofiar Przemocy w Rodzinie „Niebieska Linia”. [<http://www.niebieskalinia.pl>]
- <sup>10</sup> Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Przeciwdziałania Przemocy w Rodzinie Niebieska Linia. [<http://www.niebieskalinia.org/>]
- <sup>11</sup> Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości. Specjalistyczne Ośrodki Wsparcia dla Ofiar Przemocy w Rodzinie w 2012 r. [Access: 19.12.2012 <http://ms.gov.pl/pl/dzialalnosc/przeciwdzialanie-przemocy-w-rodzinie/placowki-swiadczone-pomoc>]
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 213-214.

# PORTUGAL (REPUBLIC OF PORTUGAL)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 10,632,482

Female population: 5,487,097

Member of Council of Europe: 1976

Member of European Union: 1986

CEDAW ratified: 1980

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: 5 February 2013

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Portugal. There are 37 women's shelters with 632 shelter places available. Data for two of the shelters show that in 2012, 45 women and 40 children were accommodated. At this time, 41% of recommended shelter places are missing in Portugal. As a result, Portugal does not yet meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of women's helpline and shelters. Furthermore, there are seven women's centers in the country and no specialized services for women survivors of sexual violence.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*Marta is a 28 year old* survivor of intimate partner violence and a mother of a six year old daughter Anna. Marta began the relationship with her perpetrator, when she was only 13 and the partner, John, was age 21. The couple lived together for nine years in a small town in the north of Portugal. Throughout the relationship, Marta suffered psychological, physical, sexual violence, including rape and economic violence from John. He had also threatened to kill her, used coercive control and stalking against her, and attempted to murder her, with the daughter witnessing some of the violence. In the course of their relationship, John began another relationship with a teenage girl and even took his own daughter with him to their meetings.

As a result of Marta's filing several complaints of domestic violence against him, he was facing several criminal proceedings for the crime of domestic violence, in addition to the crime of sexual abuse (related to his new relationship with the teenage girl). He was also the subject of civil (family) court cases involving custody and child protection related to his daughter Anna.

Marta made numerous attempts to run away from John. After the first murder attempt, Marta filed a criminal complaint with the local police station and was referred to a local support institution, where eventually John tracked her down and threatened to take Anna away. The authorities chose not to intervene as there was no standing court decision determining the custody of Anna. Marta was advised to return home with the perpetrator. During her second attempt to escape, Marta was so desperate and left without her daughter. She convinced herself that John could not be capable of harming Anna, and believed that if he was able to remain with Anna, he would have no reason to stalk her. In the meantime, Marta made an appeal to emergency social services, but returned home the following day, when informed that her daughter sustained a fracture in her leg. Because neither John nor Anna would provide an explanation for how the injury occurred, the hospital and child protection services did not interfere.

In the meantime, the family court arranged a parental conference related to custody of Anna as Marta sought help from the Commission for Child Protection. The conference resulted in Marta and Anna being accepted to a local shelter, however, they soon



were moved to another shelter (in a different geographical location) after John managed to locate them, contacting and harassing the shelter staff. The shelter staff, recognizing the severe nature of John's violence organized a risk assessment. Despite the Family Court being involved in the risk assessment, the court ordered the shelter to arrange a visitation between Anna and John, during which John attempted to force his daughter to disclose their location. Despite the confidentiality and protective measures in place, John managed to find Anna at her new school and took her away. The shelter staff notified the police and the Family Court, however, the authorities determined that the situation did not involve risk and only after incessant lobbying by the shelter staff, an alert was issued by a judge. At this time, Marta got in touch with the perpetrator, who was attempting to persuade her to meet with him. When she refused, he threatened to kill Marta. Unable to convince Marta and with pressure from authorities, John returned Anna to the police station, with no charges filed against him.

Following the episode, Marta and Anna were moved for the fourth time to a new shelter, resulting in Anna attending a new school for a third time. The Family Court continued to allow supervised parental visitations between John and Anna. The requirement to meet with her father caused Anna to suffer from anxiety attacks, and to fulfil the visitation requirements, Anna had to miss school and Marta her work. This contributed to Marta's having to extend her stay in the shelter as she could not financially provide for her own accommodation. Only after six months of visitations, the Family Court ruled to prohibit contact between John and Anna. One year later, John was finally sentenced for the crime of domestic violence and prohibited from contacting Marta.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Cooperation among services and intervention mechanisms is necessary to protect women from violence. The case outlined above has prompted initiatives in Portugal to address the lack of communication and coordination among different agencies that come in contact with cases of violence against women (women's shelters and authorities),<sup>2</sup> and especially between the Family Court (i.e. custody cases) and the Criminal Court, as it can result in lacking concern for the danger posed to women and their children in custody cases, when domestic violence is involved.

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is no national women's helpline in Portugal.<sup>3</sup>

**Based on this information, Portugal does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 37 women's shelters in Portugal with approximately 632 shelter places available. The first shelter was opened in 2001. Eight of the shelters are run by independent women's NGOs, with the remaining run by a range of foundations, community associations, parents associations and associations supporting survivors of crime and by religious NGOs. The shelters provide support to women survivors of violence and their children. All the shelters accept children of survivors but the age limit for children varies among the shelters.<sup>4</sup> Women can stay in the shelters for more than six months, however, legal provision allow for extension of the stay period based on the specific needs of the survivors, including lack of safe or autonomous accommodation alternatives. Data available from two women's shelters run by AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência shows that 80% of women stay for a period of one to six months, while only 20% remain longer (seven to 12 months). Additionally, undocumented migrant women survivors of violence also have the right to access accommodation at the women's shelters.<sup>5</sup> The women's shelters in Portugal are funded in part by the state; they also need to fundraise to cover their costs.<sup>6</sup> The Social Security Institute from the Ministry of Solidarity, Employment and Social Security is the governmental body responsible for funding of women's shelters.<sup>7</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 1,063 women's shelter places are needed in Portugal. With approximately 431 women's shelter places missing (41%), Portugal does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>8</sup>
37	1,063	632	431	41%	16,824	45 women and 40 children term (one day maximum) shelters.

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are seven women's centers in Portugal. Majority of them support women and men survivors of domestic violence, with only two of them applying a gender specific approach. Some centers also support survivors of trafficking and other forms of violence. The centers provide a range of support including crisis counselling, information and advice. Available in every region, the centers are funded by the state.<sup>9</sup>

## ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Portugal is made available through the prevalence of violence survey titled Gender Violence in Portugal – A National Survey of Violence against Women and Men published in 2008. In the survey, multiple forms of violence were measured, including physical, sexual, psychological violence and socio-cultural discrimination.

Sexual violence is defined to include the following acts: "obscenities with the intention of frightening; attempts at physical contact with sexual connotations; messages written/by telephone with the intention of molesting/belittling the victim; exhibiting sexual organs in such a way that the victim is insulted/abused; and the attempt of forced sex, threatening to injure either the victim or someone close." Sexual violence is least reported when it occurs within the domestic sphere. Women may often not recognize rape within marriage as violence and therefore not disclose it. Of the women surveyed, 19.1% disclosed having experienced some act of sexual violence. 98.1% of perpetrators of sexual violence were reported to be men.<sup>10</sup>

In 2012, 375 cases of rape were reported in Portugal, classified as violent or serious crimes. In 69% of the cases, the perpetrator was known to the victim, whereas in 24% of the cases, the perpetrator was a stranger.<sup>11</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no centers for women survivors of sexual violence in Portugal.<sup>12</sup>

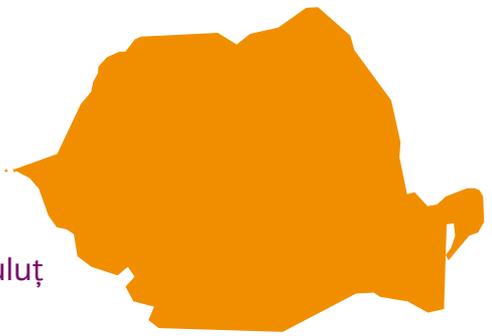
## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There is a non-specialist national helpline for survivors of domestic violence in Portugal called Serviço de Informação às Vitimas de Violência Doméstica. The phone number is (800 202 148) and the calls are free of charge. The helpline is run by the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (Comissão para a Cidadania e Igualdade de Género – CIG<sup>13</sup>).<sup>14</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência, located in Portugal. The name(s) in the story have been changed to protect the identity of person(s) described.
- <sup>2</sup> AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 219.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 219
- <sup>7</sup> AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The data for service user statistics applies to two shelters only, run by AMCV. Women's shelters in Portugal are not organized in a network and therefore no national level statistics for all 37 women's shelters are available; instead each organization collects data individually. One of the recommendations provided by AMCV for a soon to be launched National Action Plan on preventing and combating domestic violence and gender-based violence (2014-2017) includes the implementation of national level data collection related to service users in Portugal.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 219.
- <sup>10</sup> Lisboa, Manue et al. (2008). Gender Violence in Portugal – A National Survey of Violence against Women and Men. [SociNova/CesNova, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa]: The Summary of Results is available at [<http://sgdatabase.unwomen.org/uploads/Portugal%20-%20Gender%20Violence%20-%20National%20Survey%20Results.pdf>]. Additionally, it is available on the site of the of the National Observatory on Violence and Gender (Observatório Nacional de Violência e Género – ONVG at [[http://onvg.fcsh.unl.pt/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=99:inquerito-nacional-violencia-de-genero&catid=57&Itemid=119&lang=pt](http://onvg.fcsh.unl.pt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99:inquerito-nacional-violencia-de-genero&catid=57&Itemid=119&lang=pt)]. It was also published as a book which can be downloaded from: [[http://onvg.fcsh.unl.pt/images/stories/PDFs/ficheiros\\_projectos/violencia%20e%20genero.pdf](http://onvg.fcsh.unl.pt/images/stories/PDFs/ficheiros_projectos/violencia%20e%20genero.pdf)] Pg. 4, 10-12.
- <sup>11</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013.
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 219
- <sup>13</sup> [www.cig.gov.pt](http://www.cig.gov.pt)
- <sup>14</sup> AMCV – Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

# ROMANIA



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Camelia Proca (A.L.E.G.), Sorina Bumbuluț (AFIV Artemis), Mihaela Sasarman (Transcena)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 20,121,641<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 10,333,064<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1993

Member of European Union: 2007

CEDAW ratified: 1982

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: No

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Romania. There are 41 women's shelters with approximately 590 shelter places available for women survivors of violence and their children. Currently, 71% of required shelter places are missing in Romania. Over the year 2012, 700 women and 1,100 children were accommodated in women's shelters. Overall, Romania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelters. Additionally, there are 21 women's centers in Romania providing counselling and other services to women survivors of violence. Seven NGOs working in the area of supporting women survivors of violence also provide assistance to women survivors of sexual violence, including rape.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*The woman is 50 years old* and a mother of two children, aged 15 and 22. For twenty years, she endured multiple forms of violence, including physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence, as well as stalking, perpetrated by her former husband.

Being gradually isolated from her friends and family was particularly difficult for her. After she was diagnosed with two serious illnesses (breast cancer and Hepatitis C), the situation became even worse. While receiving treatment for breast cancer, the abuse and humiliation continued and intensified, now including threats to her life. The fact that the children were witnessing the abuse made it all the more difficult for her.

The woman tried to reach out for help to the police. Several times, the police came to the house, had a social talk with the former husband, and left. The abuse had significant short- and long-term consequences on her physical and emotional health. It also strongly affected her social life and, for years after she had left the perpetrator, she had to work on rebuilding her social networks with her family and her friends. The abuse also affected the children, who were afraid of their father. It had a financial impact on all three of them, as the perpetrator always refused to pay for child support, despite the court getting regularly involved to compel him to do so.

A significant event happened on the day her daughter brought home the leaflet of a women's specialized support service, and asked her mother to call them. Being aware of support available, one day, after being severely beaten, the woman went to a counselling center with her two children. There, she received legal counselling and information on divorce procedures, and she was reassured that nobody could take the children away from her. The woman and her children did not stay at the shelter. A key step for her was sending her private journal to the women's magazine *Avantaj* in 2010, following which the magazine contacted her and offered to publish her story as a book, to help other women in the same situation. The book also included references to existing support services women survivors of violence can turn to



when seeking help. The entire process of publishing the book was a groundbreaking event, and it helped her regain her self-esteem. It also gave her the courage to take action and become an activist for women's rights.

Currently, the woman is still experiencing financial difficulties, as there is no stable income she can rely on. Her health is stable and her breast cancer is in remission. She feels that she is finally free and at peace. Through the book she published, she feels that she can address directly other women survivors of violence, and she has been invited to several events organized by women's NGOs. Thanks to the support of NGOs, she has started to regain self-confidence, and has developed stronger connections to her friends and family. She has received important emotional support from her children and from her friends. As of today, the woman is still harassed by her former husband, who has since remarried, and who continues to refuse to pay for child support. She recently created her own NGO with the aim to combat domestic violence.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Romania, unlike Western European countries, did not have a feminist movement in the 1970-80s to push for the establishment of independent women's shelters. The setting up of shelters in Romania only started in the 1990s, with the country receiving significant international aid, and NGOs being set up, of which some focus on combating violence against women, even if they are not women's NGOs. In practice, and while several shelters do adopt a gender perspective in their work, only few promote themselves as belonging to women's NGOs.<sup>4</sup>

The situation of services for women survivors of violence in Romania is such that the ability to access a service resembles a lottery. Depending on their geographical location, women may or may not have access to shelters and counselling services. This is largely the case as, under law, service provision is the responsibility of local authorities that generally have very limited budgets, in a rather centralized Romanian economy. Women's NGOs provide women's specialized support services; however, these services are only located in a few cities, while there are 41 counties in Romania, plus the Bucharest municipality.<sup>5</sup>

While some women may have access to women's specialized support services in their county, the absence of national funding programs to support women's NGOs working in the field of domestic violence threatens the sustainability of support services, and therefore women's access to those services. Women's NGOs rely on private donations, project-based funding and funding from local authorities to finance their activities and services. However, not all women's NGOs benefit from local budgets, these being largely dependent on whether or not local councils are willing to allocate resources to combating domestic violence. Furthermore, as social services need to receive public accreditation in order to apply for funding at different levels, it is often very difficult for NGOs to run or to define their services outside of the legal framework. As a result, most services focus on "family violence", which is defined by Law 217/2003, and services targeting other forms of violence affecting women (i.e. rape, sexual harassment) are missing.<sup>6</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>7</sup>

There is no national women's helpline in Romania.

**Based on this information, Romania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>8</sup>

There are 41 women's shelters in Romania with approximately 590 shelter places available.<sup>9</sup> The first shelter was opened in 1999 by the organization Artemis, in Cluj- Napoca. Twenty-six shelters offer short-term emergency accommodation for up to two months (crisis centers), and 15 accommodate women for long-term rehabilitation stays of up to 180 days, in line with legal provisions on services. However, in practice, long-term stays can be up to one year or longer in shelters run by independent organizations. Sixty-five per cent of the women's shelters are run by public organizations, 32% by independent organizations, and 3% are run by public-private partnerships. All shelters accept children of the survivors with an age limit for children who are 18 years or older. Average stay is 77 days in crisis centers, and 160 days in long-term rehabilitation shelters. Shelter funding is largely dependent on the type of organization running the services, with very few private shelters benefiting from public funding.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 2,012 women's shelter places are needed in Romania. With approximately 1,422 women's shelter places missing (71%), Romania does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

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## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>10</sup>
41	2,012	590	1,422	71%	34,104	700 women and 1,100 children accommodated.

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>11</sup>

There are 21 women's centers in Romania, most of which offer some form of services or conduct the following activities: counseling, information and advice, advocacy, intervention safety support, independent domestic violence advice, legal advice, court accompaniment, networking, outreach, resettlement support and specialist child support.

### ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Romania can be found in the 2008 prevalence violence survey titled Domestic Violence in Romania: National Sociological Survey.<sup>12</sup>

A short summary of the survey findings is accessible and detailed information on methodology is not available. Although findings are disaggregated by gender for victims only, the relationship between victim and perpetrator is not evidenced, meaning that information about rates of violence includes perpetrators of all domestic relationship types, including intimate partners (current and former).<sup>13</sup>

According to the findings, 2.5% of women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime, and 0.5% have experienced sexual violence in the last 12 months.<sup>14</sup>

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>15</sup>

There is little data available on existence of women's centers for survivors of sexual violence, and no rape crisis centers are available in Romania. Seven NGOs<sup>16</sup> working in the field of violence against women also offer support to women survivors of sexual violence and rape.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> National Institute of Statistics. (2013). [[www.recensamanromania.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Press-release-no-159\\_2011-Population-census-rezults.pdf](http://www.recensamanromania.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Press-release-no-159_2011-Population-census-rezults.pdf)]
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point A.L.E.G., located in Romania.
- <sup>4</sup> A.L.E.G. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> A.L.E.G. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: According to WAVE Focal Point Artemis Counselling Center against Sexual Abuse, a shelter 'place' should equal to three beds for one woman and two children (two children being an average number of children accompanying a woman to a shelter). Hence, Romania should report 200 shelter places, rather than the 590 beds counted in the 2013 national reporting.
- <sup>10</sup> A.L.E.G. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>11</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 226.
- <sup>12</sup> Centrul de Sociologie Urbană și Regională (CURS). (2008). VIOLENȚA DOMESTICĂ ÎN ROMÂNIA Ancheta Sociologică La Nivel Național.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 223.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> A.L.E.G. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>16</sup> Asociația pentru Libertate și Egalitate de Gen, Asociația pentru Promovarea Femeii în România, Fundația Sensibilu, East European Institute for Health Reproduction, Community Safety and Mediation Center, Artemis Counselling Center against Sexual Abuse, Centrul Parteneriat pentru Egalitate.

# RUSSIA (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)



COUNTRY EXPERT: ANNA – National Center for the Prevention of Violence

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 141,909,244  
Female population: 76,268,737  
Member of Council of Europe: 1996  
Member of European Union: No  
CEDAW ratified: 1981  
CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2004  
CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: No  
ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

In Russia, there is one national women's helpline providing assistance to women survivors of domestic violence. The helpline is free of charge and operates 12 hours per day, seven days a week. In 2013, the helpline received 7,633 calls, among which 1,342 calls related to cases of domestic violence. Furthermore, there are 42 women's shelters with approximately 400 shelter places available. Consequently, 97% of recommended shelter places are currently missing in Russia. As a result, Russia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of national women's helpline and women's shelters. Lastly, there are 19 women's centers providing support to women survivors of violence, and one center for women survivors of sexual violence available in Russia.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Because of absence of a specific law on domestic violence and because of a state-controlled systemic approach, funding for support services for women survivors of violence is largely lacking. Lack of funding is at the root of significant shortage of support services in Russia.<sup>1</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>2</sup>

There is one national women's helpline in Russia. The helpline is operated by an independent women's NGO called ANNA National Center for the Prevention of Violence, and assists women survivors of domestic violence. The number of the helpline is (08800 700 600). The helpline is free of charge and operates all days of the week, 12 hours per day. Multilingual support is not available.

**Based on this information, Russia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2013) <sup>3</sup>
1	Yes	No	3,753 calls from women exposed to violence

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>4</sup>

There are 42 women's shelters in Russia with approximately 400 shelter places available. At least 23 of the shelters are run by the state. The first shelter was established in St. Petersburg in 1995, and is called the Crisis Center for Women. The last shelter was opened by a local crisis center for women in Vologda.<sup>5</sup> The shelters accommodate women survivors of all forms of violence. The shelters accept children of the survivors, usually with an age limit of 14 for boys, and offer a stay period of up to six months. Information on funding of all the shelters is not available, although the state shelters are funded by local governments (95%) and through volunteer work (5%). NGO run shelters usually receive funding in form of private donations, from international foundations and through volunteer support.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 14,191 women's shelter places are needed in Russia. With approximately 13,791 women's shelter places missing (97%), Russia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
42	14,191	400	13,791	97%	354,773	-

### WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>6</sup>

There are 19 women's crisis centers providing telephone and walk-in counseling services, and self-help groups operated by NGOs with support from ANNA National Center for the Prevention of Violence.

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Russia is not available, as no prevalence survey on violence against women has been conducted.<sup>7</sup>

### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>8</sup>

There is one women's center for survivors of sexual violence in Russia, called the Sisters Independent Charitable Center for Assistance to Survivors of Sexual Violence. It was founded in 1994, and it is predominantly funded with foreign donations (70%) and through volunteer work (30%).

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> ANNA – National Center for the Prevention of Violence. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>2</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 229.
- <sup>3</sup> ANNA – National Center for the Prevention of Violence. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>4</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 229.
- <sup>5</sup> ANNA – National Center for the Prevention of Violence. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid. Pg. 230.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid. Pg. 228.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid. Pg. 230.

# SERBIA (REPUBLIC OF SERBIA)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Vanja Macanovic (Autonomous Women's Center), Sladjana Lukovic (Association Fenomena)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 7,186,862<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 3,499,176<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 2003

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 2001

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: 4 April 2012

ratified: 21 November 2013

## SUMMARY

There is no national women's helpline in Serbia. There are 14 women's shelters with at least 162 shelter places, in five of the shelters, available to accommodate women survivors of violence and their children. User statistics for nine shelters for the year 2012 show that 129 women and 120 children were accommodated in women's shelters, while 300 women were accommodated in short-term emergency shelters. Lastly, there are no centers for survivors of sexual violence in Serbia. As a result, Serbia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline. Due to not knowing the exact number of shelter places available, no statement can be made on Serbia's meeting the recommendations on provision of women's shelters.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*The protection of survivors of domestic violence in Serbia is never easy, and women survivors constantly have to 'prove' that they have been the victims of abuse. In so doing, they need to present evidence in court, showing that they have already contacted the police and sought help from social services; they need to show medical reports evidencing physical injuries, among others. The following survivor story shows the journey of a woman survivor seeking justice.*

*The woman is in her fifties.* After gathering all the evidence to prove her experience of abuse in order to provide it to the court, she had to wait for nine months until a one-year protection order against her perpetrator was issued. However, despite breach of the protection order constituting a criminal act, the perpetrator refused to leave the house. As a result, the woman decided to initiate criminal proceedings, and proceeding for the execution of the judgment granting her a protection order. After another six months, the court decided to evict the perpetrator from the house. Because of the perpetrator refusing to leave the house, the woman had taken to live in a rented apartment. When she could finally come back to the house, she found the place in a very bad state, with unpaid bills for water, electricity and phone piling up. With the criminal proceeding still going on, she could use the unpaid bills as evidence that the perpetrator had been living in the house despite the protection order. As the protection order was about to expire, the woman filed a civil suit to have the protection order prolonged, which the court ruled in favour of and prolonged by another six months. After two years of criminal proceeding, the court eventually found the perpetrator guilty of breaching the protection order, and sentenced him to a suspended sentence of six months in prison. More than a year after the criminal sentence was passed, and after two judgments granting her protection orders, the woman was finally free from the violence of the perpetrator. It was not easy, but with the support and free legal aid from women's NGOs, the woman made it through the system.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

In Serbia, women's NGOs are the main providers of SOS hotlines, counselling and free legal support for women survivors of violence. Majority operate with little to no financial support from the state or from local authorities. Due to lack of resources, several women's shelters were closed down in recent years.<sup>4</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>5</sup>

There is no national women's helpline available in Serbia.

**Based on this information, Serbia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>6</sup>

There are 14 women's shelters in Serbia, with at least 162 shelter places available. The first shelter was opened in the mid-1990s.<sup>7</sup> Two of the shelters are run by women's NGOs (one offers emergency accommodation only), and 12 are run by state social services. Additionally, there are two shelters for elderly and homeless persons that can also provide emergency accommodation (up to seven days) for women and children survivors of domestic violence. Data on the number of shelter places is available for five shelters in Belgrade (75), Novi Sad (20), Zrenjanin (20), Sombor (22) and Pancevo (25). Therefore, there are at least 162 shelter places available in Serbia. In May 2013, the State of Serbia issued a 'Decision on the conditions and standards for providing services of social protection', which established six months as the maximum length of stay in a shelter. Information on whether access to women's shelters is free of charge is available for 11 of the state-run shelters. It shows that only three state-run shelters provide free of charge accommodation, while other shelters charge women and children, sometimes depending on their employment situation. Two NGO-run shelters are free of charge.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 719 shelter places are needed in Serbia. Due to lack of information on shelter places available, a statement cannot be made on whether Serbia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>8</sup>
14	719	At least 162	-	-	-	129 women and 120 children were accommodated in women's shelters; 300 women were accommodated in emergency short-term (one day maximum) shelters.

## WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>9</sup>

In Serbia, 26 women's NGOs, members of the network Women against Violence, provide gender-specific counseling for women survivors of male violence. Twenty-four of them also provide free legal counseling for women survivors of violence.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Sexual violence against women is still a taboo in Serbia. A criminal offense of rape includes the use of force, or a threat of use of force, which implies that there should be a physical resistance of the victim. While judicial practice has slowly moved towards a more flexible definition of rape, rape as a criminal offense is still defined by physical intercourse, and does not include other forms of forced sexual practices (i.e. forced oral sex, inserting foreign objects or hand). These are instead considered prohibited sexual acts, and subject to a financial penalty. Furthermore, the Criminal Code states that prosecution for rape within marriage can only be undertaken if the victim agrees with the criminal proceeding, and not ex officio, even if there is clear evidence that the crime was committed. At any point in the criminal procedure, the victim may withdraw charges, and the case may be dismissed.<sup>10</sup>

Information on the prevalence of sexual violence in Serbia is available from the prevalence of violence survey Mapping of Domestic Violence against Women in Central Serbia<sup>11</sup> published in 2010. For the research, a representative sample of 2,500 women in Serbia aged 18-75 was surveyed, not including Vojvodina and Kosovo.<sup>12</sup> The summary does not provide a definition on what acts were considered as sexual violence.<sup>13</sup> When looking at sexual violence, information on the relationship of perpetrators to victims (besides domestic relationship) is not provided.<sup>14</sup> Overall, men are responsible for the majority of cases of physical, psychological and economic violence perpetrated against women in the family.

Sexual violence was the least frequently disclosed form of violence experienced by women, with 1.2% disclosing experience of violence in the last 12 months, and 3.8% in their lifetime. In comparison, 31.8% of women interviewed reported having experienced psychological violence in the last 12 months, and 48.7% during their lifetime. It should be noted that data on the prevalence of sexual violence included only the “most extreme manifestations”, acts of forced sexual intercourse, as a way to minimize women’s discomfort to have to disclose information on their experience of sexual abuse.<sup>15</sup>

Available data from the 2003 survey conducted by the Autonomous Women’s Center (AWC) also shows that 6% of women in the Belgrade territory reported sexual violence perpetrated by their partner.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, information available in the 2013 EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU shows that there were only 138 criminal charges of rape in 2010, and 131 in 2011.<sup>17</sup>

### ▶ WOMEN’S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>18</sup>

There are no women’s centers for survivors of sexual violence in Serbia.

### ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

There is one helpline run by the Ministry of Interior, which women and men survivors of domestic violence can call. The helpline is called the helpline for victims of domestic violence and the number is (0800 100 600). It is free of charge and operates on a 24/7 basis. The helpline for survivors of domestic violence, operated by police officers, is charged with enabling police response in cases of domestic violence, but it does not provide assistance to survivors such as information or advice.<sup>19</sup>

Additionally, one women’s helpline was established in November 2012 in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. The helpline is run by women’s organizations gathered around the Network of Women’s Hotlines in Vojvodina, and the number is (0800 10 10 10). The helpline is free of charge, available to all women calling from the territory of Serbia and it operates from Monday to Friday, from 10:00 to 20:00.<sup>20</sup>

According to the network Women against Violence, there are 24 SOS hotlines for women survivors of violence that are run by women’s NGOs. Among these 24 hotlines, two service mainly women survivors of trafficking, four are specialized in support for women with disabilities and three provide support to women speaking languages of national minorities. SOS hotlines receive little to no funding from local governments. In 2011, four additional SOS hotlines run by women’s NGOs had to close, due to lack of funding.<sup>21</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Results of the 2011 Census of population, households and apartments in Republic of Serbia - <http://popis2011.stat.rs/?lang=en>
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Autonomous Women's Center (WIC), located in Serbia.
- <sup>4</sup> Autonomous Women's Centre Belgrade. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012 – Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence: A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 235.
- <sup>8</sup> Association Fenomena. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The data corresponds to the activity of nine shelters: eight run by the state and one emergency shelter run by women's NGO.
- <sup>9</sup> Autonomous Women's Centre Belgrade. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>10</sup> European Women's Lobby (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 64.
- <sup>11</sup> Babović, Marija. (2010). Mapiranje porodičnog nasilja prema ženama u Centralnoj Srbiji. [Ministry of Labor and Social Policy: Project against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence].
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid. Pg. 6.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid. Pg. 8.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Autonomous Women's Centre Belgrade. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>17</sup> European Women's Lobby (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 64.
- <sup>18</sup> Association Fenomena. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>19</sup> Autonomous Women's Centre Belgrade. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.

# SLOVAKIA (SLOVAK REPUBLIC)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Katarína Farkašová (Alliance of Women in Slovakia), Dušana Karlovská (Fenestra)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 5,418,374

Female population: 2,784,946

Member of Council of Europe: 1961

Member of European Union: 2004

CEDAW ratified: 1993 (by succession)

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2000

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Slovakia. The helpline operates on a 24/7 basis but is not free of charge. There are two women's shelters with approximately 31 shelter places available. Currently, 94% of recommended shelter places are missing in Slovakia. As a result, Slovakia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of national women's helpline and women's shelters. There are five specialised counselling centres for women experiencing intimate partner violence in Slovakia run by independent women's NGOs. Slovakia does not currently have any centres for women survivors of sexual violence.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Slovakia. The helpline is run by an independent women's NGO Alliance of Women in Slovakia. The number of the helpline is (0903 519 550). The helpline operates 24/7 since 2002 but is not free of charge. The helpline assists women survivors of all forms of violence. Multilingual support is provided in English, German, Russian and Czech. It is partially funded by the region of Bratislava and partially through private donations, and also relies on volunteer work.<sup>1</sup>

**Based on this information, Slovakia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics approximately in a year
1	No	Yes	1,200 <sup>2</sup> calls (99% of calls are received from women and/or their children)

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

According to a monitoring report<sup>3</sup> published in 2012, various structures/facilities in Slovakia have been identified as offering shelter provision.<sup>4</sup> Two of these structures can be identified as women's shelters. Therefore, there are two women's shelters in Slovakia with approximately 31 shelter places available. In the monitoring report, these two shelters demonstrated 75% compliance with the Council of Europe Minimum Standards and provide services specifically to women experiencing gender-based violence (intimate partner violence). The two shelters are run by independent women's NGOs 'KOTVA, n.o. Trebišov' with 20 places available and 'ZZŽ MyMamy Prešov' with 11 places available. The shelters accept children of the women survivors accommodated at the shelters.<sup>5</sup>

The other shelters, which also demonstrated 75% compliance with the Council of Europe Minimum Standards, also provide accommodation to other target groups, not only survivors of gender-based violence (intimate partner violence) and their children, and as a result are not considered to be specialized women's shelters. There are 10 such facilities in Slovakia, where anywhere between 16%-90% of clients are intimate partner violence survivors. The number of shelter places available was not provided for all the structures during data collection, or information on how many places were specifically dedicated to survivors of intimate

partner violence (and their children) was not made available for the monitoring report, therefore, the total number of places cannot be identified. The structures/facilities identified include: 1. 'SKC Dotyk Beckov', 2. 'NÁRUČ – POMOC OHROZENÝM DEŤOM V KRÍZE', 3. 'Krizové centrum SOS Rimavská Sobota', 4. 'SČK – Trebišov', 5. 'Centrum Slniečko Nitra', 6. 'ÁNO PRE ŽIVOT n.o. Raecké Teplice', 7. 'Pomoc ohrozeným deťom o.z. Bratislava', 8. 'Brána do života – krízové centrum o.z. Bratislava', 9. 'Slovenský výbor pre UNICEF o.z. Bratislava, and 10. Križovatky n.o. Azylový dom Emauzy Holíč.<sup>6</sup>



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
2	542	31	511	94%	174,754	-

#### WOMEN'S CENTERS

In the aforementioned monitoring report, 11 counseling centers in Slovakia have been identified.<sup>7</sup> Only five of the centers can be identified as women's counseling centers for survivors of intimate partner violence which also demonstrated 75% compliance with the Council of Europe Minimum Standards.<sup>8</sup>

#### SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Slovakia is available from the prevalence of violence study Representative Research on Prevalence and Experience of Women with Violence against Women (VAW) in Slovakia<sup>9</sup> published in 2008. The survey measures prevalence of intimate partner violence but women's experiences of violence by men other than partners were also studied. The survey findings are available in Slovak, with a short English summary.

The data is gender and age disaggregated for victim and perpetrator and the relationship between victim and perpetrator is evident. Intimate partner perpetrators included current and former partners/husbands. Although the focus was on intimate partner violence, women were also asked about their experiences of violence committed by men known<sup>10</sup> or unknown to them.<sup>11</sup>

Nine percent of women experienced sexual violence by current partners and more than 25% by former partners.<sup>12</sup> It was especially noted that women in Slovakia are seldom subject to one form of intimate partner violence only; sexual violence is very often connected to various forms of psychological or social violence.<sup>13</sup>

#### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Slovakia.<sup>14</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Information provided by Alliance of Women in Slovakia (2014).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Holubová, Filadelfiová. (2012). Monitoring podporných služieb pre ženy zažívajúce násilie a ich deti vzhľadom na európske štandardy. IVPR. [Bratislava]. [www.sspr.gov.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/vyskum/2012/Holubova/2261\_holubova\_monitoring\_sluzby.pdf]

<sup>4</sup> According to Alliance of Women in Slovakia, based on the monitoring report published in 2012, there are 8 women's shelters (emergency housing) with approximately 177 places available (excluding places in emergency flats). However, none of them meet 100% of the Council of Europe Minimum Standards (the monitoring limit was at 75%; several other structures tested below the limit). The minimum standards include among others: safety requirements, women's human rights approach, free of charge. The findings indicate that some of the shelters do not exclusively serve women survivors of violence, but also other women and their children with other social and crisis situations (i.e. housing problems). All the shelters are run by NGOs: Anchor Trebišov, Center Slniečko Nitra, SCK Dotyk Beckov, Crisis Centre SOS Rimavská Sobota, SČK Trebišov, Áno pre život Rajecké Teplice, Brána do života Bratislava, Krížovatky – Azylový dom Holíč. The shelters are funded predominantly by the self-government regional offices (70 %), private donations (10%) and various project funding schemes (e.g. European Social Fund). See Holubová, Filadelfiová. (2012). Monitoring podporných služieb pre ženy zažívajúce násilie a ich deti vzhľadom na európske štandardy. IVPR. [Bratislava]. [www.sspr.gov.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/vyskum/2012/Holubova/2261\_holubova\_monitoring\_sluzby.pdf]

<sup>5</sup> Information provided by Fenestra. (2014).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Information provided by Alliance for Women in Slovakia based on: Holubová, Filadelfiová. (2012). Monitoring podporných služieb pre ženy zažívajúce násilie a ich deti vzhľadom na európske štandardy. IVPR. [Bratislava]. [www.sspr.gov.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/vyskum/2012/Holubova/2261\_holubova\_monitoring\_sluzby.pdf]

<sup>8</sup> Information provided by Fenestra based on: Holubová, Filadelfiová. (2012). Monitoring podporných služieb pre ženy zažívajúce násilie a ich deti vzhľadom na európske štandardy. IVPR. [Bratislava]. [www.sspr.gov.sk/IVPR/images/IVPR/vyskum/2012/Holubova/2261\_holubova\_monitoring\_sluzby.pdf]

<sup>9</sup> Bodnárová, Bernardina et al. (May 2008). Representative Research on Prevalence and Experience of Women with Violence against Women (VAW) in Slovakia. [Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny]. Bratislava.

<sup>10</sup> See Bodnárová, Bernardina et al. (May 2008). Pg. 17: Non-partner perpetrators known to the victim included men known from work, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, relatives.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Pg. 15-17, 185.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 241.



# SLOVENIA (REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Association SOS Helpine for Women and Children

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 2,042,335

Female population: 1,030,568

Member of Council of Europe: 1993

Member of European Union: 2004

CEDAW ratified: 1992

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2004

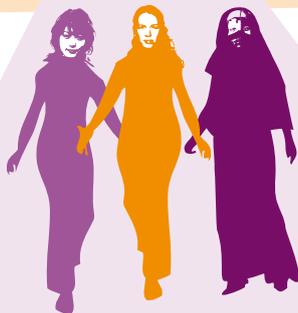
CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 8 September 2011

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Slovenia. The helpline is free of charge but does not operate on a 24/7 basis. In 2012, the national women's helpline received 2,314 calls. Furthermore, there are 16 women's shelters with approximately 249 shelter places available. In 2012, 33 women and 21 children were accommodated in two shelters, where service user statistics were available. Overall, Slovenia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline, but meets the recommendations on provision of women's shelters. Additionally, there are three crisis centers that offer emergency accommodation to women survivors of violence and eight counselling centers. Five of the centers provide support to women survivors of sexual violence.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*I am 43 years old* and I am the mother of four children, three of whom live with me in the women's shelter. For about 20 years, I was the victim of psychological, physical and economic violence perpetrated by my husband. Taking the decision to move into a women's shelter was a very difficult decision to make. Furthermore, my eldest son could not come along with my three other children and me in the shelter as he was not underage anymore and wanted to remain with his father. I was afraid to see how I would cope with the situation, being alone with my children. During the time of the abuse, I felt very ashamed of what was happening to me, which is why it took me a long time to act on it. I was afraid of taking a decision. I thought that it would get better, but I also felt that I could not live on my own. I kept telling myself that I had to try even harder and hoped the abuse would stop. Eventually, the situation was so bad that I sought help from an NGO that provided me with counselling and help in getting a place in a women's shelter. My experience reaching out for help to services was very positive, and I received support in all the different steps I took.

The abuse affected not only me but also my children. They were really shy and had difficulties at school. Things are getting better since we are in the shelter. I have noticed changes in my children, and so have their teachers. They are now more open and 'child-like'; they are less serious and not withdrawn, and they make friends more easily. I have also changed. I have more time for my children who also think that I am more relaxed. I receive counselling and I am no longer afraid.

Though I have a job, my financial situation is still very difficult, and I still do not know where we will end up living in the future. Now, we at least have peace and a lot of support from my family. I am in the process of getting a divorce, and I have reported my husband's aggression to the police. We have agreed on custody of the children, visiting rights and child support, but we are still in a criminal proceeding as I pressed charges against him. My next challenge is now to find my children and me a new home. I do not know what the future will bring but I am confident that we will be alright.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Though the state of service provision for women victims of violence is getting better, a lot remains to be done and the relevant legislation is sometimes poorly implemented. Temporary shelters for women survivors are available; however, there is no specialized housing available for the women once they leave the shelters. Increased funding is needed to address the needs of women without citizenship and to improve and expand the provision of free psychological support for all women survivors.<sup>2</sup>

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>3</sup>

There is one national women's helpline in Slovenia called SOS Help-line for Women and Children – Victims of Violence. The helpline is operated by an independent women's NGO. The phone number of the helpline is (080 11 55). It is free of charge, but does not operate 24/7. Instead, it operates Monday-Friday from 12:00 until 22:00, and on weekends and holidays from 18:00-22:00. There is no multilingual support offered. The helpline is predominantly funded by the state (70%), foreign donations (20%) and private donations (10%).

**Based on this information, Slovenia does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>4</sup>
1	Yes	No	2,314 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>5 6</sup>

There are 16 women's shelters in Slovenia with approximately 249 shelter places available. The first shelter was opened in 1991 by an organization Center for Social Work Krško. Among the 16 women's shelters, one accommodates women survivors of domestic violence who are also battling drug addiction. Four of the shelters are run by the Center for Social Work (CSW) (Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs). The majority of the shelters are run by independent women's NGOs. Furthermore, one shelter is run by the Samaritan Institute of Charity. All of the shelters accept children of the women survivors. The women and their children are allowed to stay for up to 12 months. The shelters receive some level of state funding.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 204 women's shelter places are needed in Slovenia. With approximately 249 women's shelter places available, Slovenia meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>7</sup>
16	204	249	0	0%	8,202	33 women and 21 children accommodated

### WOMEN'S CENTERS

In addition to the 16 women's shelters, three crisis centers offer emergency accommodation to women survivors of domestic violence. Two of the three crisis centers are run by the Center for Social Work (Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs), and one is run by an independent women's NGO. The children of women survivors of violence can also be accommodated at the crisis centers.<sup>8</sup>

There are eight women's counseling centers in Slovenia. All of the centers offer counseling, information and advice. Most of the centers offer independent domestic violence advice, outreach and resettlement support, with only some of the centers providing intervention safety support and legal advice and court accompaniment.<sup>9</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Slovenia can be found in the prevalence of violence survey titled *National Survey on Violence in Private Life and Partnerships*<sup>10</sup> published in 2010. The study is national prevalence of domestic violence survey and includes intimate partner violence against women.

Survey findings show that 6.5% of women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime, while 1.5% of women experienced

sexual violence in the last 12 months. Most of the sexual violence perpetrators were male current or former intimate partners.<sup>11</sup>

According to findings published in the 2013 EWL Barometer on Rape, the latest police report indicates that 33 cases of rape were investigated in 2011, and 32 cases in 2012. Additionally, 25 cases of sexual violence were investigated in 2011, and 23 cases in 2012.<sup>12</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>13</sup>

There are five centers in Slovenia that provide assistance to women survivors of sexual violence. One of the centers is called Association against Sexual Abuse (Združenje proti spolnemu zlorabljanju). Additionally, there are four women's NGOs, where women and girls survivors of sexual violence can seek assistance. These include Association SOS Help-line (Društvo SOS Telefon), Institute Emma (Zavod Emma), Women's Counseling Center (Ženska svetovalnica) and Association for Non-Violent Communication (Društvo za nenasilno komunikacijo).

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In addition to the one national women's helpline SOS Help-line for Women and Children – Victims of Violence, there are five helplines that women survivors of violence can call for counseling. The five organizations running the helplines are Women's Counseling Center (Ženska svetovalnica), Association for Non-Violent Communication (Društvo za nenasilno komunikacijo), Institute Emma (Zavod Emma), Društvo Klju (Society Klju) and CSD Maribor (Center for Social Work Maribor).<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, and additionally to places available in the 16 women's shelters, 13 places are available in the three crisis centers, and 183 places are available in 10 maternity homes. Two of the three crisis centers are run by the CSW, and one is run by an NGO. Additionally, two of the 10 maternity homes are run by the CSW, and eight are run by NGOs.<sup>15</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children, located in Slovenia.
- <sup>2</sup> Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 248.
- <sup>4</sup> Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 248.
- <sup>6</sup> Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid: the data refers to the activity of the two women's shelters run by Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children over the year 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> Association SOS Help-line for Women and Children. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg.248.
- <sup>10</sup> Leskošek, Vesna et al. (October 2010). Nacionalna Raziskava o Nasilju v Zasebni Sferi in v Partnerskih Odnosih Kon no Poro ilo: 1 Faze Raziskovalnega Projekta.
- <sup>11</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 245.
- <sup>12</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 67.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 248.
- <sup>14</sup> Association SOS Helpline for Women and Children. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.

# SPAIN

(KINGDOM OF SPAIN)



**COUNTRY EXPERTS:** Bárbara Tardón (Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA), Nicolás González Gallego (Dirección General de Prevención de Violencia de Género, Juventud, Protección Jurídica y Reforma de Menores de la Región de Murcia)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 45,929,476

Female population: 23,258,614

Member of Council of Europe: 1977

Member of European Union: 1986

CEDAW ratified: 1984

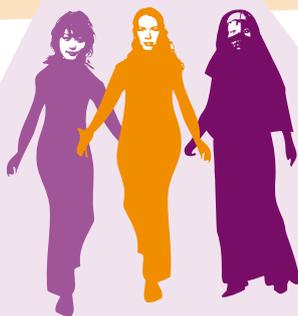
CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2001

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is a national women's helpline in Spain, operating 24/7 and free of charge. In 2012, the helpline received 55,810 calls. Furthermore, there are 3,329 women's shelter places available in the country. Currently, 28% of recommended shelter places are still missing. Spain meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for national women's helpline provision, but does not in terms of available women's shelter places.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>1</sup>

*The story of sexual violence is about the rape of a 59 year old woman,* who is an undocumented migrant from Russia living in Spain. She was raped by two strangers, who were masked and wearing black clothes, so the woman could not recognize them. Throughout the assault, they called her names and she feared they would murder her. After the rape, the woman called the police, who immediately focused on her residency status and questioned her on whether her accusations were false with the aim of receiving residency status, if she claimed to be a victim of violence. Although the Spanish Organic Act 1/2004 of 28 December on Comprehensive Measures against Gender-based Violence includes provisions of receiving protective status for women victims of violence, sexual violence is not covered under this Act (as it refers to intimate partner violence only). For this reason, the woman would not have been able to claim such a provision. Despite this, the authorities believed the woman was falsely claiming to have been raped to receive residency and/or work authorization.

Since the attack, an administrative sanctioning procedure for residing without a permit and for "false complaint" has been opened against the woman. The judge has made the decision to suspend the investigation of the sexual attack, despite medical report from the hospital confirming the woman had been raped. Following the medical examination, the woman was placed in a detention facility for 48 days.

On the 21st of November 2013, Aspacia launched a campaign titled "Raped and Expelled" documenting the case of the Russian migrant woman. The campaign included a report of the case to show the vulnerability of undocumented migrant women in Spain and that of survivors of sexual violence. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2013, following the campaign, the woman was arrested with the aim of deporting her to Russia. Aspacia once again began a campaign to stop the deportation by reporting the situation to the ombudsperson (Defensora del Pueblo), other political authorities and mass media. The case gained significant coverage and the following day, the woman was released. The threat of deportation is still pending, and Aspacia continues its efforts to lobby on behalf of the woman by meeting with the Chief of



the Migration Central Unit of the National Police. Defensora del Pueblo has agreed to further investigate the case. The aim is to ensure the woman is not deported and that she will obtain an effective remedy.

The woman has suffered severe violence that she describes as “horrible” and “traumatic”. She says, “I live here, I’ve got no papers, no healthcare, no bank account, nothing. Just my city census document, no health insurance, no job... I work but they don’t pay me, you know, no rights, nothing. I don’t know how to describe it... I’m like a wild animal.”

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Women’s NGOs serve an important role in ensuring women survivors’ of violence access to justice. Three NGOs: ASPACIA, Pueblos Unidos and Esculca in Spain became aware of the case of violence described in the survivor story above and organized to raise awareness of the trauma, hardship and further victimization that undocumented women survivors of violence face, when reaching out for help. To this point, the issue of sexual violence has not garnered the important attention it deserves in Spain, and a gender perspective and needed resources are still to be allocated to combat sexual violence in the country. Female migrants reporting sexual violence often face discrimination if they are undocumented, which leads to secondary victimization.<sup>2</sup>

Recent developments in the country, such as the healthcare reform, discriminate against undocumented migrants.<sup>3</sup> Until September 2012, undocumented migrants could access the national healthcare system; however, since then a new law (Royal Decree - Act 16/2012)<sup>4</sup> approved by the government prevents any undocumented migrants from accessing the national healthcare system. Exceptions are made for emergency treatment, pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum care, and for children under 18 years of age.<sup>5</sup> Despite provisions for exceptions in cases of emergency, it is rarely possible in practice to ensure that all women who are survivors of sexual violence, who attempt to seek treatment at a medical facility, will be deemed to require “emergency treatment”. There are numerous health concerns that must be addressed for women survivors of sexual violence, including “treatment and follow-up, access to test results for STDs and other sexually-transmitted diseases such as HIV, access to treatment of pre-existing conditions that are exacerbated by rape or access to treatment of depression exacerbated by sexual assault.”<sup>6</sup>

In addition to scarce service provisions for women survivors of sexual violence, financial resources allocated to combating gender-based violence in Spain have been cut. The budget for eliminating gender-based violence for 2014 stands at EUR 21,854,420, which is 1.45% less than in 2013 and 28% less than in 2011. No national action plan exists that encompasses a comprehensive response to sexual violence in Spain.<sup>7</sup>

### WOMEN’S HELPLINE<sup>8</sup>

There is one national women’s helpline in Spain. The phone number is (016). The helpline operates 24/7, is free of charge and provides information to women and girls survivors of all forms of violence against women. If further intervention is needed the call is sent to the regional women’s support helpline. In Spain, there are 17 regional women’s helplines. Cooperation between the national women’s helpline and the regional helplines is established in protocols between the regional governments and the National Ministry for Social Affairs, Health and Equality. Women can also directly dial regional helplines. The national women’s helpline provides multilingual support in Spanish, regional languages, and in 51 other languages including Arabic, Chinese, English, and French. The helpline is run and fully funded by the state.

Regional helplines are as follows: Andalucía (900 200 999), Aragón (900 504 405), Cantabria (942 21 42 41), Castilla y León (012), Castilla-La Mancha (900 100 114), Cataluña (900 900 120), Comunidad Valenciana (900 58 08 88), Extremadura (112), Galicia (900 400 273), Illes Balears (112), La Rioja (900 711 010), Madrid (012), Murcia (112), Navarra (848 421 588/012), País Vasco (900 840 111), Principado de Asturias (112), Ciudad de Melilla (952 699 214).

**Based on this information, Spain meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women’s Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>9</sup>
1	Yes	Yes	55,810 calls received

### WOMEN’S SHELTERS

Official data on the availability of the number of women’s shelters is not available for all 19 regions of Spain (only for Madrid, Catalunya, and Canarias), although data on the number of places in women’s shelters is available for 18 regions. In Madrid, there are 18 women’s shelters; in Catalunya, there are 8 women’s shelters; and in Canarias, there are 21 women’s shelters. Without information available about the numbers of all shelters in the remaining regions of Spain, there are at least 47 women’s shelters in Spain.<sup>10</sup>



Information on women's shelter spaces is available for 18 regions (with exception of Cantabria). Additionally, in three of the regions (Madrid, Catalunya and Canarias), rape crisis centers exists separately from women's shelters, and also provide accommodation to women survivors of violence.<sup>11</sup>

It total, there are 3,329 women's shelter places in the 18 regions of Spain, where information on shelter places is available: Andalucía (707 shelter places), Aragón (256), Asturias (169), Canarias (276 places in women's shelters and 2 places at rape crisis centers), Cantabria (information not available), Castilla la Mancha (265), Castilla y León (213), Catalunya (132 places in women's shelters and 30 places in rape crisis centers), Ceuta (15), Extremadura (35), Galicia (100), Islas Baleares (157), La Rioja (26), Madrid (221 places in women's shelters and 19 places in rape crisis centers), Mellila (30), Murcia (150), Navarra (32), País Vasco (277), and Valencia (214).<sup>12</sup>

The shelters serve women survivors of gender-based violence regardless of their legal status. Women's shelters are generally divided into three categories that include intervention centers (emergency accommodation), shelter houses (long-term accommodation) and mentored flats (final step accommodation). Shelters are available in all regions in Spain and accompanying children are accepted in most shelters with most providing trained staff to support children. The shelters are free of charge and women can stay more than six months. The shelters are funded by regional governments, and funding is mandated by law.<sup>13</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 4,593 women's shelter places are needed in Spain. With approximately 1,264 women's shelter places missing (28%),<sup>14</sup> Spain does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



## Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
At least 47	4,593	3,329	1,264	28%	13,797	-

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

Women's centers are available in every region in Spain, though information on specific numbers is not available. Centers are funded by the state.<sup>15</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Spain is available from the prevalence of violence survey titled National Prevalence of Violence against Women Survey<sup>16</sup> published in 2012. The survey is a national violence against women survey. The survey measures physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence by current or former intimate partners. The findings are available in Spanish only. In general, the survey findings indicate that 10.8% of women have experienced violence in their lifetime.

According to information in the EWL EU Barometer on Rape, there is severe underreporting of sexual violence in Spain. Data available on reported crimes against sexual freedom and integrity shows 6,798 crimes reported in 2006 and 6,562 in 2009, with the highest reporting of 7,591 in 2008. Specific data on rape shows only 1,481 cases reported in 2006 and 1,315 in 2009, with the highest number of reported cases (1,579) in 2007.<sup>17</sup>

Recent efforts at NGO level in form of a campaign 'Raped and Deported: Female Victims of Sexual Violence with an Irregular Migrant Status' have been implemented to bring awareness to sexual violence in Spain, calling for broader state action in combating sexual violence against all women, including undocumented migrant women, including the development of a National Action Plan on sexual violence as well as reforms of current legislation, and other measures aimed at combating sexual violence against women and support for victims.<sup>18</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are 27 centers for women and girls survivors of sexual violence.<sup>19</sup> The very first center was opened in Madrid in 1984 by the CAVAS organisation. They all offer access to migrant and undocumented women, though the centers are not evenly regionally distributed. Seven centres support only adult women, while the rest provide help to both women and girls. More than

half of the centres support children of women survivors of sexual violence. Majority of the centres are run by state agencies, with some run by independent women's NGO's. They are all funded by the state.<sup>20</sup> Services for women survivors of sexual violence are day centers only and are only present in some autonomous communities.<sup>21</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Additional helplines in Spain include a support helpline for children and adolescents called ANAR de Ayuda a Niños y Adolescentes. The phone number is (900 20 20 10). The helpline offers assistance free of charge. A helpline for survivors of trafficking also exists that is free of charge and the phone number is (900 10 50 90).<sup>22</sup>

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA, located in Spain.
- <sup>2</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA. (2013). Executive Summary Report: Raped and Deported – Female Victims of Sexual Violence with an Irregular Migrant Status.
- <sup>3</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>4</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA. (2013). Executive Summary Report: Raped and Deported – Female Victims of Sexual Violence with an Irregular Migrant Status.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 253.
- <sup>6</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA. (2013). Raped and Deported: Female Victims of Sexual Violence with an Irregular Migrant Status' [[http://violadasyexpulsadas.org/img/executive\\_summary.pdf](http://violadasyexpulsadas.org/img/executive_summary.pdf)]
- <sup>7</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA and Dirección General de Prevención de Violencia de Género, Juventud, Protección Jurídica y Reforma de Menores. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 253.
- <sup>14</sup> The information is calculated without taking into account shelter places that may be available in the region of Cantabria. The autonomous region of Cantabria has an estimated population of 591,888, according to [<http://www.citypopulation.de/Spain-Cantabria.html>]. Based on the population, the needed/recommended women's shelter places would be approximately 59. As a result of the number of population and the resulting needed/recommended shelter places, it is unlikely that including available women's shelter places in Cantabria would significantly change the percentage of women's shelter spaces missing.
- <sup>15</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 254.
- <sup>16</sup> Ministerio de Sanidad, Servicios Sociales e Igualdad. (2012). Macroencuesta de Violencia de Género 2011 (Survey on Gender Based Violence 2011): Principales Resultados Macroencuesta de Violencia de Género. Delegación del Gobierno para la Violencia de Género y el Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS). [[www.observatorioviolencia.org/upload\\_images/File/DOC1329745747\\_macroencuesta2011\\_principales\\_resultados-1.pdf](http://www.observatorioviolencia.org/upload_images/File/DOC1329745747_macroencuesta2011_principales_resultados-1.pdf)]
- <sup>17</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL). (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg. 68.
- <sup>18</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA. (2014). Raped and Deported: Female Victims of Sexual Violence with an Irregular Migrant Status' [[http://violadasyexpulsadas.org/img/executive\\_summary.pdf](http://violadasyexpulsadas.org/img/executive_summary.pdf)]
- <sup>19</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA and Dirección General de Prevención de Violencia de Género, Juventud, Protección Jurídica y Reforma de Menores. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>20</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 254.
- <sup>21</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>22</sup> Asociación para la Convivencia ASPACIA and Dirección General de Prevención de Violencia de Género, Juventud, Protección Jurídica y Reforma de Menores. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

# SWEDEN

(KINGDOM OF SWEDEN)



**COUNTRY EXPERTS:** Roks – National Organisation for Women’s Shelters and Young Women’s Shelters in Sweden, Swedish Association of Women’s Shelters and Young Women’s Empowerment Centers (SKR)

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 9,298,515

Female population: 4,672,153

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

Member of European Union: 1995

CEDAW ratified: 1980

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There are two national women’s helplines in Sweden. Both helplines are free of charge, and one of them operates on a 24/7 basis. Between 2007 and 2012, both helplines received a total of 100,000 calls, or an average 70 calls per day. Furthermore, there are 161 women’s shelters with at least 631 shelter places available. Currently, 32% of recommended shelter places are missing in Sweden. Over the year 2012, 2,287 women and 1,961 children were accommodated in the shelters (members of the organizations Roks and SKR); 4,089 women and children could not be accommodated over the same period, due to lack of available space. Overall, Sweden meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women’s helpline, but does not meet the recommendations on provision of women’s shelters. Additionally, there are numerous women’s centers available in Sweden, however, no information is available on their numbers. There are at least eight women’s centers for survivors of sexual violence.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

Based on the Social Services Act, local authorities are responsible for providing for support services, including shelters, for women and children (as well as the small percentage of men) subject to domestic violence. Local authorities are therefore required to provide for both state-run shelters and shelters run by NGOs. In Sweden, majority of women’s shelters are run by NGOs. Most of them are members of the organizations SKR (Swedish Association of Women’s Shelters and Young Women’s Empowerment Centers) or Roks (The National Organization for Women’s Shelters and Young Women’s Shelters in Sweden).<sup>1</sup>

An important issue related to lack of shelter places available for women survivors of violence and their children is the general shortage of housing in Sweden, which is particularly salient in larger cities. This often leads to women and their children having to remain in the shelters, due to lack of rental flat opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

## WOMEN’S HELPLINE<sup>3 4</sup>

There are two national women’s helplines in Sweden. The first helpline is called Kvinnofridslinjen and the phone number is (020 50 50 50). The helpline, run by the state, is free of charge and operates 24/7. The helpline assists women survivors of all forms of violence. Multilingual support is provided, as well as text messaging support for people with hearing impairment.

Run by an independent women’s NGO, the second helpline is called Terraferm and the phone number is (020 52 1010). It does not operate 24/7 but is free of charge. The helpline operates from 8:00-17:00, and assists women survivors of domestic violence, using both a gender and an ethnicity perspective. It is the only helpline for migrant women of all ages in Sweden, and it offers support in 43 different languages. The helpline receives some level of funding from the state.

**Based on this information, Sweden meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



National Women's Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (2007 to 2012) <sup>5</sup>
2	Yes (2)	Yes (1)	100,000 calls received; on average, 70 calls received per day

### ▶ WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>6</sup>

There are 161 women's shelters in Sweden with at least 631 shelter places<sup>7</sup> available. The first shelter was opened in 1978. Ten of the shelters are run by local municipalities and by religious organizations, and others by independent women's NGOs, members of Roks – The National Organization for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden (631 shelter places), and the Swedish Association of Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centers (SKR). The shelters accept children of the survivors with some shelters having an age limit for boys. There is no maximum period of stay in the shelters. The majority of the shelters are predominantly funded by the state (75%), which involves temporary funding from local municipalities, and through volunteer work (25%).

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 930 women's shelter places are needed in Sweden. With approximately 299 women's shelter places missing (32%), Sweden does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women's Shelters						
Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2012) <sup>8</sup>
161	930	At least 631	299	32%	14,736	2,287 women and 1,961 children were accommodated; 4,089 women and children could not be accommodated due to lack of available space

### ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS<sup>9</sup>

There are numerous women's centers in Sweden. However, there is no information available on how many centers in total exist in the country.

### ▶ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN<sup>10</sup>

In 2012, the Swedish police reported 16,688 sexual offenses (compared to 17,077 in 2011), which included sexual assaults, sexual coercion and rapes.

Based on the 2012 National Security Survey, approximately 15,000 young women (3.4%) and 2,000 young men aged 16-24 years were victims of sexual offenses over the year. The 2013 edition of the National Security Survey further shows that there are about 100 cases of rape every day in Sweden, with only a small percentage of them being reported to the police.

In 2012, 6,203 cases of rape or aggravated rape were reported to the police (against 6,510 cases reported in 2011). The majority of cases (about 95%) reported were cases of rape, but statistics also include the number of reported cases of attempted rape. Statistics also show that 98% of suspected rapists were men. In about a third of cases (1,994), the victim was under 15, and in almost 9 in 10 of those cases the victims were girls. For that same year, 807 cases of rape of children (age 15-17) were reported to the police. In 96% of the cases, the victim was a girl. A large majority (96%) of the adult victims of reported rapes were women, and 86% of cases of rape reported by women took place indoors. Comparatively, there were 133 cases of rape reported by men, 80% of which taking place indoors.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of reported cases of rape. This is largely due to a change in legislation, coming into force on April 1st, 2005, whereby certain acts previously considered acts of 'sexual exploitation' were moved to the category of acts of rape. However, and despite increasing reporting rates, it is estimated that as little as 10-20% of all sexual offenses in Sweden are reported to the police.



## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>11 12</sup>

There are at least eight women's centers dedicated officially for survivors of sexual violence in Sweden. One of the centers is run by the state, while the others are run by NGOs. RSCI, the National Society Support Center against Incest, opened the first center in Stockholm in 1981, and the most recent center was opened in Östergötland in 2008. Among SKR's members, there are five centers specialized for survivors of sexual violence. Furthermore, additional centers may also exist that fall under this category. These include the support Center Humlegården, created in 2008, and HOPE National Organization against sexual abuse which was established in 1998 and is a non-partisan, non-religious organization. HOPE works primarily to prevent sexual abuse and to improve rehabilitation and care required for those who have suffered sexual abuse. It has local support centers in six cities in Sweden. Additionally, one support center offers assistance in Arabic, Kurdish and Persian.

It is important to note that most support services, including crisis centers, women's shelters, and young women's empowerment centers, also provide support to survivors of sexual violence, since sexual violence is often part of the violence experienced by women.

## ▶ ADDITIONAL SERVICES

The helpline Kvinnofridslinjen also runs a website, important addition to the services offered by the national women's helpline. The website supports primarily women survivors of violence and their family, but also assistance for professionals working in the field. Overall, the website received more than 279,000 visits over the year 2012.<sup>13</sup>

Added to the two national women's helplines, most of the crisis centers and women's shelters in Sweden run helplines and online chats that women all over Sweden can access. In total, there would be more 100 helplines run by crisis centers and women's shelters.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the 72 women's shelters and five centers for survivors of sexual violence, SKR also runs 30 Young Women's Empowerment Centers (tjejjour) and nine Empowerment Centers for adolescents (both girls and boys),<sup>15</sup> while Roks also runs 35 young women's shelters.<sup>16</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Swedish Association of Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centers (SKR). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 260.
- <sup>4</sup> Roks – National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 260.
- <sup>7</sup> Roks – National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The number 631 refers to the estimated number of shelter beds available at Roks'shelters in 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> Roks – National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: the Data refers to the activity of Roks and SKR shelters. In 2012, Roks accommodated an estimated 1,185 women and 1,027 children, and could not accommodate about 1,738 women. For the same period, SKR accommodated 1,102 women and 934 children, and could not accommodate 1,748 women and 603 children.
- <sup>9</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 260.
- <sup>10</sup> The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention – See: [[www.bra.se/bra/brott--statistik/statistik/den-nationella-trygghetsundersokningen.html](http://www.bra.se/bra/brott--statistik/statistik/den-nationella-trygghetsundersokningen.html) ]
- <sup>11</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 261.
- <sup>12</sup> Swedish Association of Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centers (SKR). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>13</sup> Roks – National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>14</sup> Swedish Association of Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centers (SKR). (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Roks – National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

# SWITZERLAND

(SWISS CONFEDERATION)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: Vivre Sans Violence, Dachorganisation der Frauenhäuser der Schweiz und Liechtenstein

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 7,743,832

Female population: 3,935,211

Member of Council of Europe: 1963

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1997

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2008

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 September 2013

ratified: n/a

## SUMMARY

In Switzerland, there is no national women's helpline for women survivors of violence. Furthermore, there are 18 women's shelters with 247 shelter places available in the country. Between 2005 and 2013, 1,040 women and 983 children were accommodated in the shelters. 20% of women could not be accommodated in shelters in both Switzerland and Lichtenstein. Currently, 68% of the recommended shelter places are still missing. Overall, Switzerland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations on provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelters. Additionally, there are 20 women's centers in Switzerland and six women's centers for survivors of sexual violence.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE<sup>1</sup>

There is no national women's helpline in Switzerland.

**Based on this information, Switzerland does not meet Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS<sup>2</sup>

There are 18 women's shelters in Switzerland, all of which are run by independent women's NGOs. Approximately 247 shelter places are available. The first shelter was opened in 1979. One shelter in Violetta, Zürich specializes in providing services to migrant women survivors of violence. All of the shelters accept children of the survivors with an age limit for boys of 14-15 years. Women may stay between one to six months in the various shelters. Often, the survivors find it challenging to find permanent accommodation, in order to leave the shelter. This applies especially in Bern, Zürich and Geneva. Information about funding of the shelters is not available.

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 247 women's shelter places are needed in Switzerland. With approximately 527 women's shelter places missing (68%), Switzerland does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (2005-2013) <sup>3</sup>
18	774	247	527	68%	31,352	1,040 women and 983 children were accommodated; 20% of women could not be accommodated <sup>4</sup>



## WOMEN'S CENTERS

In Switzerland, there are 20 women's centers for survivors of violence. Among them, 17 specialize in assisting women survivors of domestic violence. Additionally, one of the centers supports women survivors of trafficking.<sup>5</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on prevalence of sexual violence in Switzerland is available from the prevalence of violence study titled Violence Experienced by Women in Switzerland over their Lifespan,<sup>6</sup> published in 2004. It is based on the International Violence against Women Survey (IVAWS) model. Some findings are available from the UN Secretary-General's Database on Violence against Women; however, the survey is not publically available and can be purchased online.<sup>7</sup>

The study likely defines 'sexual violence' as the following acts: forced into sexual intercourse, attempt to be forced into sexual intercourse, touched against one's will, forced into sexual activity with someone else and other sexual violence.<sup>8</sup> The respondents were female and were asked about their experience of male violence. Overall, findings show that 39% of women have experienced an act of physical or sexual violence from any men in their adult life, and 5.6% of women have been the victim of rape at least once in their adult life.<sup>9</sup> Within intimate partner relationships, 3% of women have been victims of sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.<sup>10</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>11</sup>

There are six women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Switzerland. The Helpline for Rape opened the first center in Zürich in 1981. Two of the centers are run by hospitals and two by independent women's NGOs. No information is available for the remaining two centers. One of the centers specializes in assisting children survivors of sexual violence. Two of the hospital-run centers are fully funded by the state. The two NGO-run centers are predominantly funded by the state (86%) and by private donations (14%).

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

While there is no national women's helpline in Switzerland, the website 'www.violencequefaire.ch' offers personalized support to women survivors of violence.<sup>12</sup>

Additionally, support helplines are run by Opferhilfe-Beratungsstellen (counseling centers) and by women's shelters. The helplines do not run on a 24/7 basis. TEL 143 – Dargebotene Hand is another helpline providing support to people seeking help, including women survivors of violence.<sup>13</sup>

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 265.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Dachorganisation der Frauenhäuser der Schweiz und Liechtenstein. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid: The data refers to the percentage of women who could not be accommodated in shelters in both Switzerland and Lichtenstein. Among the 20% of women who could not be accommodated in the shelters, 50% could not be accommodated due to the following factors: security, health, place of residence and available space.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 266.
- <sup>6</sup> Killias, Martin et al. (2004). Violence Experienced by Women in Switzerland over their Lifespan. [Stämpfli]. Bern.
- <sup>7</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 262.
- <sup>8</sup> Nevala, Sami. (11-14 April 2005). International Violence against Women Survey (IVAWS). [Expert Paper prepared for the UN Division for the Advancement of Women. Violence against Women: A Statistical Overview, Challenges and Gaps in Data Collection and Methodology and Approaches for Overcoming Them]. Pg. 2, 6.
- <sup>9</sup> UN Secretary-General's Database on Violence against Women. (2009).
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 262.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid. Pg. 266.
- <sup>12</sup> Vivre Sans Violence. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>13</sup> Dachorganisation der Frauenhäuser der Schweiz und Liechtenstein. (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.

# TURKEY

(REPUBLIC OF TURKEY)



COUNTRY EXPERTS: S.Nazik Işık, Zehra Tosun, Hülya Gülbahar  
(Kadın Dayanışma Vakfı); Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 76,667,864<sup>1</sup>

Female population: 38,194,504<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

Member of European Union: No

CEDAW ratified: 1985

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2002

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 11 May 2011

ratified: 14 March 2012

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Turkey operating 24/7 and free of charge. From the period of 15 October 2007 to 31 December 2012, the helpline received 33,669 calls. Furthermore, there are a total of 123 women's shelters in the country with approximately 2,190 shelter places available. Turkey meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendation for the provision of a national women's helpline, but with 71% of recommended women's shelters missing, does not yet meet the recommendations for women's shelter provision. Additionally, there are 36 women's centers in Turkey as well as a number of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors. Lastly, there are no centers for women survivors of sexual violence in the country.



## SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*I am 51 years old and I have a 30 year old son.* I was abused by my husband. He abused me physically, sexually, psychologically, economically, verbally and emotionally. He was violent from the first day on, accusing me of cheating on him and locking me at home. Meanwhile, he was smoking hashish, drinking alcohol, gambling and had a lot of affairs with other women.

The abuse lasted for 30 years. I come from a small village. I married when I was 18 years old. It was not a forced marriage, but my mother-in-law is, at the same time, my aunt. Before I married, I was working in a textile company in a bigger city, but when I decided to marry I moved back to my hometown, where I lived together with my then husband and my parents-in-law. I finished primary school, my ex-husband secondary school. Many years ago, he was working as a taxi driver, but after he left the business, he never worked again. His family never intervened because they were afraid of him.

I was very afraid that my husband would find me everywhere. I was afraid that he could threaten my family and harm them. As he had already been in jail several times, he was not afraid of being convicted.

Before I came to the shelter, I had moved to my brother and stayed with him nearly for a year. Meanwhile, my husband threatened me and my family.

My parents-in-law were very supportive, but they were also afraid of their son. While he was in prison several times because of knife fights, my mother-in law helped me financially. My mother tried to persuade me to separate from my husband, but I was afraid of losing my son, so I kept staying with him. Sometimes I could not stand it anymore and ran away, but I always came back

because of my son. Now my parents-in-law are old and they cannot support me anymore, but they supported me a lot and without them, I would not have stayed in the marriage for such a long time. Sometimes they used to tell me to run away and to save my life, but I did not want to leave my son there. If I would have had information about the shelter, I would have come earlier.

Some years ago my husband had beaten me so badly that my mother-in-law had called the police, who took me to the hospital. I got a medical report and criminal proceedings started. In the end of the criminal proceedings the court sentenced him to a custodial sentence, but then instead, imposed only a fine. I got a restraining order, which had expired before I came to the shelter.

Now, I found a job as a baby-sitter. The mother of the baby is a lawyer who had initiated the divorce proceedings. After I called my husband to inform him about my decision, he insulted and offended me but I did not care anymore. I will not go back to him.

When I stayed at the shelter, for the first time in my life, I was feeling free and could relax. I hope my attitude will motivate other women from my hometown as well. This is why I made my story public, I am feeling strong now and I am not afraid like in the beginning. I know what I'm doing and I want to give a message to other women. I also began to participate in feminist demonstrations, and I started classes in Pilates and self-defense.

One day, my husband will learn in which city I am and he will try to find me. One day, I will have to meet him, I have to prepare myself.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

The Hürriyet Emergency Domestic Violence Hotline is a national women's helpline and is run by the newspaper Hürriyet which had founded the helpline after having initiated a campaign against domestic violence in 2004.<sup>4</sup> The phone number is (0212 656 9696). The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge, but does not offer multilingual support. Assistance is provided for women survivors of all forms of violence. The helpline is fully funded by private donations.<sup>5</sup> Between 15 October 2007 and 31 December 2012, this helpline received 33,669 calls, which included 15,824 persons asking for general information, and 11,420 family members of survivors of violence seeking information, among others.<sup>6</sup>

**Based on this information, Turkey meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (15 Oct. 2007 – 31 Dec. 2012)
1	Yes	Yes	33,669 calls received

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 123 women's shelters in Turkey. Ninety of these shelters belong to the state, 32 to different municipalities, and one shelter is run by the Women's NGO Mor Çatı.<sup>7</sup> The shelters offer 2,190 beds.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the shelters, there are also 19 first receiving units/refuge stations in which the women and their children are placed if there is no place available in the shelters.<sup>9</sup>

The shelters accept children of the survivors (with all having age limits for boys), but the shelter run by the NGO Mor Çatı is the only one in the whole country that accepts young boys until the age of 18 years.<sup>10</sup> The state run shelters allow for a four to six month stay, while the NGO run shelters accommodate women for more than 12 months if necessary. The shelters are predominantly funded by the state (72.5%), the municipalities (26.7%), volunteer work and private donations (0.8%).<sup>11</sup>

According to information provided by Focal Point Mor Çatı, the shelters run by the state do not work with feminist principles and have very strict rules. For example, women's cellphones are confiscated, women cannot get out of the shelter without permission and there is armed security in and outside of the shelters.<sup>12</sup>

**Based on the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 7,190 women's shelter places are needed in Turkey. With approximately 5,477 women's shelter places missing (71%), Turkey does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
123	7,667	2,190	5,477	71%	35,008	-

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are an estimated 36 women's centers for women survivors of violence in Turkey. There is also a number of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers. The majority of the centers are specialized to provide support to women survivors of domestic violence. Two centers provide specialized support to women survivors of trafficking, one to migrant, minority ethnic and asylum seeking women, and one provides specialized support to girls under the age of 18. The centers are predominantly funded by the state (60%), private donations (32%), volunteer work (4%) and foreign donations (3-4%).<sup>13</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to information provided in the European Women's Lobby Barometer on Rape, there is no official data on rape victims in Turkey. However, an independent media institution called Bianet (bianet.org) is, since 2009, produces data and publishes quantitative information on violence against women by gathering information from the news from local and national newspapers, websites and agencies.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, according to (unofficial) data produced by Bianet in January 2013, there were 150 rapes of women by men in 2012. The majority (61%) of the victims were raped by acquaintances (including husbands, partners, relatives, colleagues, friends, neighbours) and 39% were raped by unknown men. These unofficial data also indicate that 63 women were raped at home, 37 women in the street, 29 at places where they were detained, 6 women were raped at their work place, 7 women in hotels, bars and restaurants. The data also show that 8 women were forced into prostitution.<sup>15</sup>

Information on the prevalence of sexual violence in Turkey is available from the prevalence of violence survey titled National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, published in 2009.<sup>16</sup> The survey is a national domestic violence against women survey. A project page of the survey is available in English, along with findings of the study, summary findings, and press release also available in English.<sup>17</sup>

Information was collected from 12,795 women. Sexual violence by husband or partner was defined as being forced into sexual intercourse, being forced into sexual intercourse due to the victim being scared of the husband, or being forced into a degrading or humiliating sexual act. Sexual violence by non-partners was defined as being forced into sexual intercourse or forced into the performance of a sexual act found humiliating or degrading for the woman by anyone other than husband or partner since the age of 15 years. Finally, childhood sexual abuse was described as a girl being forced into an unwanted sexual act or exposed to sexually disturbing touching before the age of 15.

Fifteen percent of ever-married women reported acts of sexual violence. A regional comparison of the reported acts indicates differences. In West Marmara 9% of women reported sexual violence, in the Northeast Anatolia region, 29% of women experienced sexual violence. For the remaining of the regions the percentages vary between 11% and 23%.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the most commonly mentioned acts of sexual violence include women experiencing sexual intercourse against their will, with the fear of consequences by their husband, if they did not. In rural areas, 18% of ever-married women experienced sexual violence. The prevalence rate is slightly lower in urban areas (14%). Reports of sexual violence by age group are as follows: 35% of 15-24 year old women disclosed sexual violence by husband or partner. The percentages increase with age reaching 48% for women in age group 45-59 years old. In addition, the survey findings show that women with high school level or university education are less likely to experience physical and/or sexual violence.<sup>19</sup>

Three percent of women disclosed having experienced sexual violence by perpetrators other than their intimate partners since the age 15 (4% in urban areas and 2% in rural areas). Fifty percent of the women who experienced sexual violence by perpetrators other than their intimate partner disclosed that the violence was perpetrated by strangers.<sup>20</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no women's centers for survivors of sexual violence in Turkey.<sup>21</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

The helpline 'Social Service Counseling Line for Family, Women, Children and the Disabled' ('ALO 183') was established in 2007 and is run by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. The phone number is (183). The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. Assistance is provided for women survivors of all forms of violence, but it is not a specific helpline for women but also includes children, disabled, relatives of martyrs and veterans. Multilingual support is not provided. The helpline is fully funded by the State.<sup>22</sup> From July 2012 to September 2012, the helpline received 3,300 calls regarding information on shelter provision/accessing shelters.<sup>23</sup>

Mor Çatı points out that the organization often receives direct feedback from women who visit the Mor Çatı solidarity center and shelter, stating that they are not satisfied with the support received from the helpline because the staff does not work from a feminist perspective.<sup>24</sup>

Following government adoption of a new law on the protection of family and the prevention of violence against women (AİLENİN KORUNMASI VE KADINA KARŞI ŞİDDETİN ÖNLENMESİNE DAİR KANUN – Law Nr. 6284) on 8 March 2012 and the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, the government opened centers for prevention and observation of violence (ŞÖNİM) as pilot projects in 14 different cities. One of their tasks is to collect statistics, but independent women's organizations have expressed concern that the data collection includes the names of the women seeking support, which may actually contradict the purpose of providing support, when women feel stigmatized and will not return to the centers for further support. The centers work to support the women and their children, as well as the perpetrators. Independent women's organizations have also expressed concerns that these centers may eventually replace the feminist women consultation and solidarity centers, causing a loss of experience and expertise gained from years of work in the field of violence against women.<sup>25</sup>

The aim of the centers is in principle to have all services in the same place: police, psychologists, lawyers, social workers, persons from the job center, and women's NGOs. The centers should in theory operate 24/7; however, this does not happen in practice due to shortage of staff. Another problem is that ŞÖNİM are generally located in remote areas, which makes it difficult for women to access them. Furthermore, ŞÖNİM have the authority to decide whether a woman can be placed in a shelter and decide on the length of the woman's stay. ŞÖNİM's decision making authority is on equal level to that of municipalities. As a result, 19 feminist women's organizations have chosen not to cooperate with ŞÖNİM, as the approach lacks a perspective of empowerment for women survivors of violence. Despite the existence of ŞÖNİM, the implementation of Law Nr. 6284 is still insufficient: women continue to lack access to all the measures available under the law. Women's NGOs would welcome to reinstall a Ministry for Women and Equality (at the moment, there is only a Ministry for Family and Social Policies), in order to achieve a more women's centered approach towards service provision.<sup>26</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Information provided by WAVE Focal Point Kadın Dayanışma Vakfı (February 2014). See the webpage of the Turkish Statistical Institute: [<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/Start.do>]
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı, located in Turkey.
- <sup>4</sup> Information provided by WAVE Focal Point Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı (February 2014).
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı (2013). Data provided in the WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire. See also: [<http://aileicisiddeteson.com/aile-ici-siddetesonistatistikleri>]
- <sup>7</sup> Information provided by WAVE Focal Point Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı, February 2014.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid. See also the homepage of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies: [<http://www.kadininstatusu.gov.tr/html/19175/Kadin+Konukevleri>]
- <sup>9</sup> Information provided by WAVE Focal Point Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı, February 2014.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 271.
- <sup>14</sup> European Women's Lobby (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg.72.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey. (2009). [ICON Institute Public Sector Gmbh, Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies and BNB Consulting Ltd Co]. Ankara.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. Pg. 9.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. Pg. 11
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid. 15
- <sup>21</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 271.
- <sup>22</sup> Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid. See also: [[www.kadininstatusu.gov.tr/upload/kadininstatusu.gov.tr/mce/alo\\_183.pdf](http://www.kadininstatusu.gov.tr/upload/kadininstatusu.gov.tr/mce/alo_183.pdf)]
- <sup>24</sup> Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> Information provided by WAVE Focal Point Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı, February 2014.

# UKRAINE



## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: 45,963,359  
 Female population: 24,778,427  
 Member of Council of Europe: 1995  
 Member of European Union: No  
 CEDAW ratified: 1981  
 CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 2003  
 CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:  
 signed: 7 November 2011  
 ratified: No

## SUMMARY

There is one national women's helpline in Ukraine. The helpline is free of charge but does not operate 24/7. There are three women's shelters with approximately 100 shelter places available. Currently, 98% of recommended shelter places are missing in Ukraine. As a result, Ukraine does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for women's helpline and women's shelter provision.

## SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Ukraine. The name is the Domestic Violence Counteraction and Child Rights Protection helpline. The helpline was established in 1997 by the International Women's Rights Center La Strada Ukraine, an independent women's NGO. The phone number of the helpline is (0800 500 335 and 386). The helpline does not operate 24/7, but is free of charge. Hours of operation are Monday to Saturday, 9:00 – 20:00, and Sunday from 10:00 – 18:00. The helpline provides support for women survivors of domestic violence and survivors of sexual violence. Assistance is offered in English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Ukrainian.<sup>1</sup>

**Based on this information, Ukraine does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics
1	Yes	No	-

### WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are three women's shelters in Ukraine with approximately 100 shelter places available. Women survivors of domestic violence are accommodated in the shelters with preference given to women in a difficult financial situation. Children of the survivors can also be accommodated in the shelters. There is no information available on the allowed period of stay. The shelters do not have guaranteed permanent financial support from the state.<sup>2</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 4,596 women's shelter places are needed in Ukraine. With approximately 4,496 women's shelter places missing (98%), Ukraine does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
3	4,596	100	4,496	98%	459,634	-



## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There is no information available on the number of women's centers in Ukraine.<sup>3</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to the Rape Barometer 2013 published by the European Women's Lobby,<sup>4</sup> the data on rape cases consists of statistics from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Court Administration of Ukraine, which are both not disaggregated by gender.<sup>5</sup> According to the Rape Barometer 2013, the law enforcement agencies have received more than 7,000 complaints of rape in 2009-2011, but only 2,071 criminal cases have been opened. Between January and September 2012, 1,584 such reports have been registered by the law enforcement agencies. From these reports, 440 criminal cases have been opened for rape. The Rape Barometer further states that in 993 cases, the police refused to initiate criminal proceedings and 363 cases have been referred to the court by police after an investigation was completed.<sup>6</sup>

The Rape Barometer refers to data of the State Court Administration of Ukraine, according to which, as of the beginning of 2012, 263 rape cases were in the courts, and in the following six months, 214 cases have been added; for 242 cases there were court hearings, which resulted in 207 convictions (250 persons convicted).<sup>7</sup> It is estimated that a very large number of rapes have not been reported, the reason of which is in the fear of the women to seek protection and the lack of trust in the protective potential of the existing legal system.<sup>8</sup> Also, a prevalent belief that victims are guilty for having been raped<sup>9</sup> might also be a reason for the high number of unreported rape cases.

Information on the prevalence of sexual violence in Ukraine is also available from two different prevalence of violence surveys. The first is titled *Prevalence of Violence in Ukrainian Families* and was published in 2010. It studies domestic violence against women and men. The survey findings are available in Ukrainian. The second study is titled *Ukraine Demographic and Health Survey 2007*. The study includes a chapter on prevalence of domestic violence against women. The survey is available in English.<sup>10</sup>

In the 2010 survey, sexual violence in the family is defined as the "illegal encroachment of one family member, sexual integrity of a family member, as well as experienced sexual acts against a minor family member"<sup>11</sup>. From the information presented, it is evident that the data collected about the victim and perpetrator was disaggregated by gender, age and relationship. The types of relationships addressed included those, where the perpetrator was a husband (for women victims only), wife (for men victims only), father, mother, other male family member, other female family member, son, brother. In terms of victim's relationship to the perpetrator, it is not specified what percentage of women experienced violence by their husband for example, only that a husband is the perpetrator in percentage of violent acts committed. Additionally, whole rates for each form of violence are not given in a gender disaggregated fashion. The time periods studied for victims' experiences of violence are since adulthood (18 years or older), current experience (during 2009) and childhood (18 years or younger). Rates of prevalence were provided for childhood and adulthood experiences of violence. The forms of violence measured were psychological, physical, economic and sexual. Although the study results show that rates of violence are high for both women and men, it should be noted, that for most forms of domestic violence, women experience violence from an intimate partner, while men experience violence from "other", often male family members. One percent of women and men experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.<sup>12</sup>

The survey from 2007<sup>13</sup> states that overall, 5% of women experienced sexual violence at some point in their life, and that younger women aged 15-19 are less likely to report having ever experienced sexual violence (less than 1%) compared with older women (5-7%). The survey suggests that women in urban areas (6%) and those in the Northern region (7%) are more likely than rural women or those in other regions to report sexual violence. Education level does not appear correlated with experience of sexual violence: according to the survey, 7% of women with secondary or less education reported sexual violence, compared with 5% for women with higher education. Overall, the data of the survey suggests that former husbands or partners are usually the main perpetrators of violence. Thirty-five percent of women have stated that a former husband or partner was the perpetrator. Moreover, about 16% of the women named a current husband or partner as the perpetrator of sexual violence. Ten percent identified a friend or acquaintance as the person committing the sexual violence.<sup>14</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Some NGOs, on a project basis, may provide women's centers for survivors of sexual violence, however, there are no centers for survivors of sexual violence that operate continuously and are solely dedicated to and specialized in this type of service in Ukraine.<sup>15</sup>

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

In addition to the national women's helpline, there is a national hotline on combating domestic violence, trafficking in human beings and gender discrimination. The hotline is free of charge and the number is (0800 500 335) for landline calls and (386) for calls received from mobile phones.<sup>16</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 277.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> European Women's Lobby. (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. [Access 28.01. 2014 <http://www.womenlobby.org/publications/rapports/article/2013-ewl-barometer-on-rape-report?lang=en>].
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pg.77.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg.274.
- <sup>11</sup> United Nations Development Program – European Union. (15 January 2010). Розповсюдженість насильства в українських сім'ях дослідження на замовлення "Програми рівних можливостей та прав жінок в Україні" (ПРООН-ЄС). Pg. 12.
- <sup>12</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 274-275.
- <sup>13</sup> Ukraine Demographic and Health Survey 2007. (September 2008). [Ukrainian Center for Social Reforms, State Statistical Committee, Ministry of Health, Macro International Inc.].
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. Pg. 169.
- <sup>15</sup> Women against Violence Europe. (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. Pg. 277.
- <sup>16</sup> European Women's Lobby. (2013). EWL Barometer on Rape in the EU 2013. Pg.77.

# UNITED KINGDOM



**COUNTRY EXPERTS:** Women's Aid Federation of England, Welsh Women's Aid, Apna Haq, Haven Wolverhampton

## GENERAL COUNTRY INFORMATION

Population: England: 52,234,000, Northern Ireland: 1,799,392, Scotland: 5,222,100, Wales: 3,006,400<sup>1</sup>

Female population: England: 26,476,400, Northern Ireland: 914,998, Scotland: 2,691,785,

Wales: 1,536,000<sup>2</sup>

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

Member of European Union: 1973

CEDAW ratified: 1986

CEDAW Optional Protocol ratified: 1986

CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women:

signed: 8 June 2012

ratified: No

## SUMMARY

In England, there is a national women's helpline operating 24/7 and free of charge. In the time period of April 2012 – March 2013, the helpline received 161,879 calls. There are 289 services in England provided by 178 providers, with approximately 3,577 shelter places available. In the time period of April 2012 – March 2013, an estimated 15,404 women were accommodated in shelters/refuges across England. Currently, 32% of recommended shelter places are missing in England. Based on the information available, England meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of a national women's helpline, but does not meet the recommendations for women's shelter service provision. Furthermore, there are numerous women's centers, including approximately 300 support services across England for women survivors of violence and their children. There are around 500 Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) and 260 Multiagency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) in England and Wales. Additionally, there are 46 rape crisis centers in England, 30 sexual assault referral centers (SARCs), and a number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA). A national umbrella agency called Survivors Trust (TST) includes over 135 specialist services for survivors of sexual violence in UK and in Ireland.

In Wales, there is a national women's helpline operating 24/7 and free of charge. In the time period of April 2012 – March 2013, the helpline received 29,718 calls. There are 36 refuges, with approximately 227 shelter places available. Currently, 25% of recommended shelter places are missing in Wales. Based on the information available, Wales meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of a national women's helpline, but does not meet the recommendations for women's shelter service provision. Furthermore, there are a number of women's centers in Wales. Additionally, there are seven centers for women survivors of sexual violence, and a number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA).

In Northern Ireland, there is a national women's helpline operating 24/7 and free of charge. In the time period of April 2012 – March 2013, the helpline managed 47,597 calls. There are 13 women's shelters, with approximately 390 shelter places available. In the time period of April 2012 – March 2013, 880 women and 546 children women were accommodated in shelters/refuges across Northern Ireland. In that same time period, there were 424 women, who were not able to receive accommodation due to lack of space. Currently, more than the minimum recommended number of shelter places are available in Northern Ireland. Based on the information available, Northern Ireland meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of a national women's helpline and women's shelter service provision. Furthermore, there are numerous women's centers in Northern Ireland, but there are no gender specific services for women survivors of sexual violence.

In Scotland, there is a national women's helpline operating 24/7 and free of charge. There are 45 women's shelters in Scotland, with approximately 509 shelter places available. Currently, 2.5% of recommended shelter places are missing in Scotland. Based on the information available, Scotland meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations for the provision of a national women's helpline, and nearly meets the recommendations for women's shelter service provision. Furthermore, there are a number of women's centers in Scotland. Additionally, there are 13 rape crisis centers in Scotland, four sexual violence services, and one sexual assault referral center.



### SURVIVOR STORY<sup>3</sup>

*I am 27 years old and I have a one year old son.* I have been physically, emotionally and economically abused by my husband. He would swear at me, threaten to take my son away from me, and take money off me. He did not allow me to wear makeup, to have nice clothes, he did all the shopping and got me very little to eat. Also, he was kicking and slapping me, burning me with cigarettes, all resulting in scars. The abuse lasted a year.

What made my situation especially difficult was the fact that I had been in the UK for five months. I came from the Czech Republic and I have no family here; I was completely isolated as my husband did not allow me to make friends. Also, as I was not working, I was not entitled to any benefits or housing in my own right.

I reached out for help through REMA, a local voluntary organisation that runs a Roma drop in session. One day when they came around to my house, they heard my husband shouting and swearing at me. I shared how my husband was treating me. They said there was a women's organization for women like me that would be able to support me. Three days later when my husband beat me up to the degree that I was unconscious on the floor, I decided the next morning that I had to leave. I was too scared about what he would carry on doing to me, if I did not leave. I went to the Roma drop in and they took me to a women's organization.

I arrived at the women's organization at 11 in the morning. They got me some nappies for the child and food, and then they rang the social services to say that my son and I needed support. Social services staff came out at five o'clock and they took me to a bed and breakfast. I was only able to communicate with them through the Roma drop in workers, who stayed with me to make sure that I was okay. The women's organization provided me with food and toiletries while the Roma drop in workers brought me some food and clothing.

The social services kept me in the bed and breakfast for four days and told me that I had two choices: either they could accommodate my child but have no responsibility for me (take my child off me), or that I could "voluntarily" return home together with my son. The social services could not be responsible for me, as I had not earned any social benefits during my short stay in the UK. I took the second option, and thus was put on an 18 hour coach journey to return to the Czech Republic. The women's organization provided me with food for the journey and some money for when I got there. After arriving in the Czech Republic, I did not feel safe in going to my parents' home town, as my husband would have been able to find me easily and inflict further abuse, which he had threatened to do. So I remained in another big city. I sought accommodation in a refuge but was turned down. The Czech authorities classed me as having no residency rights as I had been out of the country for more than three months, thus I was not entitled to any support. My son was taken into care for three weeks, since I was homeless.

My health has suffered greatly, initially from the abuse I have suffered, I have scarring on my body from the cigarette burns my husband inflicted on me as a permanent reminder of the physical violence I was subjected to, I am extremely thin, my mental health has suffered greatly, initially from the domestic abuse and then from the way that I have been treated by the authorities in the UK as well as in the Czech Republic. By being sent back from the UK and having my son taken away from me in the Czech Republic due to being homeless, I have been given the feeling that I am a worthless human being that has no right to family life. I am very fearful of how my life is going to proceed but I have my son to look forward to.

Currently, I have a small room to live in, and I have got my son back. Given the level of racism that I face on a daily basis here in the Czech Republic, I want to be in a position where I can exercise my right as a European Union Citizen to go and live in the UK. However, unfortunately, this is not possible at the moment, as I do not have the money.

### SURVIVOR STORY<sup>4</sup>

*I am a 48 year old Indian born woman* and have been married to my husband for 22 years. We have two grown up sons in their twenties. We emigrated from Holland to England six years ago to improve our prospects and for the boys to get a good education.

Since moving, my husband became more and more aggressive in the way he would address me. He also increasingly became financially abusive whereby he controlled all the finances and calculated what I was allowed to spend on groceries and household items. He didn't understand how him controlling the finances was making me feel extremely undermined and he refused to change his stance.

One evening, he accused me of having an affair with another man. He began to shout at me, threatening to beat me if I did not admit to having an affair. The argument escalated with my husband pushing me against the wall and repeatedly slapping me across the face. He hit me in the head with a hammer. I fell to the floor, surrounded in a pool of blood. He kicked me in the head, shouting about the alleged affair. After a while I managed to open the front door and crawled out and shouted for help. A neighbour saw me crying and bleeding in the street and rang the emergency services. An ambulance took me to hospital and the police took my husband. The injuries to the head were severe and required numerous stitches. I suffered bruising to the face, upper body and legs and a broken tooth. The Public Protection Unit at Wolverhampton Police Station referred me to the Haven and I was allocated a support worker from the Community Advocacy Team. I was considered as a high risk victim following a CAADA DASH risk assessment and the case was heard at MARAC.

My support worker informed me that the police were investigating the assault and statements had been provided by witnesses and the police required a statement from me. I was exceptionally nervous as I did not know what the repercussions would be if I gave evidence against him and if I was going to be believed. Another concern was the language barrier. With English not being my first language I knew I would have some difficulties in explaining what took place. My support worker arranged for the interviewing officer to be a Punjabi speaker. My husband was charged with attempted murder and I was informed by the Detective Sergeant that they had decided to keep him in custody, until the court date had been set to protect me from any further offences being committed. He remained in custody for a considerable length of time (approximately 10-12 weeks).

My support worker explained the criminal justice process and told me that if I felt uncomfortable having to face my husband then special measures can be put in place. Special measures are designed to help vulnerable adults/witnesses who are distressed or frightened about giving evidence - this would be done by Witness Care. I felt much more confident knowing that this option was available to me. I had no idea of what kind of support was available. I was in regular contact with my support worker, which allowed me to build trust. Additionally, a counselling referral was made to better help me manage the trauma I had encountered. The first session began three weeks after the referral was made and I attended the 45 minute session once a week.

Following advice from my support worker to contact my GP I was prescribed medication to help with the migraines, irregular sleep and nightmares and panic attacks following the attack which was preventing me from conducting day-to-day duties. In an appointment with my support worker I was informed that I may be eligible to apply to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority for the injuries I had sustained. I was told that it was a government organisation that can pay compensation to people who have been physically injured because they were the blameless victim of a violent crime. I was happy to apply and with the support of my support worker, I did so by post. Some nine weeks later I was awarded £6,840.

During this time I also received a letter from the CPS explaining that my husband had changed his plea to guilty, and that he would be due in Crown Court in two weeks. I was extremely pleased that he had changed his plea. It meant that I would not have to provide evidence and the judge would sentence him without me having to be present. I was totally relieved to hear this. Eventually, he was sentenced to 52 months in prison – an outcome I was elated about and it was even reported in the local newspaper. Probation wrote to me before he was to be released explaining that he would be on a licence in the community and would be deported to Holland. I was surprised that they had reached this decision but I knew I was going to be much safer if he was not anywhere near me where he could still come after me.

Even after the deportation, his family would call me persuading me to give the marriage another go. If I'm honest, the idea of returning to the marriage did cross my mind; however, even now, 18 months later, the internal trauma of my experience still haunts me on a daily basis. Simply by looking at the scars on my body, I am mentally transported back to the moment in time when I received the original injury. It might take years until I manage to live any sort of normal life, free from abuse and the flashbacks. Fear and abuse kept me there and in turn, fear and abuse stop me from returning.

## ENGLAND

### SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

#### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in England, the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Free phone Helpline (0808 2000 247), set up and run in partnership by two independent women's NGOs: Women's Aid England and Refuge. The helpline operates 24/7, is confidential and free of charge. It provides gender specific support to survivors of domestic violence. Multilingual support is provided by a language service offering over 150 languages and a telephone interpretation service. The helpline provides TypeTalk for callers who are deaf or who have hearing difficulties. The helpline also provides a voicemail service and responds to emails from survivors of abuse and their supporters. The helpline is funded approximately 70% by state funding and also receives support from private donations, charities and trusts.

There are also helplines offering support for other forms of violence. The Rape Crisis Helpline (0808 802 9999) supports women and girls survivors of rape or any form of sexual violence. Broken Rainbow UK (0300 999 5428), for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic violence. The National Stalking Helpline (0808 802 0300), which provides support for survivors of harassment or stalking. The Honour Network Helpline (0800 5999 247) is for survivors of so called “crimes of honour” and forced marriage across the UK. Support for children dealing with violence across the UK is provided by Childline (0800 1111). There is also a helpline for men experiencing violence, The Men’s Advice Line – free phone (0808 801 0327) - for men experiencing domestic violence, run by Respect and a separate helpline for domestic violence perpetrators that covers England, Wales and Scotland and is called the Respect Phoneline (0808 802 4040). All the helplines are run by NGOs, a few are open 24/7 and majority of the helplines are free of charge.<sup>5 6</sup>

**Based on this information, England meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



National Women's Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (April 2012 – March 2013)
1	Yes	Yes	161,879 <sup>7</sup>

**WOMEN'S SHELTERS**

There are around 289 services provided by 178 providers, with approximately 3,577 shelter places available. Around 66% of domestic violence services are run by independent NGOs, and the vast majority of the rest are run by other NGOs, including housing associations. Most shelters are in part funded by local authorities, but other sources of funding – for example, from charitable trusts – are also becoming increasingly necessary. The majority of shelters support women survivors of all forms of violence and their children. Almost all the shelters accept children of the survivors; many have an age limit for boys of 13 years. Commonly, women stay in shelters for between three and six months.<sup>8</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 5,223 women's shelter places are needed in England. With approximately 1,646 women's shelter places missing (32%), England does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women's Shelters <sup>9</sup>						
Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (April 2012-March 2013)
289 Services	5,223	3,577	1,646	32%	14,603	Estimated 15,404 women were accommodated <sup>10</sup>

**WOMEN'S CENTERS**

There are around 300 support services in England across most regions providing support to women survivors of violence and their children. There are also around 500 Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) and approximately 260 Multiagency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) in England and Wales,<sup>11</sup> that provide support to high-risk survivors of domestic violence. A range of support is provided by non-refuge services including floating and outreach services in the community, regional or local helplines, counselling support, legal advice, welfare, housing and financial matters and representation at appeal tribunals.<sup>12</sup>

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Information on estimated rates of sexual violence in England and Wales is available from the survey titled Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2011/12.<sup>13</sup> The survey was published on 7 February 2013. The survey is a crime survey that includes questions on interpersonal violence against women and men. The Crime Survey is conducted on an annual basis and aims at addressing the lack of data on violence against women and children in England and Wales.

In the report, a section focuses on intimate violence. This covers partner abuse (non-sexual), family abuse (non-sexual) and sexual assault or stalking by anyone where sexual assault covers multiple offences from indecent exposure to rape.<sup>14</sup> Information on intimate violence as a whole is provided in a gender disaggregated fashion, while information on sexual assault is not.<sup>15</sup>



# UNITED KINGDOM

According to the findings, overall, 31% of women have experienced any type of domestic abuse since the age of 16.<sup>16</sup> Twenty percent of women experienced sexual assault (including attempts) since the age of 16.<sup>17</sup> The prevalence of intimate violence was higher for younger women. Women aged between 16 and 19 were most likely to be victims of sexual assault (9.2%).<sup>18</sup> Overall, the most common perpetrators of sexual assault disclosed were strangers (57%).<sup>19</sup> A distinction is made between serious sexual assault and less serious sexual assault. In serious sexual assault experienced, 58% of women reported strangers as the offenders in contrast to only 5% reporting a family member. 36% of women declared partner/ex-partners to be the offender and 22% declared other known persons.

Seventy-nine percent of all victims (male and female) suffered from negative consequences as a result of sexual assault. Over half (56%) of victims of serious sexual assault suffered mental or emotional problems, and a further quarter (25%) reported having problems trusting people or having difficulty in other relationships. The physical injuries victims were most likely to suffer were minor bruising or a black eye (20%). In 4% of incidents the victim attempted suicide as a result of the incident.<sup>20</sup>

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are 46 Rape Crisis Centers run by independent women's NGOs providing long-term specialist support and advocacy free of charge to all women and girls who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any point in their lives. Some Rape Crisis Centers also support men and boys. The first sexual violence center was opened in London in 1973. There are also 30 Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) run by the Health Service that provide free specialist 24/7 service for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted in the previous year; primarily immediate short term support including medical care, forensic examination and some emotional support. There are also a number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) working in the voluntary and community sector and in SARCs providing safety planning, risk assessment and support survivors to access other support services. BMER and women with disabilities can access these services, though there are very few specialist services. SARCs are funded by the state and ISVAs are primarily funded by the state, while Rape Crisis Centers are partially funded by the state and also receive funding from private donations, trusts and foundations and through volunteer work.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, Survivors Trust (TST) is a national umbrella agency for over 135 specialist rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse organizations throughout the UK and Ireland.<sup>22</sup>

## WALES

### ▶ SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

#### ▶ WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Wales, the All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Helpline (0808 8010 800). The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The helpline supports survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Multilingual support is offered in over 150 languages and through a telephone interpretation service. The helpline is funded by the state.<sup>23</sup> Support for other forms of violence against women is provided by national helplines that work across the UK (see the section on helplines in the England entry).

**Based on this information, Wales meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**

#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (April 2012 – March 2013)
1	Yes	Yes	29,718 <sup>24</sup>

#### ▶ WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 36 refuges available with 227 places for women survivors of violence.<sup>25</sup> The first shelter was opened in the early 1970s. Thirty of the shelters are run by independent women's NGOs members of Welsh Women's Aid,<sup>26</sup> five are run by other NGOs and one by a state housing association. The majority of shelters support women survivors of all forms of violence, though the majority of women accommodated are survivors of domestic violence. All the shelters offer access to migrant and minority ethnic women and there are three specialized shelters for migrant and minority women. All the shelters accept children of survivors, most having an age limit for boys of 16 years. There is no limit on the period women can stay in the shelters. The shelters are funded by the state.<sup>27</sup>

Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 301 women's shelter places are needed in Wales. With approximately 74 women's shelter places missing (25%), Wales does not meet the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.



#### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
36	301	227	74	25%	13,244	-

#### WOMEN'S CENTERS

Wales had numerous women's centers in 2011, however, the total number available is difficult to estimate. Almost all are run by the 30 independent women's NGOs affiliated to Welsh Women's Aid. The centers provide a range of support to women survivors of violence and their children, including outreach and floating services in the community, counseling and advice on housing, welfare and legal and financial matters. All the centers offer support to migrant and minority women and women with disabilities and one specialist organization, the Black Association of Women Step Out, provides specialist support to BMER women survivors of domestic violence, forced marriage, trafficking, and so called "honour crimes."<sup>28</sup>

#### SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

For information on rates of prevalence of sexual violence in Wales, see section on sexual violence against women in the England entry.

#### WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are seven centers for women survivors of sexual violence. One of the centers is a Sexual Assault Referral Center (SARC)<sup>29</sup> run by the state. Others are referred to as Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centers and provide free long-term support and advocacy to all women and girls who have experienced any form of sexual violence. SARC provides immediate free specialist 24/7 support for survivors of rape and sexual assault, primarily immediate and short-term support, including medical care, forensic examination and counselling. All centers support survivors 15 years or older, and one center offers support to girls and women and any age. Access is offered to all migrant, asylum seekers, Roma women, undocumented migrant women, and women with disabilities, there are no specialised services for BMER women. There is also a number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) providing support and advocacy to survivors of sexual violence. SARC is fully funded by the state, ISVA receives primary funding from the state and the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centers are partly funded by the state and partly funded with private donations and support from volunteers.<sup>30</sup>

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

##### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

There is one national women's helpline in Northern Ireland, the 24 hour Domestic Violence Helpline (0800 917 1414). The helpline was established in 2005 having evolved from the first helpline set up by Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland in 1995. The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. The helpline uses a gender specific approach supporting women and girls survivors of domestic violence. Multilingual support is provided as is support to those with hearing loss. The helpline is funded predominantly by the state with support from volunteers.<sup>31</sup> Support for other forms of violence against women is provided by helplines available across the UK (see the section on helplines in the England entry).

Based on this information, Northern Ireland meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.



#### National Women's Helpline

Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics (April 2012 – March 2014)
1	Yes	Yes	47,597 calls managed <sup>32</sup>

# UNITED KINGDOM

## WOMEN'S SHELTERS

There are 13 women's shelters (known as refuges) in Northern Ireland with approximately 390 shelter places available. Twelve of the shelters are run by independent NGOs affiliated with the Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland, and one is run by a religious charity. The shelters support women and their children survivors of all forms of violence, primarily domestic violence, using a gender specific approach. The shelters accept children of the survivors, with an age limit for boys of 16 years. All shelters offer access to migrant and minority ethnic women, including traveler women. Undocumented women are also accepted, although this is difficult as no funding is provided because undocumented women do not qualify for housing benefits. There is no limit on how long women and their children can stay in the shelters. The shelters are funded, at least in part by the state.<sup>33</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 180 women's shelter places are needed in Northern Ireland. With no shelter places missing, Northern Ireland meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



### Women's Shelters

Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics (April 2012-March 2013)
13	180	390	0	-	4,614	880 women and 546 children accommodated; 424 women were unable to be accommodated due to lack of space <sup>34</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS

There are a range of women's centers in Northern Ireland which provide services for women survivors of violence and their children including advice on legal issues, housing and financial matters. Some of the centers provide floating and outreach support in the community.<sup>35</sup>

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Information on estimated rates of sexual violence in Northern Ireland is made available through the study titled Experience of Domestic Violence: Findings from the 2008/09 to 2010/11 Northern Ireland Crime Surveys published in 2013.<sup>36</sup>

Focused on domestic violence (partner and family violence), the survey covers multiple forms of abuse ranging from emotional, financial, sexual and physical abuse. They are divided into three main offence groups: non-physical abuse, threats and force. The third category, force, includes forced sexual intercourse and forced into other forms of sexual activity (including attempts). Overall, 13% of women disclosed the use of force in general wherein 3% of women disclosed sexual violence.<sup>37</sup>

## WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are no gender specific centers for women survivors of sexual violence in Northern Ireland.<sup>38</sup>

## SCOTLAND

### SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

#### WOMEN'S HELPLINE

Scotland has one national women's helpline to support women survivors of domestic violence, the Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline (0800 027 1234), set up in June 2000. The Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline also responds to calls from young women and girls but does not offer a specific service to girls. The helpline is run by independent women's NGO using a gender-specific approach. The helpline operates 24/7 and is free of charge. It receives some state funding and is also funded through private donations.

There is also a national helpline to assist survivors of rape and sexual assault, the Rape Crisis Scotland helpline (0808 8010 302). It was set up in October 2007 and is run by an independent women's NGO. The helpline is free of charge and multilingual support

is provided, but it does not operate 24/7. The helpline is fully funded by the state.<sup>39</sup> Support for other forms of violence against women is provided by helplines that are provided across the UK (see the section on helpline in the England entry).

**Based on this information, Scotland meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



National Women's Helpline			
Total number	Calls free of charge	24/7 service	Service user statistics
1	Yes	Yes	-

**WOMEN'S SHELTERS**

There are 45 women's shelters in Scotland with approximately 509 shelter places available. The first shelter was opened by Edinburg Women's Aid in 1973. Independent women's NGOs run the shelters which are primarily funded by the state (94%). The shelters support women survivors of domestic violence and their children, support for women survivors of trafficking is also provided by several shelters around Glasgow and there are two specific shelters for minority women. All shelters accept children of women survivors, with about a third having an age limit for boys of 16 years. There are no specific limits on the length women can stay in the shelters. The shelters are primarily funded by both local authority funding and Scottish Government.<sup>40</sup>

**Based on Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations, approximately 522 women's shelter places are needed in Scotland. With approximately 509 women's shelter places missing (2.5%), Scotland nearly meets the Council of Europe Taskforce Recommendations.**



Women's Shelters						
Total number	Shelter places needed	Shelter places available	Shelter places missing	% of shelter places missing	Number of population per shelter place	Service user statistics
45	522	509	13	2.5%	10,260	-

**WOMEN'S CENTERS**

Scotland has a number of women's centers that provide a range of support to women survivors of violence including information, legal advice, outreach and advocacy.<sup>41</sup>

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Information on estimated rates of sexual violence in Scotland is made available through the National Statistics 2010/11 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Sexual Victimization and Stalking.<sup>42</sup> It was published in December 2011. The survey is a self-completed interview, conducted in the respondent's home using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing. Most of the results are not gender disaggregated because the purpose of the survey was to look at violence as whole and not at gender violence.

Sexual violence in the survey is defined along two main categories: less serious sexual assault and serious sexual assault. Less serious sexual assault includes indecent exposure, sexual threats and unwanted sexual touching.<sup>43</sup> Serious sexual assault includes forcing someone to have sexual intercourse when the person did not want to, attempting to force someone to have sexual intercourse when the person did not want to, forcing someone to take part in other sexual activity when the person did not want to, attempting to force someone to take part in other sexual activity when the person did not want to.<sup>44</sup>

Female victims of less serious sexual assault claimed that 98% of the offenders were male. Seventy-five percent of adults who had experienced indecent exposure since the age of 16 said the offender was someone they had never seen before. Twenty-three percent of those who had experienced unwanted sexual touching said it was their partner, twenty-nine percent said it was someone else they knew and 30% said the offender was someone they had never seen before. Forty-nine percent of those who had experienced sexual threats said the offender was their partner and 16% said it was someone they had never seen before.

# UNITED KINGDOM

Eight percent of adults overall had experienced at least one of the three forms of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16. Thirteen percent of women had experienced less serious sexual assault since the age of 16<sup>45</sup> within which indecent exposure and unwanted sexual touching are the most prevalent of the three.<sup>46</sup> Five percent of women experienced serious sexual assault since the age of 16. Three percent of women were forced to have sexual intercourse and 2% experienced the attempt of forced sexual intercourse.

## ▶ WOMEN'S CENTERS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

There are 13 rape crisis centers providing support to survivors of rape and sexual violence, primarily women (96.8%). The first center was set up in Glasgow in 1976. The centers are all run by independent women's NGOs using a gender specific approach. Rape crisis centers are funded by the Scottish Government, local authorities and grant making trusts. Scotland also has four Sexual Violence Services and one Sexual Assault Referral Center (Archway) in Glasgow for anyone over 13 years of age. Archway is open 24/7 and offers various services, including forensic examination, testing for infections, support and counselling.<sup>47</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 280.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Story made available by Apna Haq, located in United Kingdom.
- <sup>4</sup> Story made available by WAVE Focal Point Haven Wolverhampton, located in United Kingdom.
- <sup>5</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 284.
- <sup>6</sup> Information provided by Women's Aid Federation of England. (2014).
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Information provided by Women's Aid Federation England. (2014); based on Women's Aid's Annual Survey 2012.
- <sup>9</sup> Information provided by Women's Aid Federation England. (2014); based on UKROL data for April 2013.
- <sup>10</sup> Women's Aid. (2013). Women's Aid Annual Survey 2013 – Domestic Violence Services. [<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001001400130005&sectionTitle=Women%27s+Aid+Annual+Survey>]: The data is an estimated number of women service users in refuges across England based on a survey of domestic and sexual violence organizations in England (both members and non-members of Women's Aid), where information on the number of women and children accommodated in refuge services was collected. Majority of the organisations reporting on the number of service users were Registered Charities (70%), Voluntary Organisations (3%), Housing Associations (22%), Private Companies (1%), and Other (3%).
- <sup>11</sup> CAADA. (2012). A Place of Greater Safety. [[www.caada.org.uk/policy/A\\_Place\\_of\\_greater\\_safety.pdf](http://www.caada.org.uk/policy/A_Place_of_greater_safety.pdf)]
- <sup>12</sup> Information provided by Women's Aid Federation England. (2014).
- <sup>13</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2013). Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2011/12, published 07 February 2013.
- <sup>14</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2013). Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2011/12, published 07 February 2013. Pg. 63.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid. Pg. 71.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid. Pg. 65.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid. Pg. 2.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid. Pg. 71.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid. Pg. 72.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid. Pg. 75.
- <sup>21</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence – A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 285.
- <sup>22</sup> The Survivors Trust (TST). [[www.thesurvivorstrust.org/about-tst/](http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/about-tst/)].
- <sup>23</sup> Welsh Women's Aid. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>24</sup> Welsh Women's Aid. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire: The phone calls received include the following: survivors, other agencies, concerned others, perpetrators and calls not related to domestic abuse. 19% of the callers were from survivors experiencing domestic abuse; 74% were from other agencies, including Women's Aids groups; 4% were from concerned others; and 3% were not related to domestic abuse. There were 54 phone calls from perpetrators. 95% of the callers experiencing domestic abuse were women.
- <sup>25</sup> Welsh Women's Aid. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>26</sup> [www.welshwomensaid.org.uk](http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk)
- <sup>27</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 285.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. Pg. 286.
- <sup>29</sup> Welsh Women's Aid. (2013). Data provided in WAVE Country Report 2013 Questionnaire.
- <sup>30</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 286.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid. Pg. 288.
- <sup>32</sup> Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland. (2013). Annual report 2012-2013. [<http://www.womensaidni.org/themainevent/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Womens-Aid-Annual-Report-12-13.pdf>]. Pg. 36-38: In total, there were 47,597 calls managed during the period April 2012-March 2013, and 44,664 calls answered. Calls managed include all calls answered and all calls made by the helpline staff to follow-up specific support and advice. For example, arranging refuge accommodation for a woman may involve helpline workers making a number of calls out.
- <sup>33</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 288.
- <sup>34</sup> Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland. (2013). Annual report 2012-2013. [<http://www.womensaidni.org/themainevent/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Womens-Aid-Annual-Report-12-13.pdf>]. Pg. 47.
- <sup>35</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 288.
- <sup>36</sup> Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. (2013). Experience of Domestic Violence: Findings from the 2008/09 to 2010/11 Northern Ireland Crime Surveys.
- <sup>37</sup> Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. (2013). Experience of Domestic Violence: Findings from the 2008/09 to 2010/11 Northern Ireland Crime Surveys. Pg. 6
- <sup>38</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 289.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid. Pg. 292.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2011). National Statistics 2010/11 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Sexual Victimization and Stalking.
- <sup>43</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2011). National Statistics 2010/11 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Sexual Victimization and Stalking. Pg. 2.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid. Pg. 3.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid. Pg. 15
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid. Pg. 18
- <sup>47</sup> Women against Violence Europe (WAVE). (2013). Country Report 2012: Reality Check on Data Collection and European Services for Women and Children Survivors of Violence. A Right for Protection and Support. Pg. 292.

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## UNITED KINGDOM

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## WAVE LIST 2013

### NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES IN THE NON-EU COUNTRIES

The following is a table of the national women's helplines available in the non-EU countries. If there is no national helpline, a regional or general helpline is listed (these countries are marked with a \*).

Country	Name	Phone number
Albania	Counseling Line for Women and Girls	+355 422 33408
Armenia	Women's Rights Center	+374 105 428 28 0800 80 850 099 887 808
Azerbaijan	Clean World Social Union Aid to Women	+99 412 408 5696
Belarus*	Hotline for survivors of domestic violence Helpline for situations of violence, abuse and child neglect Anti-trafficking information line	8 801 100 8 801 8 801 100 16 11 113
Bosnia	Woman – Federation SOS Helpline	1265 or 1264
Georgia	National Domestic Violence Hotline Tbilisi Crisis Center of "Sakhli" Advice Center for Women	309 903 +995 5 952 321 01
Iceland*	Red Cross Kvennaathvarfið shelter helpline	1717 561 1205
Kosovo	Direct Line for Victims of Violence SOS Linja	080011112 +381 39 033 00 98
Liechtenstein	Women's Helpline	+423 380 02 03
Macedonia	National SOS Line National SOS Line – Phone of trust SOS National Mobile Line	15 700 15 315 +389 75 141 700 +389 77 141 700 +389 70 141 700
Moldova	Trust Line	8008 8008
Montenegro*	SOS Hotline for Women & Children Victims of Violence Podgorica SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence Niksic  Bijelo Polje for women survivors of domestic violence Ulcinj for women survivors of domestic violence	020 232 254 040 213 086 040 213 358 068 024 086 050433660 030 411 700
Norway*	Crisis Situation helpline	800 40 008
Russia	ANNA (National Center for the Prevention of Violence)	08800 700 600
Serbia*	Helpline for victims of domestic violence Network of Women's Hotlines in Vojvodina	0800 100 600 0800 10 10 10
Switzerland*	Dargebotene Hand	143
Turkey	Hürriyet Emergency Domestic Violence Hotline Social Service Counseling Line: family, women, children, disabled	+90 212 656 9696 183
Ukraine	Domestic Violence Counteraction & Child Rights Protection Helpline	0800 500-335 or -386

## WAVE LIST 2013

### NATIONAL WOMEN'S HELPLINES IN THE 28 EU MEMBER STATES

The following is a table of the national women's helplines available in the 28 EU member states. If there is no national helpline, a regional or general helpline is listed (these countries are marked with a \*).

Country	Name	Phone number
Austria	Women's Helpline against Male Violence	+43 800 222 555
Belgium*	Hotline for all types of violence, domestic (any member of the family) sexual violence, honor related violence, and more , child abuse, elder abuse, Ecoute Violences Conjugales (for marital violence) SOS Viol (for sexual violence) Crisis Situation Helpline	1712 (Flemish) 0800 30 030 (French) 02 534 36 36 (French) 106 (Flemish) 107 (French) 108 (German)
Bulgaria	Women's Helpline	+359 2 981 76 86
Croatia*	Autonomous Women's House Zagreb	0800 55 44
Cyprus	Center for Emergency Assistance Helpline	1440
Czech Republic*	DONA Line ROSA SOS helpline for women victims of DV	+420 251 51 13 13 +420 602 246 102 +420 241 432 466
Denmark	LOKK Hotline	+45 70 20 30 82
Estonia	Estonian Women's Shelters Union	1492
Finland	Women's Line	+358 800 02400
France	Viols Femmes Information Domestic Violence Information	0800 05 95 95 3919
Germany	National Women's Helpline	08000 116 016
Greece	National Center for Social Solidarity (E.K.K.A.) Women's Helpline	197 15 900
Hungary	NaNE Women's Rights Association	06 80 505 101 +36 4 06 30 006
Ireland	National Freephone Helpline	1800 341 900
Italy	Antiviolenza Donna	1522
Latvia*	Center Marta for trafficking in women	800 2012
Lithuania	Women's Line	8800 66 366
Luxembourg	Fraentelefon	12 344
Malta*	Appogg Agency Support Line 179	179
Netherlands*	Information and Help on Domestic Violence	0900 126 26 26
Poland*	National Emergency Service for Survivors of Family Violence Blue Line	22 668 70 00 801 12 00 22
Portugal*	Serviço de Informação às Vítimas de Violência Doméstica	800 202 148
Romania*	Bucharest: Sensi Blu Foundation Bucharest: ADRA Iasi: CMSC Targu Mures: IEESR Sibiu: A.L.E.G. Biai Mare: Centru Artemis Timisoara: APFR	021 3114636 021 2525117 023 2252920 0265 211699 0753893531 0262 250770 0256 293183
Slovakia	National Women's Helpline	0903 519 550
Slovenia	SOS Helpline for Women and Children - Victims of Violence	080 11 55
Spain	National Women's Helpline	016
Sweden	Terrafem Kvinnofridslinjen	020 52 1010 020 50 50 50
United Kingdom	ENGLAND: National Domestic Violence Free phone Helpline NORTHERN IRELAND: Domestic Violence Helpline SCOTLAND: Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline  WALES: All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence	0808 2000 247 0800 917 1414 0800 027 1234 0808 8010 302 0808 8010 800