

WAVE Country Report 2019: The Situation of Women's Specialist Support Services

Vienna, 30th December 2019 – This year the WAVE Network celebrates its 25th anniversary building a world free from gender-based violence (GBV). Since WAVE was established in 1994, the Network became a movement for change and data collection played a big part of its activities. The findings are published every other year in the Country Report to monitor the actual situation of women's specialist support services and country's compliance with the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

The report provides comprehensive data on helplines, women's shelters, women's centres and additional information on specialist services for survivors of sexual violence and femicide victims in a total of 46 European countries (both in and outside of the European Union) and focuses on women survivors of violence and their children. Based on our research it is acknowledged that we are far from reaching the minimum standards for service provision recommended by the Istanbul Convention and the Council of Europe.

Helplines

- 75% of EU countries and 78% of countries outside the EU have at least one national women's helpline.
- 32 out of 35 European national women's helplines operate free of charge, while 27 out of 35 operate 24/7.
- 71% of the national women's helplines existing in Europe meet Istanbul Convention standards.
- Only 52% of all European countries meet Istanbul Convention standards for provision of national women's helpline.

Women's Shelters

- Currently 2,350 shelters are available for women experiencing domestic violence in Europe, providing a total of 31,943 bed spaces to women and their children.
- Out of 46 European countries, only five meet the minimum standards of the Istanbul Convention for bed spaces for shelter provision.
- 25 out of 28 EU Member states (89%) and 16 out of 18 countries outside of the EU (89%) fail to meet IC standards on minimum required bed spaces in shelters accessible to women survivors of domestic violence.

Women's Centres

- There is currently a minimum of 3,323 women's centres in Europe.
- 42 European countries have at least one women's centre, while four countries do not have any specialised women's centres.
- 78% of these centres are in EU countries, while 22% are in countries outside of the EU.
- Prevalent types of services provided are: counselling, advice and advocacy support, including regarding legal options, housing, employment, other support services, and representation at court, police or social services.

Specialist services for survivors of sexualized violence

- Countries outside of the EU are missing 99% of services as required by standards set in the IC, and EU countries are missing 87%.
- 33% of European countries have specific helplines for survivors of sexualised violence.
- Over half (54%) of European countries have other services (other than RCC and SVRCs) in their countries which support women survivors of sexualised violence.

Femicide victims

- Many countries do not recognize femicide as a separate form of violence and therefore do not collect data related to this crime.

- There were at least 1,070 victims of femicide in 2018 (31 of 46 countries provided data).
- Ten out of 46 countries have women's organizations which are carrying out their own data collections and record the number of femicide victims through media reporting and/or collecting data from police records.

WAVE is calling all institutions and state agencies for ring fenced grant funding to specialist women's organisations working to end violence and women and girls and urges states to work with women's NGOs to improve service provision and to ensure that preventive work is based on awareness raising and education around early intervention and recognition of violence.

The full version of the [WAVE Country Report 2019](#) is available online.

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