**WAVE Newsletter July-August 2016**

**WAVE News**

The official WAVE Step Up! campaign website is now launched

On August 10th, the WAVE office officially launched the [Step Up! Campaign website](http://www.stepupwave.org). In addition to a Campaign [Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/wave.stepup), the new website highlights everything there is to know about the campaign, including country profiles, full of up-to-date activities and news about what is going on at the national and European level.

Aiming at **improving the availability of services and also the access to specialist support services for women survivors of violence and their children**, the Step Up! Campaign, launched on 25 May 2016 with the support of UN Women, has become viral in several countries throughout Europe, particularly in [Cyprus](http://www.wave-net.org/cyprus), where important government officials and news outlets, as well individuals, showed public support for the campaign. With nearly 40 European countries in the network taking part in Step Up!, the #StepUpWAVE hashtag is all over the internet – and many people are changing their Facebook profiles in solidarity with the campaign by adding the [Step Up! Twibbon](http://www.facebook.com/wave.stepup). In other cases, as in [Lithuania](http://www.wave-net.org/lithuania) and [Cyprus](http://www.wave-net.org/cyprus), independent videos are being uploaded and shared, and in some cases women’s organizations are being invited onto news channels to explain why the campaign is so important, such as in [Finland](http://www.wave-net.org/finland).

The WAVE Step Up! Campaign has also received endorsement by Vera Jourova, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumer & Gender Equality, and [open letters](http://www.wave-net.org/lithuania) have been sent to other European stakeholders. Romanian organizations sent an [open letter](http://www.wave-net.org/cyprus) to their government urging for more accountability and commitment to implementing the Istanbul Convention; a [follow-up letter](http://www.wave-net.org/finland) was sent on behalf of WAVE showing support for recent decisions by the Romanian government to improve their engagement in ending violence against women. Activities have already begun for the Campaign launch – a call for participation in the [Youth Video Award](http://www.wave-net.org/finland) has been extended; a checklist called “How Accessible is Your Service for Women with Disabilities?” and [strategy paper](http://www.wave-net.org/finland) for improving access to services by women with disabilities has been circulated to specialist women’s support services. Already making strong gains in many countries throughout Europe, the Step Up! Campaign will launch more exciting activities in the coming months.

**WAVE President participates in a Gender Conference: Combating violence against women in the OSCE region**

The [conference](http://www.wave-net.org/finland), organized by the OSCE Gender Section and the German Chairmanship of the OSCE, took place on the 22nd of July 2016 in Vienna. The event started with a high-level panel attended, among other, by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Dr. Dubravka Šimonović, and Ambassador Miroslava Beham, OSCE Senior Advisor on Gender Issues. Dr. Šimonović reiterated her call to member states to establish a Femicide Watch. Since femicide represents the most severe manifestation of violence against women, it is imperative to closely analyse such criminal acts and identify which factors have led up to their occurrence. A key role the Femicide Watch should play is that of data collection, ensuring that this is
comparable and reliable, which can guide policy-makers in the long-run. WAVE President Ms. Rosa Logar also gave a presentation during a session that addressed the importance of preventing violence against women and bringing security back into their homes. The session offered an opportunity to identify the root causes of violence, bring in new approaches to tackle this problem and share best practices.

**International News**

**New Law on sexual violence adopted in Germany**

On the 7th of July 2016 Germany’s parliament passed a new law that defines rape, clarifying that "No means No", even if a victim did not fight back. Previous legislation stipulated that rape could only be punishable if the victim showed physical signs of resisting the assailant.

BFF, Germany’s federal association of rape crisis and women’s counseling centers welcomed the new legislation as a “paradigm change” in how the country deals with sexual violence. “No longer is coercion the requirement for the prosecution of sexual assault, but the will of the victim,” the association said.

**IC Chance: A Campaign to secure the ratification of the Istanbul Convention (IC) in the UK**

The IC is a strategic way to work towards a safe society in which women and girls can live free from violence and free from the fear of violence. The UK Government committed itself to the principles of the IC in June 2012. The mission of this campaign is to secure the ratification of the IC through education, campaigning and advocacy. Welsh Women’s Aid, who are a member of the WAVE network, are backing the IC Change campaign. Currently, the UK still remains in limbo between signing and ratification, in spite of frequent questioning and promises made by the Government.

**Women’s Aid launches ‘Change That Lasts’: a new approach to domestic abuse**

‘Change that Lasts’, which is funded by the Big Lottery Fund’s Women and Girls Initiative, will be piloted from Friday, the 1st of July 2016 in Northumbria, Nottinghamshire and Surrey to help women experiencing domestic abuse receive support earlier, and help them achieve long-term recovery and independence. Women’s Aid has reviewed current approaches used in tackling domestic abuse and identified some systems currently in place which are not working effectively. Survivors frequently report to Women’s Aid that opportunities to help them were missed. Hence, the charity has come up with a new model to provide a framework that facilitates the shortest, and/or most effective route to safety, freedom and independence for each survivor.

**Twitter Campaign in Finland**

Our WAVE member from Finland, Women’s Line, is trying to persuade their government to ensure that an adequate budget is allocated to specialist women’s support services, so that women and their children can live their lives away from violence! The Finnish government will reach its budget decisions this week. Several organizations from Finland- Women’s Line Finland, Amnesty Finland, Mother and Child Shelters Association and NYTKIS - The Coalition of Finnish Women’s Associations have been tweeting with #Tärkeäaskel to put pressure on their governments as of Thursday, the 25th of August 2016.

**The EU**
**European Commission: Action grants to support national information, Awareness raising and education activities aimed at preventing and combating violence against women** RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP PROGRAMME (2014-2020)

We are excited to inform you about a funding opportunity for your government to engage in awareness raising and education on violence against women. Governments have until the 27th October to apply and we urge you to immediately approach them with your knowledge and expertise in this area and encourage them to apply – they could subcontract your organization to do the work!

Please inform also the WAVE Members in your country and coordinate the application process together. We are happy to support you in any way possible and are already circulating a Step Up! Campaign strategy on women with disabilities and undocumented migrant women. Let us know if this is something you will consider doing.

**2017- EU year on eliminating violence against women**

The European Union plans to designate the year 2017 to the cause of eliminating violence against women. Commissioner Jourová stated during a meeting with the European Women’s Lobby that the European Commission will propose the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention, and is planning to dedicate the year 2017 to ending violence against women. Earlier in March, the European Commission made a proposal to the European Union to ratify the Council of Europe’s Istanbul Convention, a comprehensive international treaty on combatting violence against women and domestic violence.

**Online Discussion organized by EIGE: Proposed indicators for data collection on rape, femicide and intimate partner violence**

The online discussion on proposed indicators for data collection on intimate partner violence (IPV), rape and femicide took place on 7 July 2016. It was organised in the context of EIGE’s Study on terminology and indicators used in data collection on rape, femicide and intimate partner violence (the Study) carried out by Milieu Ltd. The study examines the lack of comparable and reliable EU-wide data on VAW.

Conclusions reached at the end of the discussion indicated that the prevalence of intimate partner violence, rape and femicide are best measured with surveys, with administrative sources giving only a small percentage of the real phenomenon. Initiatives to develop indicators must align with other parallel processes carried out by the United Nations, the Council of Europe or other relevant stakeholders.

**EIGE: expert meeting on gender database**

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is organising a one-day experts’ meeting on gender statistics database on the 15th of September 2016. The first experts’ meeting on gender statistics database was convened in February 2015 in order to discuss its interface, functionalities and content. On 30th of June 2016, EIGE launched the Gender Equality Glossary and Thesaurus that has been developed in cooperation with EIGE’s main stakeholders, including the European Commission, European Parliament and Council of Europe, as well as national machineries for gender equality, academia and partners of EIGE’s Resource and Documentation Centre. The remaining challenge is to make a link between this new tool and the statistics database.

**The UN**
The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Dubravka Šimonović, considers that the discussion on the adequacy of the international legal framework on violence against women initiated by the former mandate holder should continue and she wishes to secure views from different stakeholders, including States, National Human Rights Institutions, Non-governmental organizations, as well as members of academia.

Taking into consideration the important role that different stakeholders play in reinforcing universal human rights standards, she would be very interested to receive input and views on the following questions:

1. Do you consider that there is a need for a separate legally binding treaty on violence against women with its separate monitoring body?
2. Do you consider that there is an incorporation gap of the international or regional human rights norms and standards?
3. Do you believe that there is a lack of implementation of the international and regional legislation into the domestic law?
4. Do you think that there is a fragmentation of policies and legislation to address gender-based violence?
5. Could you also provide your views on measures needed to address this normative and implementation gap and to accelerate prevention and elimination of violence against women?

All submissions should be sent by 1 October 2016 to vaw@ohchr.org.

CEDAW Draft General Recommendation No. 19


At its sixty-fourth session, the Committee decided to invite all interested parties to submit comments in writing on the "Draft update of General Recommendation No. 19" (to be indicated in the subject title) to the following email address: cedaw@ohchr.org. NGOs are invited to submit their feedback by the end of September 2016.

Current UN Secretary-General wants his successor to be a woman

The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, has said he would like a woman to take over from him. Ban Ki-moon said it was "high time" for a female head, after more than 70 years of the UN and eight male leaders. Of the 11 candidates in the running to take up the post, five are women. It is expected that a new secretary-general will be announced in the autumn. According to tradition the role rotates between various regions of the world.