



WAVE Newsletter July-August 2019

WAVE News

WAVE Conference: Registration Deadline Extended & Draft Programme released!



Registrations to the 2019 WAVE Conference will be *extended until Tuesday, September 17, 2019*. Please follow [this link to register & find the draft programme](#) .

The 2019 WAVE conference "25 Years of Defending Women's Human Rights: Milestones and Visions for the Future" is a celebration of the work the WAVE Network has done over the last quarter century. From providing shelter and support to advocating for reproductive rights and policies of equality, WAVE members have made enormous strides in the promotion of feminist values and the advancement of women's wellbeing across Europe. The network has many successes in 25 years — however, in the current



political climate, the protection and promotion of women's rights is more essential than ever. Together, we can learn from the past and create a positive, actionable vision for the safety of women in Europe: today, tomorrow and 25 years from now.

WAVE Executive Manager is going on maternity leave



Stephanie Futter-Orel, WAVE Executive Manager, will be going on maternity leave for 8 months from of mid-September 2019 to mid- May 2020. During this time period, Stephanie's position will be covered by a competent and enthusiastic woman who will introduce herself shortly in this newsletter. The WAVE Office wishes Stephanie a safe and healthy path into the exciting journey of motherhood!

Alicja Switon starts working at the WAVE Network as Executive Manager covering for Stephanie

Coming from a lesbian feminist background I am extremely happy to start working in and for the WAVE Network as the Executive Manager covering for Stephanie. I have completed my master's degree in history at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland, where I have focused on methodology of history and cultural studies, exploring mostly gender theory and identity related topics. After that I have moved to



Gibraltar and then to Spain, and finally to Vienna where I live since 2015 together with my tricolour cat. In the last years I have completed a postgraduate diploma in Gender Studies at the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. I have worked in a number of managerial positions related to Knowledge, Content and Project Management, heading several international teams at the same time. I have also attended a Senior Female Leadership programme and lead an LGBTQI+ network. My joy comes from leading others and from being active in expressing myself and standing up for my rights as a woman, as a lesbian, and as an immigrant.

The WAVE Network has 151 members!

The WAVE Office is proud to announce the following organisations have recently joined the WAVE Network:

Kosovo – Kosovar Gender Studies Center

Russia – Doctors to Children

Serbia – Association of Women Sandglass

Georgia – Democrat Women’s Organization of Samtskhe-Javakheti (DWO)

UK , England – Standing Together

Albania – Psycho – Social Centre Vatra

As of August 2019, the [WAVE Network](#) has 151 members in 46 European countries.

DIS.CO: FREE training to educate counsellors on specifics of counselling at a distance now online

Teach your Counsellors with our online course developed by University of Tartu



The fifth intellectual output, the Distant Learning Tool, consists of an e-course on an e-learning platform. This online programme is developed to educate the counsellors on the specifics of counselling at a distance. The course is free of charge and has an open access. It is available in five languages: English, Spanish, Greek, German and Estonian.

The course could be used independently or as part of in-person training programme that was also developed within the DIS.CO project. It contains eight video-lectures and quizzes (small tests) to access your knowledge. The course also includes prior knowledge assessment and post-training assessment to evaluate the improvement that students achieved in the process.

Click [here](#) to access the course.

International News

Romanian women's NGO issues a call for immediate action to the Council of Europe

Necuvinte Association, a WAVE member from Romania, issued [a Call for Immediate Action to the Council of Europe to Prevent the Loss of Human Lives because of deficiencies in the emergency response system and institutionalised sexism in Romania](#). A shocking murder case occurred in Romania last July in the city of Caracal, Ilt county. The details about this case came to the attention of the public on Friday, July 26. The case involved the kidnaping, raping and killing of two female teenagers. One of the victims called the national emergency line three times to ask for help and inform authorities about her kidnapping, yet her appeal for help was not treated with due consideration by the police and emergency line operators. This tragic case highlighted the systemic failures of the Romanian state to protect the lives of its citizens.

Belgium issues first reports on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention

In February, the [Belgian government submitted its first report on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention](#). A coalition of 49 Flemish and French-speaking feminist NGOs and community services that published [a shadow report](#) did not share the positive evaluation of the government's work: the lack of policy coherence in a divided country leads to a post code lottery in terms of service provision; insufficient means and a gender neutral approach challenge the effectiveness of anti-violence measures; the police and tribunals all too often do not hold perpetrators accountable ; and the rights of particularly vulnerable groups of women such as undocumented migrants or women with disabilities are not protected. The NGO coalition identified ten priority recommendations, such as increasing the budget invested in combatting violence against women to 2% of the GDP to at least match the costs of violence to the nation.

How do we prevent violence against women and girls? – A new initiative is undertaken in the UK



All of us can take action to build a Scotland where VAWG is no longer tolerated. To do this we need new social norms including equal and respectful relationships, elimination of all forms of oppression and discrimination, and collective action to tackle women's inequality.

Zero Tolerance has published a newly updated briefing on preventing violence against women and girls. It covers the extent of violence in Scotland, the cause of violence, and what everyone can do to play their part in ending all violence against women and girls. Further information about this initiative can be found [here](#) .

Female drug users, female sex workers, and women held in prisons are the most discriminated groups in the Republic of Moldova

Female sex workers and women who use drugs are a significant, but extraordinarily marginalized and invisible community in the Republic of Moldova. This finding was reflected in the [civil society Joint submission](#) to the CEDAW pre-sessional working group (WG). Between July 22 and July 26, 2019, the Committee's pre-sessional *working group* has met to *formulate a list of issues* and questions arising



from the report of the Republic of Moldova to be examined by the Committee at one of the future sessions in 2020. The violations of the Convention are expressed by the criminalized and/or stigmatized status that keeps these women in an isolated sub-group of society. Practices that perpetuate the status quo include: [administrative practices of stigmatization](#); no access to shelters; women victims of violence in detention; the lack of state policies to respond to their specific needs; criminalization of drug use. These and other serious problems were raised by the WG as part of their [list of issues in relation to the sixth periodic report of the Republic of Moldova](#). The upcoming review of Moldova (2020) will be guided by this list of issues in order to make positive changes in the areas of concern mentioned above.

Workshop to establish a domestic violence fatality review team was held in Moldova last July



On 18-19 of July, 2019, the Women's Law Center, a WAVE member from Moldova, in partnership with Global Rights for Women, USA, organized a workshop to establish a domestic violence fatality review team. During the two days, experts, along with representatives of public institutions and non-governmental organizations, analysed the purpose, goal and possibility of creating in the Republic of Moldova

a committee to examine cases of domestic violence which result in a victim's death or severe bodily injuries. All participants acknowledged the importance of having such a committee, as it would contribute to enhancing cooperation, communication and coordination between institutions providing a response to cases of domestic violence, identifying gaps in the system, as well as solutions to overcome these gaps. According to [Melissa Scaia, an expert from Global Rights for Women](#), when assessing these cases, it is crucial to take into account criteria such as chronology of events, types of violence, risk indicators reported, institutions involved and the degree of communication and coordination between them.

In 2018, the Republic of Moldova adopted its first National Strategy to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, while the Action Plan to implement the Strategy places on national authorities the responsibility to create a committee to examine cases of death or severe bodily injuries of victims of domestic violence. The national authorities will apply the key elements of the reasoning, values, principles and working processes presented and discussed at the workshop. The workshop held was part of the Project





“Strengthening Capacities of Prosecution and Judicial Response to Domestic Violence in Moldova” supported by the US Embassy in Moldova. Further information about the workshop is available [here](#).

Report about restrictive access to abortion services in Romania is released

In June 2019, FILIA Center and their partners, ECPI - Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives, published a report about the status of elective abortion in Romania. Findings from the report reveal the following:

- 51 public medical units from a total of 158 contacted (32.2%) do not perform elective abortion services at all.
- 36 hospitals out of 158 (22.7%) do not practice elective abortions during religious holidays. Correlated with the number of medical units which do not perform elective abortion all year round (51), a worrying phenomenon limiting women's access to elective abortion is observed.

The full report entitled [Restrictive Access to Abortions in Romania](#) (2019) can be accessed [here](#). The authors hope that their report will be useful to future activities promoting women's rights and gender equality.

Government inaction to domestic violence cases is endangering women’s lives in Russia

The European Court of Human Rights [issued its first ruling](#) on a domestic violence case in Russia last July. The ruling recognized Russian authorities’ overall “[reluctance to acknowledge](#) the seriousness and extent of the problem of domestic violence in Russia and its discriminatory effect on women.” This emphasizes that domestic violence and the official inaction the applicant faced in that particular case was not an isolated incident, but rather the result of a systemic, ongoing failure on behalf of the Russian authorities to comprehensively address domestic violence.

Russia currently [has no domestic violence law](#) and does not consider domestic violence as a stand-alone criminal offense. In a [dramatic step back in 2017](#), certain forms of domestic violence [were actually decriminalised](#). The [police may treat victims of domestic violence with open hostility](#) and refuse to register or investigate their complaints. Russian law does not provide for protection orders, which could prevent women from experiencing recurrent violence by their partners.

With financial support from the
Rights, Equality and Citizenship
Programme of the European Union

