

## WAVE Newsletter, July-August 2017

### WAVE News

#### Sharing Experience of Working with Perpetrators in Russia and the UK



[URU Connect](#), a U.K. non-for-profit organisation is working with [The Crisis Centre for Women and Children "Ekaterina"](#) in Russia to develop a pioneering project (2017-2018) aiming to develop and implement the Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP) in Sverdlovsk Area, Russia. The project will develop the first of its kind Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP) in Russia to help people, who have been abusive towards their partners or ex-partners, change their behaviour and develop respectful, non-abusive relationships. The Crisis Centre "Ekaterina" will work with the Federal Penitentiary Service FSIN of Russia to jointly identify and screen perpetrators and deliver the programme in Sverdlovsk Area. Professionals from the FSIN will be trained to deliver this programme as part of their work with perpetrators. Kath Rees MBE said "we are committed to supporting all our international partners in developing multi-agency working and other strategies to improve safety for women and children victims of domestic violence".

#### Mapping support services for victims of violence against women in Kosovo

On June 29<sup>th</sup> 2017, the Council of Europe organised a [seminar](#) in Pristina to mark the closing of the project *Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo* (January – July 2017) and to present the results of the [mapping study](#). The project's specific objectives are to promote Council of Europe standards to improve the prevention of violence, the protection of victims, and the prosecution of perpetrators and to map existing services for women victims of all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention. This study addresses the availability and accessibility of support services responding to violence against women in Kosovo in relation to the standards set out in the Istanbul Convention.



#### Two International Experts on Domestic Violence visited Ireland this July

SAFE Ireland invited two International experts on domestic violence and coercive control, Professor Evan Stark and Davina James-Hanman, to Dublin this July to deliver training to professionals who have a role in responding to women and children experiencing domestic violence. Professor Evan Stark is the leading global expert on coercive control in the context of domestic violence and abuse. He has advised the English, Welsh and Scottish Governments on their coercive control laws. Davina James-Hanman is an independent Violence Against Women Consultant who has published innumerable articles and three book chapters and advised a number of Government Departments in the UK on domestic violence policy. Over the course of their three day visit to Ireland, Davina and Evan delivered a Masterclass for Lawyers in the Law Society and a Seminar in Croke Park on: *Understanding Coercive Control* to over 170 delegates from a wide range of professionals and volunteers working with victims and/or offenders of domestic violence. For more information, please visit the [website](#) of SAFE Ireland.



## WAVE MEMBERS PLAYED A POSITIVE ROLE IN SECURING PUBLIC PRESSURE AGAINST WOMEN-DEGRADING OPINIONS

A coalition of Slovenian NGOs - among which also WAVE Network members and campaigners - played a positive role in securing public pressure against the candidature of the Slovenian lawyer Dr. Boštjan M. Zupančič for the UN Commission for Human Rights. Dr. Zupančič has a long record of expressing his opinion on women as second-class human beings. Recently, he publicly expressed a shocking opinion about Simone Veil, describing her as a “murderer” for her crucial role in legalizing abortion in France. The coalition wrote an open letter to the Slovenian government, asking the government not only to reject him as a candidate for the UN Commission for Human Rights, but also to consider stopping working with Dr. Zupančič altogether, given his public statements. In early August, the Slovenian government announced they would withdraw their support for Dr. Zupančič, and instead support Dr. Vasilka Sancin's candidature.

### [Girls Decide for Europe and Central Asia](#)



Winner of the *With and For Girls Award* in 2016, [A.L.E.G.](#) – WAVE member in Romania - had the opportunity to organize in Romania the final selection process for the 2017 *With And For Girls Award*. The award winners for Europe and Central Asia were selected by a panel made up of 4 teenage girls, aged 16 to 18, recruited from several cities around the country (Sibiu, Bucharest and Bacău), supported by an experienced A.L.E.G. volunteer. In 23-24 July, in Sibiu, A.L.E.G. hosted the training for the selected girl panelists, and then, within the timeframe 25-28 July, the girls interviewed 10 organizations shortlisted by the [With and For Girls](#) Collective, choosing the four winners, which are to be publicly announced in November in London. The selection criteria were: activities based on girls' needs, involving girls in the decision-making process and having programmes which impact on girls' lives at the grassroots level. The award includes small and large grants for the winner organizations to keep up the good work.

### **New shelter for victims of domestic violence, *INVICTA House***

This emergency shelter was opened on August 1<sup>st</sup> by ANAIS Association in Bucharest, Romania. The crisis shelter is open 24/7 and can be accessed by women victims of domestic violence and their children residing in Bucharest. Services are provided free of charge and it has 16 places available for 8 adults and 8 children. Services offered include: short-term housing, social counseling and guidance, medical consultations, psychological counseling. Legal counseling services, file preparation and court assistance to obtain a protection order, vocational counselling, psychotherapy and psychological counselling are offered at the Counseling Center for the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence of the ANAIS Association.



### **Latin American Women's Aid (LAWA) will be reaching a milestone anniversary of 30 years.**

[LAWA](#) is a London based migrant women's organisation and runs the only refuge in the UK and Europe for Latin American women and their children fleeing gender violence. Over the last 30 years, LAWA has

worked tirelessly to save and transform the lives of thousands of Latin American, black and minority ethnic women and their children. Based on their experience, supporting migrant families fleeing violence means not only tackling difficult issues such as domestic violence, child abuse and sex trafficking, but also offering them holistic assistance. On the 6th of October, LAWA will host a [celebration](#) of its landmarking anniversary and all those that have contributed to their achievements such as funders, partners, service users and supporters are invited to attend.

### Programme for empowering women and girls launched in Transnistria (Moldova)

The Center *Resonance*, member of the WAVE network, launched the economic programme for women and girls survivors of domestic violence, trafficking in persons, or those belonging to the risk group ranging from ages 16 to 40. *Resonance* provides basic trainings on entrepreneurship and employment skills, individual counseling and coaching, all within the framework of this programme. For women who would like to start their own business, the following opportunities are provided: a long-term course on entrepreneurship (84 hours long) and subsequently the best business plans will get a grant for financial support. 41 women attended the training programme in June-August 2017. Most participants emphasized that the Centre's educational programmes give women a great opportunity to fulfill their dreams to start their own businesses. You can find additional information about the programme on [Facebook](#).

### WAVE Step Up Campaign

#### WAVE Step Up Peace Day Protest to be held in Vienna on September 21<sup>st</sup>



As agreed upon in December 2016 at the Step-Up! Training in Vienna, a [European-wide protest will take place on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017](#) in the early evening hours. On this day, which is also the International Day for World Peace, women and their supporters will gather in front of government buildings of national importance to raise awareness on the issue of violence

against women. A demonstration organized by WAVE and the Austrian Women's Shelter Network (AÖF) will also be held in Vienna, Austria, on that day in front of the Justice Palace (Justizpalast) at Schmetterlingplatz. The event is planned to start at 7 pm, further information about this is available [here](#). Since many women around the world continue to suffer from physical, sexual or psychological violence, we hope many of you will be able to join us in this Long Night for Eliminating Violence against Women!

### International News

#### Norway ratifies the Istanbul Convention



On July 5<sup>th</sup> 2017, Norway ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), becoming the [24<sup>th</sup> ratifying state](#). The Convention will enter into force, as regards Norway, on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2017. The Istanbul Convention provides for an independent expert body – the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence ([GREVIO](#)) – to monitor compliance of all Contracting Parties with the Convention. It carries out this task in a spirit

of dialogue and co-operation with the Contracting Party concerned. GREVIO currently has 10 members, but 25 ratifications would expand membership to 15.

### **Albanian elections herald historic increase in number of women MPs**

Albania has reached a new milestone with women's representation in politics. Following the national elections held on June 25<sup>th</sup>, the Albanian Parliament will soon welcome a record number of women parliamentarians. The initial results indicate that [women's representation has reached 28 %](#)—a marked improvement compared to 2013 elections, when around 18 per cent women were elected. Women constitute approximately 50 % of the 2.88 million people in Albania, but majority of them (57 %) lack interest in politics, as revealed by a [2014 study supported by UN Women](#). Ahead of the 2017 elections, UN Women worked with national partners to improve the capacities and engagement of women, both as candidates and as voters.

### **CSW62 (2018)**

The [sixty-second session](#) of the [Commission on the Status of Women](#) will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 12 to 23 March 2018. The priority theme of the session is "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls" and the review theme: "Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women ([agreed conclusions](#) of the forty-seventh session)". Representatives of [Member States](#), UN entities, and [ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations \(NGOs\)](#) from all regions of the world are welcome to attend the session.

### **New Tunisian law takes long stride towards gender equality**

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, Tunisia's Parliament has approved comprehensive [new legislation](#), targeting violence against women. With the new law set to be implemented within six months, men who have sex with underage girls will no longer be allowed to escape prosecution by marrying their victims. The new legislation also raises the age of consent from 13 to 16. Additionally, workplace and wage discrimination is now punishable by a fine of 2,000 Tunisian dinars (\$817). In the public sphere, [sexual harassment will now be a criminal offense](#), punishable by two years in prison and a fine of 5,000 Tunisian dinars (just over \$2,000). Marital rape will also be criminalized. Before, judges were able to say that marital rape was not actually rape and therefore not a crime. From now on, marital rape will always be treated as rape, leaving no room for ambiguity.

### **Historic day for women in Lebanon as Parliament repeals rape law**



The Lebanese Parliament agreed on August 16<sup>th</sup> to [abolish the Penal Code Article 522](#), the infamous "rape law" or "rape-marriage" law, which exempted a rapist from punishment if he married his victim. This major legal step is a direct outcome of several national initiatives, including a successful nation-wide advocacy campaign led by ABAAD Institution for Gender Equality, in partnership with UN Women Lebanon, to remove existing discriminatory legal provisions related to article 522 of the Lebanese Penal Code. The campaign, funded by the Government of Japan and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) during the [16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence](#), mobilized

public awareness to strengthen legislation to protect women and girls from sexual violence and exploitation in Lebanon, and to spur social norms change to adequately respond to sexual violations. Tunisia and Jordan have both recently abolished similar laws. The rape clause remains in place in legislations from Algeria, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Bahrain, Palestine and Syria.