



WAVE Newsletter July-August 2020

Upcoming Events

SAVE THE DATE for the 22nd Annual WAVE Conference from October 7th – 8th 2020, Online!



(artwork by [@thingsdremakes](#))

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the first-ever *online* WAVE Conference, which will take place from the 7th – 8th of October 2020 starting at 9:00h (CEST). The conference topic this year is “Structural inequality: the root of the global pandemic of violence against women”.

We are still waiting for some speakers to confirm their attendance, however, WAVE is honoured to have **Dunja Mijatović**, Commissioner for Human Rights at the Council of Europe, deliver a key-note speech on the opening day of the conference.

Registration will open during the second week of September (to be announced on our website and social media soon!). Please be aware that although it will be held online, there are limited spaces, so please keep an eye on the registration date. It is possible that highlights of the conference will be viewable for the public for free online at a later time.

The agenda, as well as more information about speakers and workshops will follow.

The Autumn Advisory Board Meeting Date is Set!

We are happy to announce that the Autumn ABM will take place on **Monday, the 12th of October 2020** online. Registration (open to WAVE Advisory Board members only) will open in the upcoming weeks. Please check your emails for further details from the WAVE Office.

WAVE Multidisciplinary Training

Save the date for WAVE’s annual Multidisciplinary Training (MDT)! This year, the MDT will be a digital event taking place over two half-days on the **29th-30th of September** and focus on how effective collaboration between specialist women’s support services and the legal system can ensure effective, survivor-centered support for women survivors of rape. Olivia Björklund Dahlgren, Chairperson of the Swedish organization FATTA, will present good practices on integrating explicit consent into the national legislation. Virginia Gil, director of the foundation Aspacia, will present her experience in establishing the first Spanish rape crisis center and demonstrate how to support survivors when consent legislation is not in place. Registration and further information will follow shortly, so make sure to follow WAVE’s communication channels!

WAVE News

New Publication! The WAVE 2020 Handbook on Countering Gender Neutral Policy & Practice

The WAVE thematic working group on protecting women's specialist services from gender neutral policy and practice is excited to announce the publication of WAVE's 2020 handbook "**How Gender Neutral Policy and Practice Is Dismantling Women's Specialist Support Services and Ways to Counteract It.**" It can be found online [here](#).

The purpose of this handbook is to inform employees and volunteers of women's specialist support services (WSS) about the dangers of gender neutral policy and practice, as well as to help them counteract it by providing best practice examples which they can apply to their own region and organisation.

We would be grateful if you could share our social media posts about the handbook on your organization's and personal social media pages via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). During times when we risk budget cuts, we must show off the amazing work that we are doing together as WAVE members!



WAVE Youth Ambassador Mini Conference

On 14 July 2020, the WAVE Youth Ambassador mini Conference was conducted, an online meeting dedicated to the official introduction of the 2nd generation of WAVE Youth Ambassadors to the WAVE Network and the WAVE Step Up! Campaign. The Conference included a session exclusively for the WAVE Youth Ambassadors; a safe space during which they could express themselves openly and freely, and talk about their experiences and expectations as well as motivations and ideas to raise awareness about violence against women and girls. The online meeting also aimed at strengthening and fortifying the relationship between ambassadors and campaigners of the Step Up! Campaign, and encouraged both parties to discuss issues prevalent in their respective countries, visions and possible paths to solutions by joining forces. The online meeting included interactive group sessions, promoted intergenerational dialogue and resulted in fruitful discussions.

International News

Women's Rights Center Strategy to Face Rising Risk of Domestic Violence Against Women During Covid 19 Lockdown in Armenia

COVID-19 lockdown has brought the world to a standstill. The cases of domestic violence are repeated and perpetrated frequently. Armenia is not exception among countries where the number of domestic violence cases related to the current situation has increased and more women and their children have become vulnerable. Taking into consideration this fact, Women's Rights Center has taken responsibility to make their package of services as accessible as possible, ensuring the safety of beneficiaries by providing psychological and legal online counseling and even judicial representation in court, and if possible, expanding the scope of services from home by operating one more hot line number.

The Women's Wellness Centre Kosovo Has Implemented a Project Producing 13,500 Cotton Masks, Engaging Women Survivors of Domestic Violence

The Women's Wellness Centre has the mandate to protect, support and promote the rights and interests of women and girls all over Kosovo, regardless of political views, religious views, level of education, age, sexual orientation or ethnicity, as well as to cultivate understanding, tolerance, and collaboration in order to achieve a woman's full well-being. We implemented the project called "We Connect, We Protect" focused on engaging women survivors of domestic violence in producing 13,500 cotton masks.

The main objectives of the project are for the protection of people from Covid-19 (not just health care workers), to empower women, and to strengthen and support local partners. The project has had a multiplier effect in bringing some immediate income to the women beneficiaries. In addition, it will include majority and non-majority women in the joint work to fight against COVID-19.



The masks were delivered to women's organizations, such as women farmers and other institutions like the police, social workers, victims advocates, ect. The project was supported by UNMIK and was implemented for one month.

Umbrian Feminists Resist Restrictions on Abortion: "We are the Granddaughters of the Witches Who Have Not Been Burned!"

In Italy, access to abortion is regulated by law 194/78. The Italian Constitution establishes the right to health for all people as the founding principle of respect for health and human dignity. Therefore, the health system in Italy is of a "universal" nature and is ensured through the payment of taxes. Thanks to this, access to abortion and contraception should be free and guaranteed. Individual regions have exclusive competence in the regulation and organization of services and activities for



the protection of health and the financing criteria of the local health authorities and hospitals. This also goes for the management control and assessment of the quality of health services in compliance of the general principles established by the laws. Taking advantage of this autonomy, some regions governed by the radical right-wing took this opportunity to boycott access to abortion, in particular medical abortion (RU486). One of these regions is Umbria, and it is here that a wave of protests began which grew to involve the whole country, and one that honors the feminist struggle! Read and learn more on the WAVE Blog [here](#).

Women's Aid Released Their Annual Impact Report 2019 and Supplementary Report: When Home is Not Safe, Domestic Abuse During the Covid-19 Emergency.

Women's Aid released their [Annual Impact Report 2019](#) and supplementary report: [When Home is Not Safe, Domestic Abuse During the Covid-19 Emergency](#) on Thursday the 19th of August 2020. Women's Aid saw an aggregate increase of 9% across all Women's Aid direct services from 2018 to 2019. There were 20,763 contacts with Women's Aid where 24,049 disclosures of domestic abuse against women and children were made. During the Covid-19 emergency, Women's Aid saw an increase of 43% of in calls between the end of March to the end of May. There was also a 71% increase in visits to the Women's Aid website during this period.

Women's Aid Federation of England: Resources for Survivors and Communities

Throughout COVID 19, the VAWG sector in England and Wales has come together weekly to share updates and expertise on how to tackle these unprecedented and challenging times. This includes the creation of joint [safety and support resources](#) for survivors and communities, which are available in British Sign Language and 15 other languages.

Such regular discussions have enabled organisations to quickly respond to the fast-paced policy changes during the pandemic and lobby the government on the vital support that survivors and front-line services need with the strength of the sector's voice as one. These meetings have also benefited from the attendance and support of both the designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner and Victim's Commissioner.

This will continue to be a vital space for the sector as we navigate the easing of lockdown measures, but also to improve the sector's work on anti-racism and ensuring this is a much more central focus.

Women's Aid Federation of England: New Research Report

On Tuesday 18th August 2020 Women's Aid released a new report "[A Perfect Storm: the impact of Covid-19 on domestic abuse survivors and the services supporting them](#)". Using what we have learned from the survivors and providers we interact with, our key data sources and specially designed surveys of survivors and providers, the research finds:

1. Covid-19 is escalating existing abuse: 91% of survivors responding to our June survey said the pandemic had impacted their experiences of abuse in one or more way/s.
2. Abusers' behaviour and lockdown restrictions have reduced women's support networks and freedom to leave or seek help: over ¾ of survivors in April said Covid-19 made it harder to leave and this was still a significant issue in June.
3. Support services have seen a mixed impact on demand for services and expect to see a spike in demand over the coming year because of the pandemic."

Italian Feminist Proposals 25 Years on from Beijing: A Position Paper

25 years ago, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, a promise of equality was launched. Today, the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed structural gender inequalities rooted in our society and has definitively shown that the promise for women has not been kept. The system of power and resource management, governed almost exclusively by men, has failed.

With the Position Paper "[The Change We Want. Feminist proposals – 25 years on from Beijing](#)", a group of 68 Italian feminist women representing 45 organizations - coordinated by [D.i.Re](#), a network of over 80 Italian women's NGO running women's specialized services - built together a strong political stance, to voice the change we demand, with clarity and determination.

The Position Paper, while taking stock of the progress, delays and regressions made after implementing the 1995 Beijing Declaration in Italy, is a feminist contribution of thought, proposals and actions to activate systemic changes, to challenge economic and production structures and to recognise, make room for and value women's work.



Scottish Feminist Judgments Podcast



The First Episode of the Scottish Feminist Judgments Podcast is now available on all major streaming platforms!

Based on the legals project of the same name, the podcast explores past judgments through a feminist lens, and looks at how this would impact the arguments, logic, and outcomes of the judgments. The first episode discusses a case called Stuart Drury vs her

Majesty's Advocate, to highlight how sexist history and cultural legacies impact on Scots Law today. You can listen to episode [here](#), and follow the podcast on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) for further updates.

