

Press release: Violence against older women is a burning issue in the EU

New project establishes a large-scale transnational action to tackle gender based violence against older women through collaboration of different agencies. “MARVOW 2.0: Coordinated Multi-agency Response to Violence against Older Women” builds on the earlier MARVOW project implemented between 2019 and 2022 and will expand a multi-agency collaboration model to protect older women affected by violence in the European Union.

Vienna, 04.05.2023 – Violence against older women is an increasingly relevant concern as in the European Union 5% of women over 50 reported physical and/or sexual violence in the last year, 3% from a partner¹. The same study suggests that although 19% of women over 60 were abused by a partner in their life, only 14% of women who experienced violence reported their most serious incident of IPV to the police. Therefore, it is widely believed that the number of unreported cases of violence against older women is very high. As Europe’s population ages, the issues surrounding violence against older women are likely to intensify. This is why MARVOW 2.0 will take action to tackle GBV against older women through multi-agency teamwork.

The goal of the MARVOW 2.0 project is to build upon the outcomes and key pathways of the MARVOW project to create a coordinated and structured model for responding to abuse against older women. The earlier project adopted a multi-agency approach combined with capacity building for relevant professionals, which facilitated the reduction of under-reporting and increased the efficiency of services tackling GBV against older women.

The MARVOW 2.0 project aims to address the issue of violence against older women in the EU by developing risk assessment tools and case management methodologies for frontline professionals, providing capacity building and training programs, and introducing a coordinated multi agency work protocol and policy recommendations. The project includes experts from Austria, Greece, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Bulgaria, Italy, France and Cyprus. The project’s outputs will be disseminated and replicated via wide European networks such as AGE Platform Europe, European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN) and Women against Violence Europe (WAVE).

In the long run, MARVOW 2.0 will contribute towards improved gender equality through combating violence against older women and creating a long-lasting transnational change.

The kick off meeting will take place on 4th and 5th May and it will be hosted by the project coordinator Association of Autonomous Women’s Shelters in Austria, AÖF. International experts on intimate partner violence against older women and EU project partners will gather to discuss the extension of the work done under MARVOW.

What is the MARVOW model?

The MARVOW project focused on implementing multi-agency networks and cooperation between stakeholders that are in contact with older women who experience violence, including health care professionals, the police and judiciary, victim support services and perpetrator programs as well as local and regional policy makers. The project developed a multi-agency cooperation model of

¹ Violence against women: An EU-wide survey: Main results. FRA, EU FRA, 2014

systematic response to the needs for older women who are at a high risk of abuse. The team also developed replication guidelines showcasing how the model can be replicated across Europe.

Partner organisations in Europe:

- Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters, Austria
- Union of Women Associations of Heraklion, Greece
- Conexus, Spain
- Association Naia, Bulgaria
- Anci Associazione Regionale Comuni Italiani Lazio, Italy
- SC Psytel, France
- Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, Cyprus
- AGE Platform Europe
- European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN)
- Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE)