



StoP Domestic violence

Community matters!

StoP Press Release



Press release: New project shows that neighbourhoods are essential to stop cases of violence against women

“Community Matters! Community based model to stop domestic violence” is a new project to multiply “StoP – Districts without Partner Violence” in the European Union

Vienna, 31.03.2023 – Root causes of violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence are embedded in societal structures and social norms, which are upheld and conveyed in the communities we live in. Widespread change of social norms and immediate, direct help require engagement of the ones in the immediate vicinity of victims - friends, family, neighbours – as well as the engagement of civic life and social services. That is why community-based programs are needed - community-based programs address domestic violence where and when it happens by unlocking the potential of social networks and local communities.

“StoP: Districts without Partner Violence” was launched in Germany and has been expanded to 25 locations in Austria in recent years. This innovative model to prevent domestic violence celebrates its new success - a kick off meeting of a new project which will allow StoP to expand to further European countries.

The purpose of this European StoP project is to adapt and expand a digital social design toolbox and curriculum in partner countries: Belgium, Czechia, France, and Romania. Women Against Violence in Europe (WAVE) and European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN) have joined to distribute the toolbox across Europe.

The long- term goal is to have a StoP program in every EU country in every city, municipality, and district to bring about social "climate change" against deep-seated patriarchal structures,

fight toxic masculinities and traditional gender stereotypes, in order for violence against women and children to be no longer ignored nor tolerated.

The kick off meeting will place on 31st March and 1st April and it will be hosted by the Association of Autonomous Women's Shelters in Austria, AÖF and "StoP - Neighbourhoods Without Partner Violence". International experts on intimate partner violence and EU project partners will gather to discuss the expansion of StoP across Europe. The meeting will be opened by StoP founder Prof. Sabine Stövesand, the director of AÖF, Maria Rösslhumer and the project coordinator - Alicja Switon. Ms. Silvia Jankovic, the head of the 5th district of Vienna, which was the first district of Austria which welcomed StoP in 2019, will join the project opening.

What is StoP?

"StoP - Discripts without Partner Violence" is a social space-oriented violence prevention project. It involves neighbourhoods in the prevention of intimate partner violence and femicides in their own communities. StoP manages this by reaching out to neighbours, teaching them to spot early signs of partner violence in their neighbourhoods and encouraging them to enact civil courage and intervene.

The StoP concept was initiated and brought to life by Prof. Dr. Sabine Stövesand, professor at the HAW in Hamburg, Department of Social Work at the Faculty of Economics and Social Affairs. In 2019 Maria Rösslhumer, head of the Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters, AÖF established the project in Austria. It was first introduced in the fifth district of Vienna and quickly expanded all over Austria. Today StoP counts 25 chapters in all nine Austrian states, including nine in Vienna. For more information, please visit: www.stop-partnergewalt.at

The StoP project is developed by an international, interdisciplinary team consisting of:

- Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters (Verein AÖF), Project Coordinator, Austria

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- Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW) - Department Social Work, Germany
- Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW) - Centre for design research, Germany
- Association for Liberty and Equality of Gender - A.L.E.G, Romania
- Garance ASBL, Belgium
- SC Psytel, France
- Rosa Centrum Pro Zeny ZS, Czech Republic
- WWP EN, the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, Germany
- WAVE, Women Against Violence Europe, Austria

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