



## STRATEGY PAPER

### **Europe-wide protest to hold governments accountable for providing specialist support services to women survivors of violence and their children 21<sup>th</sup> of September 2017**

#### **WHAT IS THE ISSUE?**

##### INTRODUCTION

As agreed upon at the Fall 2016 Step-Up! Training in Vienna, a Europe-wide protest will take place on **September 21, 2017 in the early evening hours**. On this day, which is also International World Peace Day, women and their allies will come together in front of government buildings of national importance in order to raise awareness for the issue of violence against women. This demonstration will be held to continue raising awareness on the issue of lack of support structures for women and children who have suffered from domestic violence.

**This paper is intended to provide some ideas for national or local campaigns. It offers some basic information about the problem and a few suggestions for activities you can do in your area. Please see the campaign [blueprint](#) prepared by WAVE for information on the campaign.**

##### GOVERNMENTS ARE STILL DRAGGING THEIR FEET ON SIGNATURE/RATIFICATION OF ISTANBUL CONVENTION

Governments have signed and ratified the Istanbul Convention yet have not met the requirements of the provisions. On World Peace Day, we will unite all over Europe to put pressure on our governments to Step-Up! and take charge of ensuring women victims and their children are protected and provided with the appropriate services.

1 in 3 women in the EU have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual assault since the age of 15, translating into 62 million women throughout the EU. However, **governments are still not providing** the funds to ensure that there are enough spaces and/or shelters for women and their children. An estimated 47,000 of recommended shelter places are still missing in Europe.

#### **WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?**

**Please note that these steps will be thoroughly discussed during our skype meeting occurring from March 21<sup>st</sup> -24<sup>th</sup>, 2017.**

##### STEP 1. CREATION OF WORKING GROUP IN YOUR COUNTRY

The first step for the protest would be the creation of a working group for your country. In this case, having a dedicated campaigner with which the WAVE office could be in contact with, would be an advantage.



## **STEP 2. ENGAGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC AND ORGANISATIONS**

It would be ideal to **involve celebrities and politicians (from ministries as well as local governments)** who may be interested. Share their pictures/posts (with a meaningful commitments/statement) on facebook and all other social media ahead of the demonstration. The WAVE office uses a website called Canva to create social media posts that are visually engaging and recommends that you create your own posts which then can be shared ubiquitously by everyone. Social media will be an important place to promote this event so twitter, Instagram and snapchat should be used as well.

## **STEP 3. INVOLVE OTHER ORGANISATIONS/COOPERATIONPARTNERS**

Since this event will be held on International World Peace Day, it would be useful **to involve peace organisations, women's Networks, Youth organisations/Networks, Football clubs, academics, individual ...etc.** and any other relevant networks which might come into question. We also recommend that you synergize with various other organisations which may also have an event on this day.

## **STEP 4. PLANNING**

In order to make sure the demonstration runs smoothly, you will want to check with local authorities to make sure that you are **permitted to have a demonstration** in front of your government building of choice Building with chairs in front of them. Preparing your important messages (see below) and materials (Posters, Videos, give aways etc..)

## **STEP 5. PROMOTION OF THE PROTEST**

The promotion of this demonstration is key. It is necessary to:

1. build a strong organisational team with local allies for this event well before September (examples: peace organisations, human rights organisations, migrant organisations, etc.);
2. promote the event via press and social media duly ahead of the event. A **press release** will be created and sent to all during the week of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. A **Facebook event** for the Europe-wide protest demonstration will be created. Facebook events of every country participating will be listed on this main event created by the WAVE office, so please send us the link as soon as it is created.

Another option for promotion could be the use of artists to **create murals or make light projections on buildings** in your cities.

For financing murals, campaigners could also engage local authorities and local artist communities. An example of first would be the painting of a [mural in Nitra, Slovakia](#) for an esperantist Conference in the city. Maybe you could consider who has done murals or projections before in your city and contact them. Also, your city may have buildings where projections are already being made. This contact would also be great to have.

Examples of the light projections would be:



LEFT: In 2016, Frauenhaus Zürich Violetta celebrated 35 years of providing support to women seeking refuge from violence. On the evening of Monday 7th of December, to mark its Jubilee, three illuminated messages were projected on the Swissmill-Silo tower, in the Zürich industrial district. 'Temporary ambassadors against domestic violence', the three thought-provoking messages read: „Stop domestic violence – Do not look away”, “365 days against violence against women and children”, and “35 years Foundation Frauenhaus Zürich”. (Photo: Dominique Meienberg)

RIGHT: “Empire State Building Shines Pink in Solidarity with Women Marching Below” (Photo: Mike Segar / REUTERS, source: <https://goo.gl/NZaKSL>)

## KEY MESSAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN

The key messages can vary based on the country. The WAVE office would love to hear your variations and ideas on the key messages.

1. Women and children deserve a life **without violence**. Governments need to **immediately fund** shelters and specialised facilities in order to protect victims of violence!
2. Governments must **actively support** prevention and protection for victims of violence by **committing** to improving their access to protection and specialised support services, especially groups facing multiple discriminations.
3. The **quality and number of women’s specialist support services** must be improved.

## STRUCTURE OF THE PROTEST

Women and allies will hold hands across the steps of said buildings in order to signify that the government should “step up!” and provide funding for specialized facilities for women. Whether these steps are part of a ladder or actual steps leading up to the parliament, courthouse, etc. can be decided upon by the Step-Up! campaigners of each country. Politicians and celebrities should be invited to the event which will be held in the early evening hours.

Ideally a picture would be taken of **women (and allies) holding hands** in each country. The pictures would be collected by the campaigners and sent to the WAVE campaign coordinator (or campaign assistant Lina Piskernik) who will then find a way to juxtapose the pictures into a mural where the women can be seen holding hands across countries and regions in Europe.

## CONTACT

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