

NEWSLETTER

no. 41 (2025)

STOP VIOLENCE



APRIL to JUNE

WOMEN'S LAW CENTRE

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EVENT CELEBRATING THE RESULTS OF THE PROJECT „EMPOWERING WOMEN, LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND REFUGEES IN MOLDOVA”

The Women’s Law Centre implemented the project „Empowering Women, Local Communities and Refugees in Moldova” from August 2023 to April 2025, with financial support from the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF). The closing event, held on 23 May 2025, brought together beneficiaries, partners, and supporters of the project to reflect on the achievements of the last two years and to encourage the sustainability of local initiatives.



Opening the event, WLC Executive Director, Angelina Zaporozhan-Pîrgari, emphasised:

“Real change towards gender equality starts with each one of us, through conscious choices and daily actions that build respect, resilience and balance in our communities. We are grateful to our partners on the ground, women, men, community leaders and active young people, who through their involvement have proven that they are true agents of change.”

Dieter Wagner, Programme Management Officer, UNDEF, summarised the impact of the joint efforts:

“The initiatives you have implemented have contributed to raising awareness on gender equality and have supported women in their personal and professional development.”



■ A project about change and inclusion

The project aimed to create a positive environment for promoting gender equality and the economic, social, and educational empowerment of women in the districts of **Orhei, Soroca, Glodeni, Causeni, Stefan Voda, Ialoveni, Criuleni, Cimisliia, Donduşeni, and Floresti.**

Thirty people from the 10 districts, comprising **15 women** and **15 men**, were selected to benefit from a comprehensive training programme on gender equality, project writing, fundraising, project

management, and working with local authorities. The first phase of the project involved assessing the population’s perception of gender equality in the targeted districts, and the findings were used to develop local initiatives further. The training programme was complemented by 10 round tables with decision-makers, organised by the project beneficiaries in each district, to identify the problems and needs of the communities and to collect community-proposed project ideas.



Male and female participants formed mixed teams, consisting of one man and one woman, and submitted proposals for local initiatives to address the identified gender equality problems. WLC selected **10 local initiatives**, each receiving funding of USD 10,000.

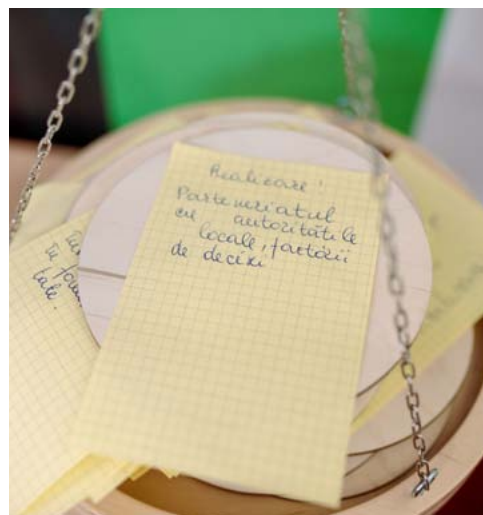
The local initiatives, implemented in the 10 districts, included **various activities, targeting several target groups**: summer camps for young men and women;

information campaigns on social media; economic empowerment and entrepreneurship courses for women; fathers' club and information sessions for parents on gender-sensitive parenting; career guidance sessions for young women; development of local gender equality action plans and strategies; training for multidisciplinary teams on coordinated response to cases of domestic violence, etc.

■ The final event – a platform for reflection

The final event was centred around a symbolic installation – the **gender equality scale**. The participants reflected on the results achieved and the challenges encountered by symbolically placing them on the „Challenges” and „Results” trays. This gesture visually illustrated the balance between achievements and the steps needed for the future. During the interactive sessions, male and female participants shared lessons learnt and outlined future directions for promoting gender equality and community involvement.

The project demonstrated that community involvement and collaboration between women and men can lead to sustainable solutions that promote gender equality. While change doesn't happen overnight, we are convinced that investing in education, awareness raising and community support can transform mindsets.



Discover the impact of the 10 local initiatives [here](#).

WLC AND CNSM LAUNCH STRATEGIC COLLABORATION TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND COMBAT SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

The Women's Law Centre and the National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (CNSM) signed a strategic cooperation agreement on 30 April 2025 to promote women's rights and combat sexual harassment in the workplace.

The agreement stipulates the drafting of a framework regulation to prevent and combat sexual harassment at work, which will be adopted by the CNSM and subsequently promoted among member trade union organisations. The collaboration also provides for the training of trade

union trainers, the holding of information sessions for employers and employees and the development of information materials.

„The Republic of Moldova has made significant progress in the area of gender equality, advancing to 7th out of 146 countries in 2025, according to the Global Gender Equality Index. Women's political participation has increased considerably, from just 4% in 1995 to over 42.5% today. These results reflect, in no small part, the efforts we are making together. However, women's economic participation remains low, and one of the most serious problems is gender-based violence. Nearly 70% of women have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime, including in their professional lives. In the context of the project, we will work together to develop a clear and enforceable regulation that



can be used by employers and trade union organisations so that women can claim their rights in cases of sexual harassment at work,” – **WLC Executive Director Angelina Zaporojan-Pîrgari said.**

“The signing of this agreement is not just a formal gesture, but a firm commitment by the CNSM to help create a safe and

dignified working environment for all. Zero tolerance towards any form of violence must become the norm, and gender equality, not just a strategic objective, but a value that we constantly promote. It is paramount to provide useful tools to our colleagues so that we have an organisational culture based on respect, non-discrimination and solidarity,” said **Igor Zubcu, President of the CNSM.**



The partnership was concluded in the framework of the project “Strengthening Gender Equality in Moldova”, implemented by WLC with the financial support of KVINFO.

HOME REMAINS THE MOST DANGEROUS PLACE FOR WOMEN, ACCORDING TO THE 2024 REPORT ON ANALYSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES RESULTING IN DEATH OR SERIOUS BODILY HARM

On 13 June 2025, the Women's Law Centre, in partnership with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, presented the 2024 case analysis on the platform of the Commission for Monitoring and Analysis of Domestic Violence Cases Resulting in Death or Serious Bodily Harm.

This annual analysis is a vital tool for understanding and tackling this deeply harmful phenomenon. The report offers concrete recommendations for strengthening the national response system, including proposals to amend legislation, promote intersectoral cooperation, expand prevention efforts, and improve access to support services for victims of domestic violence.

Compared to 2023, when 75 cases were recorded, 2024 shows an increase to **87 criminal cases examined**, resulting in death or serious bodily harm to the victims. Of these:

42 cases

in which the victim died (37 victims died immediately, and another 14 later as a result of the trauma suffered)

21 cases

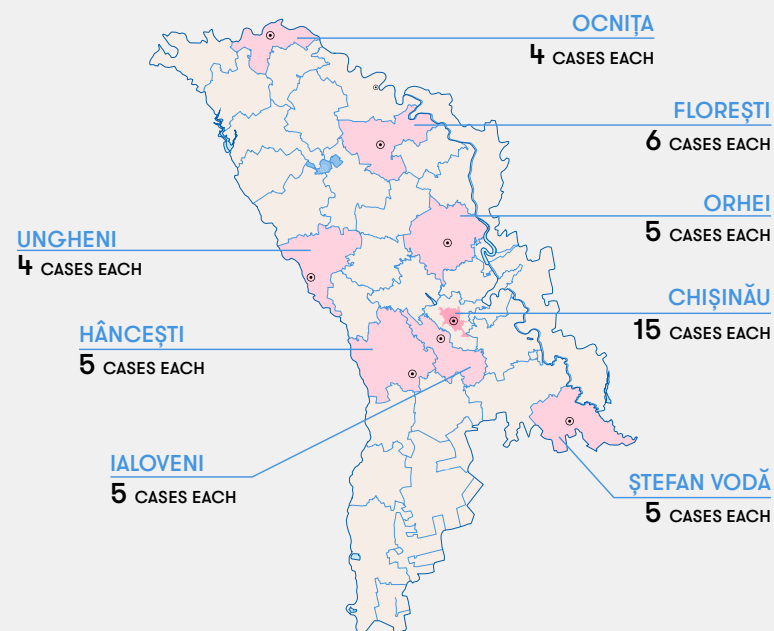
of femicide

45 instances

where the victim survived



Breakdown of cases by administrative units:



In cases of domestic violence, the predominance of male aggressors is more than three times higher than that of female aggressors. Out of 87 criminal cases, in 67 cases the perpetrator is male and in 20 cases female.



In 2024, femicide made up 53% of cases, identical to 2022 and very close to 2023. This consistency in the lethal proportion of men's violence against women confirms the hazardous nature of domestic violence. It reveals a persistent pattern that requires urgent, specialised and well-coordinated interventions between institutions, focused on risk assessment and prevention of lethality.

In most cases, victims lost their lives in their own homes. For many women, home is the most dangerous place, a place where violence, gender inequality and stereotypes isolate and condemn them. Women who become victims of femicide are often subjected to a vicious cycle of violence, where access to resources and support to escape an abusive relationship is limited or non-existent.

In femicide cases, 2 out of 3 offences occurred in rural areas and 1 out of 3 in cities.

Most acts of violence were committed in active intimate relationships, particularly cohabiting (75% of cases), reflecting the fact that the most dangerous relationships for women are intimate partnerships, where lack of legal protection and emotional/economic dependence can facilitate extreme violence.

10 offenders were already known to the police:

7 of them were registered as 'family offenders'

1 offender had a criminal record,

In 2 cases no clear information was available.

In cases of femicide, the situation is even worse:

11 out of 21 perpetrators had a criminal record and/or offences.

2 out of 3 offenders had already been sanctioned for domestic violence or other abuse.

In 16 cases, the victims had been subjected to violence in the last 5 years, but in only 8 of them did they file a complaint (5 women and 3 men). In the other 8 cases, the victims did not report the violence, although it had happened (6 women and 2 men). In 1 out of 3 femicide cases, there had been violence before. Still, only half of them were reported to the authorities, which shows the significant risk of under-reporting and a lack of early intervention.

Convictions with actual execution of the prison sentence are the most common, applied in severe cases, including femicide cases, with sentences ranging from **2 to 25 years imprisonment**. Out of 47 cases, 39 involved custodial sentences and 8 non-custodial sentences, including community service. The mildest penalty was 135 hours of unpaid community service, although the victim lost his life.

As in 2023, the most frequently cited motive for committing the crime was verbal conflict. In none of the femicide cases examined by the prosecution authorities



and the courts was a gender-based motive identified, nor was the offence classified under the aggravating circumstance of gender-based prejudice.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, in cooperation with the Women's Law Centre, prepared the report as part of the work of the Commission for Monitoring and Analysing Domestic Violence Cases Resulting in Death or Serious Bodily Harm to Victims, with financial support from UN Women and the Kingdom of Sweden.

WLC SUPPORTS ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE LEGAL AID TO WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE UNDER THE MENTORING PROGRAMME

Free legal aid is a fundamental right of victims of domestic violence, guaranteeing them effective access to justice. Non-governmental organisations providing legal aid services play a crucial role at the front line of intervention. They help protect victims' rights through information, counselling and legal representation tailored to the needs of each individual.

WLC, with the support of UN Women, implements a Mentoring Programme to support organisations in providing a more effective, coordinated and victim-centred response, and to contribute to the development of sustainable practices in providing legal aid to women victims of gender-based violence.

5 NGOs from the northern, central and southern regions of the country were **selected to participate in the Mentoring Programme**:



- A.O. "Biaz Gul" – Comrat
- A.O. "Ophelia" – Cahul
- Resource Centre for Youth and Women DACIA – Soroca
- A.O. "Stimul" – Ocnița
- Social Justice Centre "ECHITATE" – Criuleni



In April and May, we visited the organisations, signed mentoring agreements with each of them, discussed priorities and established a support plan for their activities.



Another step was to identify capacity-building needs during the initial assessment of the organisations.

On 5-6 June 2025, WLC conducted the training course for lawyers and advocates from NGOs participating in the

Mentoring Programme. The WLC team thus had the opportunity to share their experience in the field of specialised legal assistance for women victims of violence with colleagues from the selected organisations.





For two days, key topics were addressed to understand the phenomenon of domestic violence better, the specifics of providing primary and qualified legal aid in dealing with domestic violence cases, including specific intervention tools, with a focus on developing intervention skills and victim/survivor-centred response.



At the same time, the specifics of examining cases from a civil, criminal and contravention perspective were deepened, addressing the main problems encountered in practice and the importance of coordinated response in cases of domestic violence, including partnership with state institutions and referral to specialised services.



This event is one of the stages of the 6-month Mentoring Programme, which will include several activities, including individual mentoring sessions with each organisation.

The Mentoring Programme is organised by the Women's Law Centre in the framework of the project "Enhancing Women's Leadership for Resilient and Peaceful Societies" implemented by UN Women Moldova and funded by the Government of Denmark.

IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME ON WLC BENEFICIARIES

Twenty-one courageous women across Moldova have said „YES” to change. They are taking significant steps towards financial independence, through the Economic Empowerment Programme implemented by WLC, with the support of UN Women and Sweden.

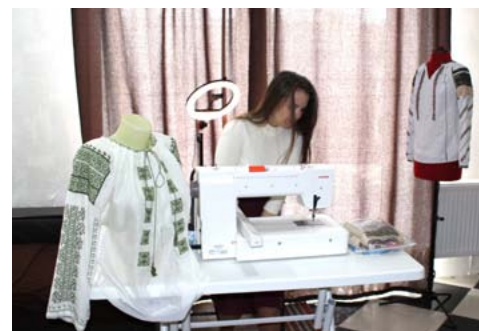
This programme is not just about courses or material support – it is about the personal and professional transformation of our beneficiaries, it is about the power to overcome obstacles and step confidently towards a better future. The programme gives women survivors of violence, who have left traumatic experiences behind, the chance to turn their dreams into reality.

For more than a year, we have been implementing local economic empowerment programmes in 5 districts of Moldova. Women have had the opportunity to participate in vocational training, entrepreneurship, and personal development courses, and received one-to-one mentoring. Under the TransFormare voucher programme, 21 of them have received financial support to achieve their goals.

Some recipients have capitalised on the knowledge they have gained and the vouchers to start or develop businesses in various fields.



- **DIANA** has invested in the development of her clothing brand, acquiring equipment such as a professional ironing board, industrial electric press, hidden-stitch sewing machine, mannequins, etc.



- **STELA** makes authentic traditional costumes and has over 10 years of experience in ethnography and ethnology. Her dream is to open a mini-workshop in Singerei. Thanks to the Programme, she has acquired valuable knowledge for the development of her activity and invested in the purchase of much-needed equipment.



- **TATIANA**, inspired by the desire for personal re-discovery and self-fulfilment, founded a modern language learning centre. With the support of mentors and the Economic Empowerment Programme, she successfully created a space tailored to the community's needs, offering English and Italian classes for all ages.



- **ELENA** runs an apiary and in over 5 years of business has developed it from scratch to 150 hives. Thanks to the programme, Elena has invested in developing the enterprise by launching a new product – creamed honey with natural additives – and in technologizing the process of making candles from natural wax.



- The economic empowerment programme allowed **GEORGETEI** the opportunity to build her business. She opened a cosmetology practice where she offers personalised skin care services. With the help of the voucher, she invested in refurbishing the practice, creating a modern and attractive space for customers.



- For **ELENA***, art has been the way to escape, to transform pain into beauty, in the most challenging moments of life. Elena creates commissioned paintings. Thanks to the support, she has invested in professional equipment, including a graphic tablet, projector, compressor, sprayer, drawing brushes, and canvases, to perfect her technique and meet the demands of her clients.

Other beneficiaries have found their calling by following vocational training courses in areas such as patisserie and confectionery, tailoring and clothing design, hairdressing, manicure and professional make-up.



- **CAROLINA** is on her way to a new career. She is undergoing professional training in hairdressing and has invested in the necessary tools to put her acquired knowledge into practice.



- **MARIA*** has turned her passion for embroidery into an additional source of income. Thanks to the voucher, she was able to purchase an embroidery machine and a computer to improve her techniques and expand her business.



- **ELENA*** saw manicuring as an opportunity to build a better future for herself. By taking a specialisation course and investing in professional tools, she is now ready to develop her skills and turn her passion into a source of income.

- Thanks to the economic empowerment programme, **ANA** dared to start a new business and fulfil her dream of creating clothes. With great enthusiasm, Ana is taking a tailoring and design course and has acquired the necessary tools to make unique garments.



We continue to stand by the beneficiaries of the programme who need support and guidance, supporting them to take firm steps towards a better future. WLC provides mentoring and guidance so that each woman feels encouraged throughout the process.

*Name changed to protect identity.

"JUSTICE BEGINS WITH US. UNITED AGAINST VIOLENCE" – SUMMER SCHOOL FOR LAW STUDENTS

On 27-29 June 2025, the Women's Law Centre, in partnership with the Criminal Law Department of the Faculty of Law at the State University of Moldova (USM) and with support from Sweden, organised the summer school "Justice Begins with Us: United Against Violence."

Over the course of three days, 20 male and female students from the Faculty of Law, USM engaged in an interactive and innovative programme exploring gender equality and the prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence.



■ Future agents of change

Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari, Executive Director of the WLC, emphasised at the opening of the event:

"You are the agents of change and the future prosecutors, judges, lawyers, criminal investigation officers who will build a fair justice system that protects and respects the rights of victims of domestic violence and violence against women. During the summer school, you will learn about both the national and international legal framework in the field, as well as how to identify your own perceptions and prejudices on gender equality, building together a climate of zero tolerance towards violence."



■ A strategic educational partnership

Alina Şavga, Ph.D. in Law, Lecturer at the Criminal Law Department of the Faculty of Law, USM, noted the contribution of the WLC to the training and continuous education of students of the Faculty of Law, USM:

"By organising public lectures, mock trials, round tables and other activities in collaboration with representatives of the Criminal Law Department, a favourable platform is launched for the development of initiatives to prevent and combat violence. The organisation of the summer school for law students is a first edition. Still, it will certainly make a significant contribution to encouraging participants to take an active role in promoting the rights of victims of all types of violence."





Arina Țurcan-Donțu, WLC lawyer, held a session dedicated to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, presenting cases from real practice. The examples discussed reflected both the difficulties faced by women and the importance of an empathic approach, adapted to the needs of the victim and the importance of specialised services for victims of violence against women.

Thus, male and female students had the opportunity to gain a concrete understanding of both the challenges of the system and the impact of professional legal support in protecting women's rights.



■ Non-formal approach, personal experiences

The sessions facilitated by **Mariana Meg Țurcan** and **Viorica Mocanu** stimulated reflection and personal engagement of young men and women. The topics were centred on a deeper understanding of stereotypes, gender-based prejudices and attitudes that influence interpersonal relationships and the process of social inclusion.

The sessions provided participants with the opportunity to reflect on how personal perceptions and experiences influence social interactions, sometimes leading to discrimination and exclusion. The interactive atmosphere facilitated open discussions and practical individual and group exercises, designed to stimulate empathy and critical thinking.



■ Student feedback

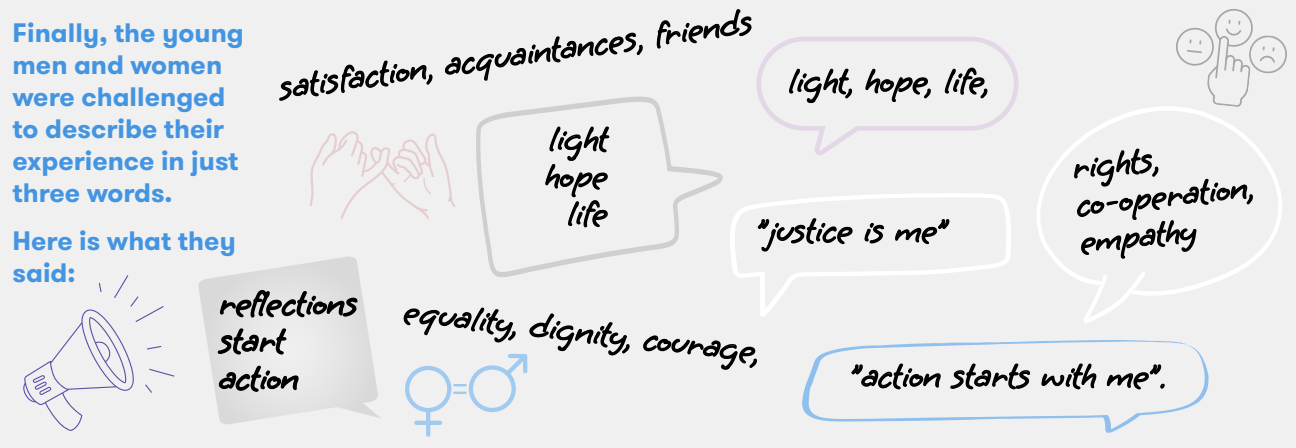
Virinea Carapirea, a fourth-year student working in the **Cimislia Court**, said:

"Participating in the summer school was a valuable experience for me. I have acquired theoretical and practical tools that will enable me to provide support to those who come to us. I encourage all young men and women to take advantage of such educational opportunities. I am convinced that learning does not take place in the comfort zone, but where fear and challenge begin, where you are no longer sure of the answers, but are willing to question, listen and rethink your positions. Such experiences can become starting points for action, giving us the chance to turn theoretical knowledge into engagement, engagement into change, and change into something that starts with each of us."



Finally, the young men and women were challenged to describe their experience in just three words.

Here is what they said:



WLC LAUNCHED AN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITY WOMEN FROM BALTI AND CHISINAU

In May 2025, WLC launched the project "Economic Empowerment of refugee and host community women through services tailored to their needs" with an implementation period until 31 August 2025, in Balti and Chisinau.

The objective of the project is to help refugee women and women victims of domestic violence in the host community start or develop a business idea to secure a stable source of income.



To this end, we have made an economic empowerment programme available to the project beneficiaries, consisting of two modules that focus on personal development, entrepreneurship, and business plan development. The programme also offers the possibility of winning funding to support at least eight business ideas.





■ What have we achieved so far?

Information sessions: In Chisinau and Balti, participants learnt about their rights, violence prevention methods and economic opportunities available.

Economic Empowerment Programme (5 days): In Balti and Chisinau, **31 refugee women** from Ukraine and host communities completed two modules, focusing on personal development (2 days) and entrepreneurship (3 days). Guided by experienced mentors, they clearly defined their values, motivation and the steps needed to turn a business idea into reality.

■ What next?

The women have submitted applications for funding and business plans, and the most promising initiatives will receive **funding of up to \$2000**.

In parallel, refugee women will participate in English language courses, helping them to integrate and build a better future.



Women who look forward with dignity, hope and courageous plans.



The project “Economic Empowerment of Refugee and Host Community Women through Services Tailored to their Needs” is implemented by the Women’s Law Centre with the financial support of the International Rescue Committee [IRC].

INSP EMPLOYEES ARE TRAINED ON COMBATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

From 25 to 30 June 2025, the Women's Law Centre organised, in partnership with the Association of Police Women (AFP), 2 workshops attended by heads of the National Public Security Inspectorate (INSP) subdivisions.

In the Republic of Moldova, sexual harassment in the workplace remains a widespread but deeply underreported phenomenon. In 2023, about **18%** of women abused at work experienced at least once every 2-3 months subtle and medium forms of sexual harassment, and another **25%** severe forms of harassment. **60%** of abused employees never reported the abuse they experienced.

The reasons are multiple: fear of stigmatisation, institutional pressures, lack of trust in existing protection mechanisms and a culture of tolerance that normalises abusive behaviour. In parallel, there is a chronic lack of domestic regulation within public and private institutions to address this type of violence effectively. Although Moldova has ratified the International Labour Organisation's



Convention No. 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work, the application of these standards in everyday reality remains a challenge.

*“Sexual harassment in the workplace is a form of gender-based violence that is far too little talked about. This is why such workshops are essential for encouraging awareness of rights, building institutional capacity, and implementing the commitments that the Republic of Moldova has undertaken at the international level, including through the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and ILO Convention No. 190. Things can only be changed in partnership, and we are grateful that the police are with us in this process.” – **Angeлина Zaporozjan-Pîrgari**, Executive Director WLC.*

“It is important that we listen to and value the perspectives of both women and men when talking about safety, respect and fairness in our institutions. The purpose of these discussions is to

ask questions, share experiences and, most importantly, identify effective solutions that can be implemented. We need to know how to deal with conflicts, even when they start from seemingly minor situations, and through information and prevention, we can significantly reduce the risk of harassment being perpetuated in our professional environment,” said the President of the Association of Women Policewomen, **Cristina Schimbov**.





During the workshops, the participants discussed the forms, causes and effects of sexual harassment in the professional environment, relevant decisions of the Council for Equality, perceptions of women in the Ministry of Interior and Police regarding the phenomenon of harassment at the workplace, as well as the managerial responsibility in ensuring a safe and equal work environment for all. At the end of each workshop, the heads of the subdivisions were invited to formulate commitments and action plans to prevent cases of harassment in their own teams.



The WLC organised the workshops in partnership with the AFP as part of the project “Strengthening Gender Equality in Moldova”, implemented with the financial support of KVINFO.

PARALEGALS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY PARTICIPATED IN INFORMATION SESSIONS ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

70 male and female paralegals strengthened their knowledge in preventing and combating gender-based violence and domestic violence. Between 13 May and 3 June 2025, 3 information sessions were organised in Chisinau, Balti and Cahul, bringing together specialists from several regions of Moldova.



Our colleagues, Daniela Josanu Groza, legal specialist and coordinator of the WLC Specialised Assistance Service for Victims of Domestic Violence and Nicoleta Cocoță, WLC legal specialist, facilitated the session dedicated to the legal framework and protection mechanisms. They emphasised the importance of an empathic approach, tailored to the specific needs of women victims of violence. They emphasised the importance of tailoring support to meet the particular needs of individuals with multiple vulnerabilities.

Participants benefited from varied sessions, which included exploring the role of paralegals in ensuring access to justice and supporting victims, with a particular focus on those facing multiple vulnerabilities. Practical approaches needed to help them were discussed, as well as the importance of cross-sector collaboration.



Who are paralegals?

Paralegals are trained basic legal professionals who support communities, particularly in rural areas where access to lawyers is limited. They provide primary legal advice, support victims of violence and help promote fundamental rights.

The sessions were organised by the National Agency for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (ANPCV), in partnership with HIAS Moldova, the Women's Law Centre and the National Council for State Guaranteed Legal Aid, with the financial support of the German Federal Foreign Office.



DETAINED WOMEN BENEFIT FROM READING THERAPY PROVIDED BY THE WLC TEAM

In a space full of challenges, but also full of the desire for change, we kicked off the meetings of the Reading Club, held at Penitentiary No. 7-Rusca. The first session, held on 27 May 2025, brought together **25 women** detainees, who welcomed us with openness and shared thoughts and feelings that often remain hidden.

They talked about their deepest needs: guilt towards their children, struggle with a hostile environment, lack of trust and support from family. Some women

confessed that these discussions helped them to discover “common concerns” with other prisoners and to realise that they were not alone in their feelings.



„Ziua de ieri s-a încheiat.
Astăzi este o nouă zi și pot
merge înainte, în siguranță.”

One touching moment was when we discussed their childhood dreams: some wanted to play football, while others dreamed of being a juvenile inspector or even joining the military. With a dash of humour and enthusiasm, we decided that we could now form a football team, and we even found a goalkeeper!

This meeting was about more than words written in the pages of a book; it was about empathy, hope and the power to dream again.

The activity was facilitated by fellow psychologists from the Institute for Family and Social Initiatives, with whom we are building these valuable moments.

In addition to the individual legal and psychological counselling sessions offered by the WLC to detained women every Saturday, the Reading Club takes place twice a month, providing a space for reflection and reconnection. We are grateful to Sweden for supporting these activities.

CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR EMPLOYEES OF PRISON NO. 7-RUSCA

On 26 June 2025, WLC, in partnership with the National Administration of Penitentiaries of the Republic of Moldova, organised a workshop dedicated to the staff of Penitentiary No. 7-Rusca, marking **15 years since the adoption of the Bangkok Rules**, UN standards that provide a framework aimed at ensuring respect for women's human rights in detention.

The Bangkok Rules provide for recognition of women's vulnerabilities, access to specialised medical care, care for pregnant women and women with children, measures against harassment and violence, programmes for social reintegration, safe custody for mothers, and human rights training for staff.

A key principle promoted by the Bangkok Rules is respect for the dignity and specific needs of women.

During the workshop, male and female employees discussed:

- How applying the Bangkok Rules improves the prison environment.
- Challenges and good practices in handling sensitive situations.
- Ways to support women in detention.

Through a role-play, participants analysed the causes and consequences of detention, the shock of detention, and its impact on children and the community. They also reviewed hypothetical scenarios and presented intervention strategies for the challenges they face in their daily work.



They identified good practices for establishing and maintaining contact with family, responded to the specific needs of groups with multiple vulnerabilities, and discussed how social reintegration begins. They also analysed how to ensure access to justice and psychological support for women in detention.

The event was organised by WLC with financial support from Sweden, as part of the project "Increasing access to justice, legal aid and psychological support for women in detention".



WLC CONTRIBUTES TO THE FIRST RESEARCH ON PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE IN MOLDOVA AND ROMANIA

Psychological violence is the most common form of abuse against women in the Republic of Moldova. According to the OSCE study „Women’s Well-being and Safety”, 71% of women say they have been affected by psychological violence, followed by physical violence (33%). Moreover, 55% of Moldovan women consider domestic violence a private matter to be dealt with within the family, four times more than the EU average (14%).

On 20 June 2025, our colleague Daniela Josanu, Coordinator of the Specialised Assistance Service for Victims of Domestic Violence at WLC, participated in the **launch event of the first research** in Moldova on psychological violence, organised by the National Coalition “Life without Violence”.

WLC contributed, together with other organisations from Moldova and Romania, to the study **“Revealing the hidden side of the iceberg. Psychological violence in the Republic of Moldova and Romania”**, developed by the Association for Community Relations in collaboration with the FILIA Centre and the National Coalition “Life without Violence”, with the support of

the OAK Foundation, through the Issues Affecting Women programme.

This research provides an in-depth look into the invisible realities experienced by survivors of psychological violence, highlighting their needs, the lack of adequate systemic response and the crucial role of support organisations.

Key study findings:

- **Control** was the word most often mentioned by survivors to describe the form of abuse experienced. Behaviours such as humiliation, isolation, constant criticism and manipulation are strategic tactics that profoundly affect their confidence, autonomy and mental health.

- **Psychological violence leaves unseen** but painful wounds. Many women spoke of ongoing anxiety, fear and lack of support from institutions such as the police or social services.
- **Victims with multiple vulnerabilities** – such as women with disabilities, single mothers or women from marginalised communities – are at increased risk and face double dis-

crimination, lack of access to services and inadequate support from authorities.

- **Spiritual and economic violence** frequently occur alongside psychological violence. Women are forced to follow imposed religious beliefs, renounce their mother tongue or justify every expense to their abuser.



Credit foto: Coaliția Națională „Viața fără violență”

Daniela Josanu,
Coordinator
of the Specialised Support Service, WLC

“In 2024, almost 86% (1084 cases) of the Women’s Law Centre’s beneficiaries reported that they had been subjected to psychological violence. Of these, 283 were affected solely by this form of abuse, while the rest reported psychological violence in combination with other forms, such as physical, economic or sexual. At WLC we see every day how seriously this type of violence affects women’s emotional state and safety.”

SEE THE STUDY

NEWS IN BRIEF

WLC team expresses its gratitude to H.E. Katarina Fried, Ambassador of Sweden to the Republic of Moldova

On 16 June 2025, our colleagues, WLC Executive Director Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari and WLC Programme Director Eleonora Grosu, participated in the gratitude event dedicated to Her Excellency

Katarina Fried, Ambassador of Sweden to the Republic of Moldova, organised by UN Women Moldova.

Completing her four-year term (2021-2025), H.E. Katarina Fried has been an active advocate for gender equality, a strong voice for women's rights and a driving force behind numerous efforts to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

For WLC, this moment was an opportunity to express its gratitude to her for the support she had provided over the years.



“On behalf of the Women’s Law Centre, I would like to thank you for your support in defending women’s rights to a life free from violence and for supporting reforms in the field of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Moldova. We have been honoured by your support and have had the opportunity to learn from you as an inspirational role model and visionary leader in promoting gender equality.” – Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari

One of the cornerstones of the WLC was laid with care and trust by Sweden. Thanks to this support, we have been able to grow as an organisation and offer help to the thousands of women who face domestic violence. We are grateful to Sweden for the beautiful cooperation we have had and the valuable projects that have come to life over the years. The contribution of H.E. Katarina Fried will remain an important milestone on this journey.

WLC team participates in the exchange of good practices for gender inclusion and equality in Denmark

On 7-11 April 2025, in Copenhagen, Denmark, our colleagues Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari, Executive Director of WLC, and Viorica Ursachi, Project Coordinator, together with representatives from other NGOs, are participating in an event organised by KVINFO- Danish Centre of Excellence for Knowledge in the field of gender equality and diversity.

The event brings together local partners from Moldova and Armenia within the context of implementing the Regional Programme to Promote Gender Equality and Inclusion, launched by KVINFO in Moldova in late 2024.

In Moldova, the programme is implemented by the Women’s Law Centre, the International Centre “La Strada Moldova” and the DACIA Youth and



Women’s Resource Centre, with the aim of strengthening more effective protection for women and promoting inclusive and equitable policies.

Within this programme, WLC aims to:

- Contribute to a safer working environment for female employees by protecting them from sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Equip women and girls, victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence, who are in economically vulnerable situations, with the skills and capacities to become financially independent.

The Copenhagen meeting aims to create a platform for dialogue and exchange of good practices between NGOs, with a focus on the challenges of gender equality and the impact of gender-based violence in our societies.





WLC becomes a member of the National Coordinating Council

We are pleased to announce that WLC has become a member of the National Coordinating Council in the field of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

This platform, coordinated by the National Agency for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, is the national mechanism that ensures the coherence and effectiveness of efforts to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence.

WLC's presence in this critical forum allows us to make the voices of women victims of domestic violence heard.



Creative workshops – inspiration and regaining inner balance for WLC beneficiaries

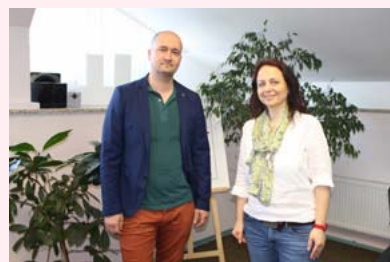
At the Women's Law Centre, we have a long-standing tradition of creating moments of colour and hope with our beneficiaries.

Between April and June, **27 women** participated in 3 occupational therapy **workshops**. Together with them and

their children, we decorated Easter baskets, learnt the secrets of making bread with Maria and brought pictures to life through painting. These activities transformed the time spent together into an inspiring experience of solidarity and regeneration.



International visits to WLC



Jonathan Gharbi, a Swedish journalist with a passion for travel and impactful stories, visited us to learn more about WLC's work and how we support women affected by violence in Moldova. We had the opportunity to tell him about our projects and how Swedish support has been instrumental in the development of our organisation.



On 14 May 2025, we were honoured to welcome a **delegation from Austria**, consisting of representatives from the Austrian Embassy in Chisinau and experts from the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, to share WLC's experience in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, as well as to discuss the challenges faced and possible solutions.



On 21 June 2025, we had the pleasure of welcoming **representatives from the OAK Foundation and the Association for Community Relations** in Romania for a visit. We had an open discussion about the current challenges, including the lack of a sustainable funding model to support victims of violence and the barriers faced by women with multiple vulnerabilities. We also highlighted the need to invest more in organisational capacity to respond effectively to these needs.

Public consultation on draft Law No 70/2025

On 4 April 2025, at the initiative of the Platform of Women Deputies, public consultations were held in Parliament on Draft Law No. 70/2025 of 06.03.2025. It aims to bring Moldovan legislation in line with European standards on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

WLC contribution

In 2024, at the request of the MMPS, the WLC team prepared the third **Report on the compatibility of national legislation with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention**. On the basis of this Report, a draft legislative amendment was prepared, which formed the basis of the current draft Law No. 70, subject to consultations.

The WLC welcomes the initiative of the group of women MPs to consider the draft law prepared by the WLC team. The draft contains essential provisions in the field of preventing and combating violence, including the digital dimension; extending the term of the protection order up to 6 months; criminalisation of femicide; coverage from the state budget of the costs of judicial expertise in cases of domestic violence, etc.

It should be noted that some essential proposals from the WLC draft have not been incorporated, while others have been included in a modified form. We believe that the current wording risks a fragmented approach and may limit a practical and comprehensive response to violence against women and domestic violence.



During the consultations in Parliament, Angelina Zaporojan-Pîrgari, Executive Director of WLC, mentioned some key issues not included in the draft law:

- Completion of the Criminal Code to fully incorporate the notion of lack of free consent in cases of rape and sexual violence.
- Completing the Criminal Code with a new article defining sexual harassment with the use of information technology or electronic communications.
- Defining in the Criminal Code the notion of “intimidation and isolation of the victim of domestic violence” – forms of coercive control and psychological violence, which are not included in criminal legislation, as provided for in the Istanbul Convention.
- Deletion of Art. 78¹ (domestic violence) from the Contravention Code and completion of Art. 201¹ (domestic violence) of the Criminal Code to include not only acts of violence causing bodily harm or injury to health, but also any use of physical force against women, regardless of the context, in line with Art. 35 of the Istanbul Convention.

The WLC’s detailed opinion on the draft law has been forwarded to the Parliament for consideration.

WLC expresses its solidarity with Romanian NGOs for the recognition of femicide in legislation

On 31 May 2025, a 23-year-old pregnant woman was shot dead in the street while holding the hand of her three-year-old daughter. She and her unborn child died. The perpetrator, a man who had been abusing her since she was 14 years old, committed this crime in broad daylight, in front of several children. This brutal act came after years of physical, sexual and psychological abuse, protection orders and repeated complaints to the police. This is the 25th case of femicide recorded in Romania in the last five months.

The WLC expresses its solidarity and supports calls by Romanian organisations such as the FILIA Centre and Romanian Women’s LOBBY for the criminalisation of femicide as a separate offence.

A similar case, that of Ana Maria, the young pregnant woman who was abducted, raped and cruelly murdered by a man in April 2024, prompted the introduction of femicide into Moldovan law. WLC launched a public call for the recognition of femicide, which was also supported by civil society in Romania.



Every life lost in such circumstances is a failure of the system to prevent violence against women.

Roundtable: Combating hate speech and sexism in parliamentary elections

On 14 May 2025, Angelina Zaporojan-Pîrgari, WLC Executive Director, moderated the roundtable dedicated to combating hate speech and sexism in the context of the parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova. The event was organised by the Council of Europe jointly with the Central Election Commission and UN Women, with the support of Sweden.

Why is this topic important?

- During election periods, hate speech and sexist language limit the participation of women and vulnerable groups in public life:
- In the 2021 parliamentary elections, there were 299 cases of hate speech and incitement, of which 63 targeted women and 39 LGBTQIA+ people.
- In the 2024 presidential campaign, there were 70 reported cases of sexist language, particularly affecting women.



“We are at a pivotal moment for democracy in our country as parliamentary elections approach. This context compels us to reflect on the quality of public discourse and the measures needed to prevent and combat hate speech and sexism, directed against women, ethnic minorities and the LGBTQIA+ community. It is also crucial to ensure equal participation in politics for all members of society.”

Angelina Zaporojan-Pîrgari

Full recording of the event is available [here](#).



Learning from the best at the National Fundraising Conference

On 27-28 May 2025, our colleague, Evelina Pîrău-Namesnic, WLC communication and public relations specialist, participated in Bucharest, together with other colleagues from member organisations of the National Coalition “Life without Violence”, in the National Fundraising Conference, 21st edition, organised annually by the Association for Community Relations in Romania (ARC).

The motto of this year’s edition was “We are closer to YES!”, an invitation to reflect on how we make informed decisions with real impact. How do we get a ‘yes’ from the community, donors and those we are fighting for? How do we turn our mission into a shared commitment?

The conference brought together more than 200 professionals from the non-profit sector in Romania and the Republic of Moldova in a space for learning, inspiration, and the exchange of best practices.

During the two days, participants had the opportunity to explore current topics for the sustainability of organisations in workshops and plenaries, including strategic fundraising, diversification of funding sources, digital fundraising, community engagement, and donor loyalty.

“It was a valuable experience that inspired me to rethink how we communicate about our impact and how we can more actively engage the community in our mission. I left the conference with concrete ideas, energy and the conviction that we can do fundraising that is meaningful, humane and grounded in the real needs of the women we work for.” – **Evelina Pîrău-Namesnic**, Communications and Public Relations Specialist, WLC

We are grateful to ARC for its continued support of WLC’s organisational development and for the opportunity to learn from the best in philanthropy again this year.

Media appearances



„Good Morning” programme on Moldova 1



„Violence rooted in hatred: when women become targets in their own homes because of prejudice” – **Ziarul de Gardă**



Psychological violence: „An abuser always has a justification: „you provoked me”” | **SIMPLE PEOPLE**, Moldova.org



„Legislation protects abusers more”. About how sexual harassment is (NOT) punished – **SIMPLE PEOPLE**, Moldova.org

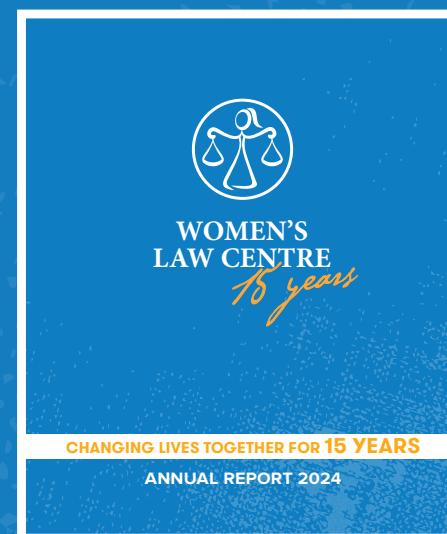
For 15 years, we have been standing by thousands of women survivors of violence, providing holistic support: legal counselling, court representation, psychological, social and economic empowerment to help them rebuild their lives.

In 2024, WLC celebrated its 15th anniversary, marking 15 years of dedicated work, ambitious projects, and courageous steps that have brought about change for women and girls in Moldova.

The year 2024 is also significant as we mark the completion of the implementation phase of the Organisational Development Strategy for 2019-2024. We look back with excitement and pride at the successes achieved throughout this period.

We invite you to read the **Annual Report 2024**, where you will find an overview of the activities carried out in the past year, the impact of WLC through the voices of its beneficiaries, as well as a retrospective of the last few years of activity.

SEE THE REPORT



Thank you for standing with us!

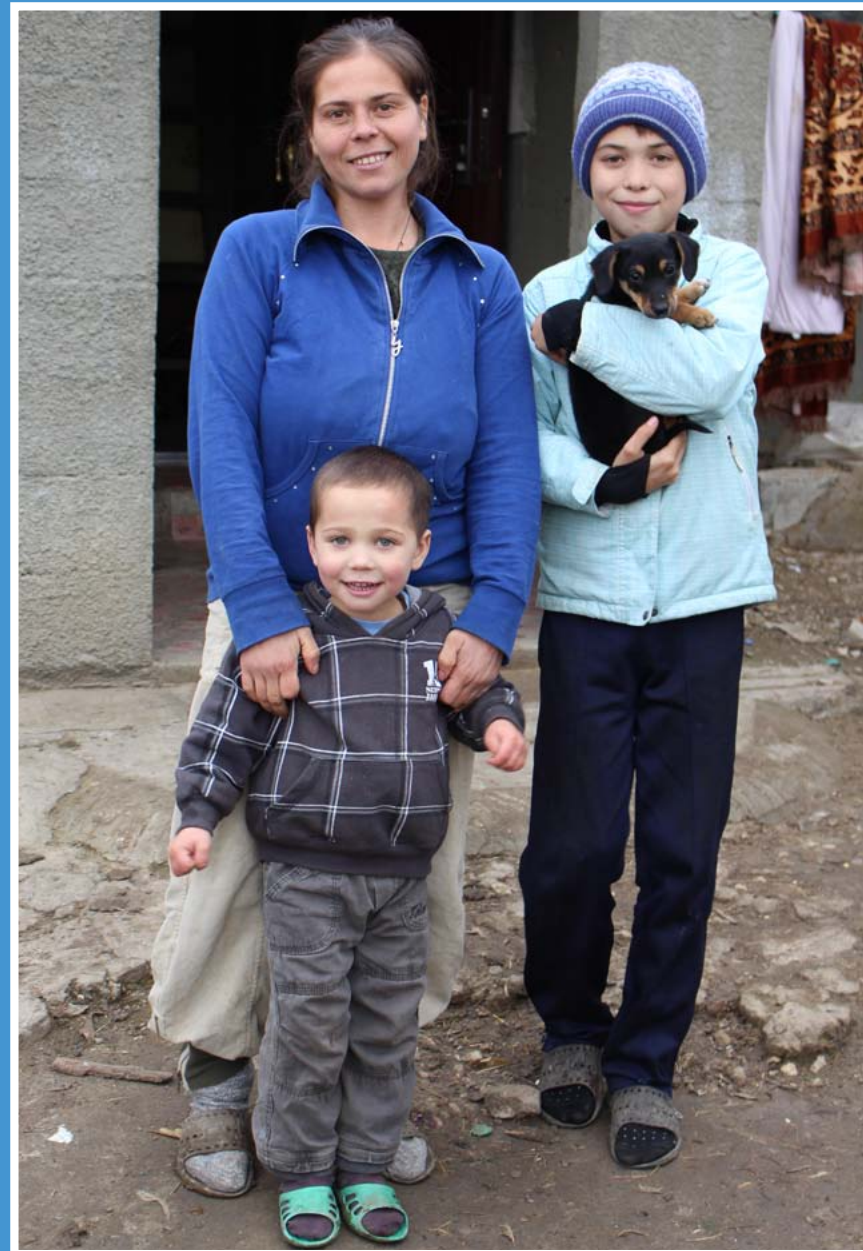
TOGETHER WE ARE CHANGING LIVES!

Every month, about **100 women** take an important step in their lives. Sometimes, this step is their last hope to be heard, understood and supported. Every month, about **100 women** choose not to tolerate domestic violence anymore and turn to WLC for specialist support.

We offer to these women **legal and psychological support, social assistance, and opportunities** for economic empowerment, so that they can step confidently into tomorrow. **Our support is free and confidential!**

You can also help women and children of Moldova. Visit the WLC website and make a donation to support victims of domestic violence. Every donation is a chance for these women to rebuild their lives. Every donation enhances the power of our community.

DONATE



You have the right to live safely!



WHO ARE WE?

WOMEN'S LAW CENTRE (WLC) is a non-governmental organisation founded by a group of women-lawyers from Moldova. WLC advocates for equality between women and men in the public and family life and helps prevent and combat domestic violence and gender-based violence against women.

The newsletter is issued with the financial support of Sweden and the OAK Foundation (via ARC).

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We are grateful to our funders



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