

NEWSLETTER

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STOP VIOLENCE



OCTOBER TO DECEMBER

WOMEN'S LAW CENTRE

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 2 CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS IMPROVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF RESPONDING TO CASES OF VIOLENCE
- 3 WLC EXPANDS LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS TO PREVENT AND COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- 4 WLC ACTIVITIES TO PREVENT AND COMBAT SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE
- 7 JOURNALISTS LEARNED HOW TO REPORT PROFESSIONALLY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
- 8 WLC STRENGTHENS THE CAPACITIES OF NGOS PROVIDING LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE
- 10 IMPACT OF THE SUPPORT GROUP FOR WLC BENEFICIARIES
- 11 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
- 14 REGIONAL DIALOGUE IN 5 DISTRICTS TO INCREASE ACCESS OF WOMEN AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE TO SUPPORT SERVICES AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES
- 15 THE IMPACT OF LOCAL PROGRAMS OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE
- 17 THE WOMEN IN CUSTODY RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM THE WLC TEAM
- 18 WLC OBTAINED THE CONVICTION OF TWO BROTHERS FOR REPEATEDLY RAPING THEIR MINOR SISTER. THE CASE BRINGS TO LIGHT DYSFUNCTIONS IN THE SYSTEM
- 19 WLC CONDUCTED A STUDY ON THE APPROACH OF FEMICIDE AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL



The newsletter reflects the activity of the Women's Law Centre in preventing and responding to domestic violence and violence against women

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS IMPROVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF RESPONDING TO CASES OF VIOLENCE

The way justice professionals respond to domestic violence cases has a decisive influence on whether victims will have the courage to seek help and defend their rights. The right intervention can help break the cycle of violence.

October 2-3: 29 judicial assistants, court clerks, and prosecutors' advisors strengthened their knowledge of investigating and prosecuting domestic violence crimes during a seminar dedicated to the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

The professionals analysed violence as a social phenomenon, the national legal framework, protection and assistance measures for victims, and the challenges encountered in the investigation and prosecution process. The discussions also included an examination of the European Court of Human Rights' relevant case law.



October 16-17: 17 judges and prosecutors participated in a seminar focused on the investigation and prosecution of cases of violence against women and domestic violence, with an emphasis on femicide.

The professionals discussed prevention, victim protection, sanctions for perpetrators, victims' rights, and victims' safety in judicial proceedings.

The seminars were organized as part of the Council of Europe project "Support for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the Republic of Moldova - Phase II," in partnership with the Women's Law Center and the National Institute of Justice, with financial support from Sweden.



WLC EXPANDS LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS TO PREVENT AND COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On November 4, 2025, the WLC team, in partnership with the Căușeni Police Inspectorate and with financial support from Sweden, organized an **information session and cooperation-building event** between local authorities and actors, entitled „The Istanbul Convention in action: Ensuring a coordinated response for better resolution of cases of violence.”



The event brought together mayors from localities in the Căușeni district, as well as representatives of the police, probation services, social assistance, and the health system, who discussed the importance of inter-institutional cooperation in preventing and combating violence against women.



To reinforce joint efforts, a **cooperation agreement** was signed during the event between the **Women’s Law Center** and the **Căușeni Police Inspectorate**. The agreement provides for cooperation in the exchange of information and experience, the offering of free legal assistance to women victims of violence, the organization of training sessions for police employees, the conduct of joint information campaigns, and support for the implementation of effective tools and procedures for the protection of victims.



WLC ACTIVITIES TO PREVENT AND COMBAT SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Model regulations on preventing and combating sexual harassment in the workplace have been approved

The National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (CNSM) has approved the Model Regulation on the prevention and combating of sexual harassment in the workplace, an important step in promoting safe, respectful, and dignified working environments.

The document, developed by the WLC and CNSM, establishes a practical framework for measures to be implemented to ensure a safe and respectful working environment free from sexual harassment. The regulations aim

to guide employers and trade unions in preventing, identifying, and combating cases of sexual harassment in the workplace.

The approval of the Regulation is a significant result of joint efforts to strengthen respect, safety, and trust in professional relationships and contributes to the implementation of International Labor Organization Convention No. 190, reaffirming the commitment to zero tolerance for any form of abuse.

It should be noted that the Regulation was developed on the basis of the Cooperation Agreement between the CNSM and the WLC, signed on April 30, 2025, providing a practical tool for the correct and effective implementation of the new rules.

The partnership is part of the project “Strengthening Gender Equality in Moldova” implemented by the Women’s Law Center with the support of KVINFO and financial support from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

APROBAT
REGULAMENT
CU PRIVIRE LA MĂSURILE DE
PREVENIRE ȘI COMBATERE A
HĂRȚUIRII SEXUALE
LA LOCUL DE MUNCĂ



[SEE THE REGULATIONS](#)

WLC and CNSM train trainers to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the workplace

Sexual harassment is a form of violence that affects both women and men, including in the workplace. In this context, WLC, in partnership with the National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (CNSM), organized the first stage of the training program for trainers in the field of preventing and combating sexual harassment in the workplace on December 2 and 3, 2025, in Chisinau.

Over two days, participants—members of primary trade union organizations in public and private institutions—received in-depth training on:

- Forms of sexual harassment in the workplace;
- Reporting, investigation, and protection mechanisms;
- Case studies and real-life legal examples;
- Impact on victims and the role of trade unions in managing harassment situations.

The training agenda included an analysis of the national context and the role of trade unions, a presentation of international standards, including ILO Convention No. 190, case studies on sexual



harassment, reporting and protection mechanisms, and psychological aspects of the phenomenon.

The Model regulations on measures to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the workplace were also presented, with practical recommendations for their application in institutions. Participants will subsequently share the knowledge they have acquired to their teams, thus contributing to the creation of a safe and respectful working environment in which everyone feels protected.

The event was held as part of the project “Strengthening Gender Equality in Moldova” implemented by the Women’s Law Center with the support of KVINFO and financial support from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Sessions on preventing sexual harassment in the workplace

Sexual harassment in the workplace remains a disturbing reality.

1 in **5** women is sexually harassed at work.



4 out of **100** employed women experience serious forms of abuse.



Sexual harassment is not limited to explicit gestures or remarks. It can take subtle forms, such as insistent stares, inappropriate messages, sexually suggestive comments, or “jokes” that are wrongly tolerated as harmless but which affect the dignity and safety of those concerned.

In this context, in order to promote a safe and respectful working environment, the WLC team held information sessions aimed at strengthening understanding of the phenomenon and the responsibilities of employers.

October: **2** sessions / **27** department heads from Victoriabank

December: **1** session / **30** workers from the Trade, Public Food, Consumer Cooperation, Services, Restaurants,



and Hotels Trade Union Federation “SindLUCAS”

Knowing and recognizing the first signs of abuse, as well as prompt and appropriate intervention, can contribute to changing the organizational culture and creating working conditions in which everyone feels protected, respected, and safe.



Police officers are trained on how to respond to sexual harassment in the workplace



On November 21, 2025, WLC, in partnership with the Police Women’s Association, organized a workshop at the General Police Inspectorate in Chisinau dedicated to the police response mechanism to cases of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Twenty-seven police officers, mainly from the Inspection Department and the Human Resources Management Department, received practical and theoretical training on identifying, documenting, and managing cases of harassment.

Through these activities, WLC and its partners aim to strengthen the institutional response of the police to sexual harassment, promoting safe and respectful working environments within the General Police Inspectorate.

The event was organized by the Women’s Law Center, within the project “Strengthening the equality between Women and Associates, within the project “Consolidation of gender equality in Moldova”, implemented with the financial support of KVINFO.





WLC launches information campaign "What are you doing, it's harassment!"

In December, WLC, with financial support from Sweden, launched the information campaign "What you are doing is harassment!", dedicated to preventing and combating sexual harassment in the workplace – a phenomenon that is still difficult to recognize and rarely reported in the Republic of Moldova.

Many forms of harassment are normalized and overlooked: "joking" comments, "compliments," sexually suggestive messages, inappropriate emojis, unwanted touching, or persistent invitations. For women who experience

them, these behaviors cause discomfort, fear, shame, and affect their safety and dignity in the workplace. Sexual harassment is a form of violence and should not be tolerated, regardless of intention or position.

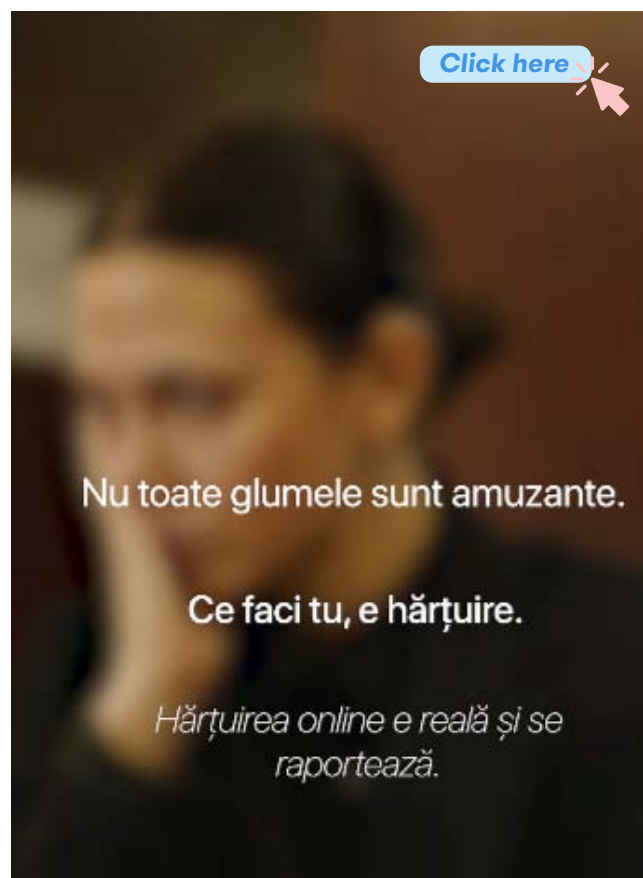
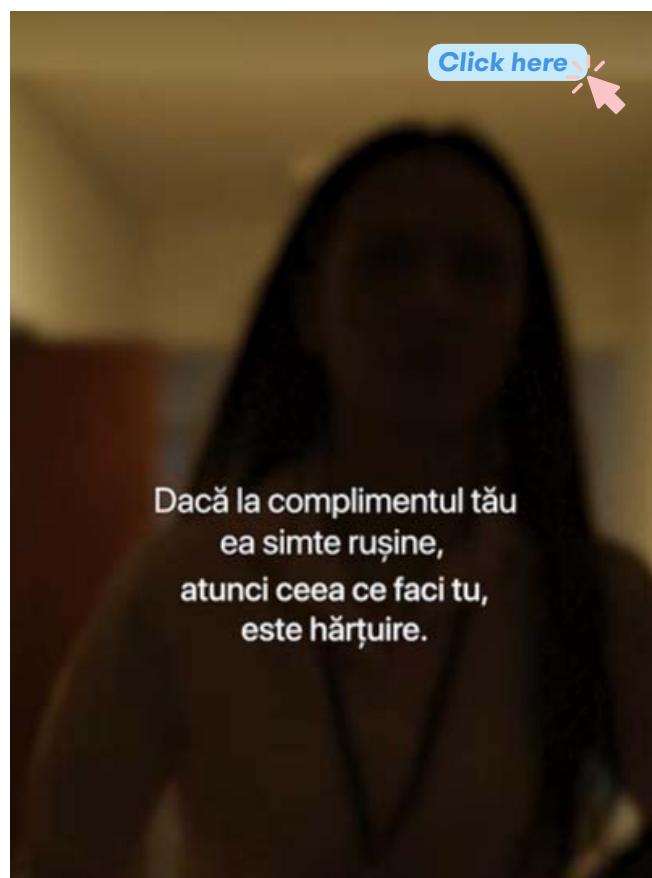
As part of the campaign, WLC produced three videos illustrating real-life situations of harassment:

- repeated "minor" comments and gestures that undermine confidence and courage;
- touching and violations of personal space, presented as "help";

- online harassment, manifested through messages, jokes, and emojis in work chats.

Through this campaign, the WLC aims to open a clear and necessary conversation about what harassment means in the workplace, how it can be recognized and why it is essential to report it.

The campaign will continue in 2026 with the aim of contributing to safe working environments based on respect and consent.



JOURNALISTS LEARNED HOW TO REPORT PROFESSIONALLY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

On October 9–10, 2025, 16 journalists from various newsrooms in the Republic of Moldova participated in the training program “Beyond Sensationalism: How to Report Professionally on Violence Against Women,” organized by WLC in collaboration with the Independent Journalism Center (IJC) and with financial support from Sweden.

The program aimed to strengthen journalists’ skills in ethical, responsible, and documented reporting on cases of violence against women and domestic violence. Participants discussed gender stereotypes

in the media, diversity, protecting sources and victims’ identities, balancing emotion and statistics, as well as the legal framework and protection mechanisms available to victims.



During the training, experts in the legal, psychological, and journalistic fields emphasized the essential role of the media in changing social perceptions and preventing gender-based violence through reporting that avoids sensationalism and respects the dignity of survivors.

Following the training, the WLC and the IJC launched a **competition for journalistic materials** on the topic of violence against women and domestic violence, and on December 4, 2025, in Chisinau, as part of the international campaign “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based

Violence,” the winners of the competition were announced.

A total of 11 articles by nine journalists were submitted and evaluated based on ethical principles, accuracy of information, balanced approach, and solution-oriented approach.



Through these initiatives, we support the development of journalists’ abilities to produce ethical, well-researched, and solution-oriented reporting, contributing to accurate public information and transforming the media into an active ally in preventing and combating violence against women.

5 journalists awarded

Prizes of 9,000 lei were awarded to journalists **Liubomir Guțu** (Diez.md), **Alexandru Statnii** (Moldova 1), and **Bogdana Rudaia** (TV Nord), while prizes of 5,000 lei went to **Dorina Cioca** (Observatorul de Nord) and **Elena Mandeac** (Jurnal TV). The other participants received certificates of merit and vouchers as a sign of appreciation.



WLC STRENGTHENS THE CAPACITIES OF NGOS PROVIDING LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

WLC, in partnership with UN Women Moldova, implemented a mentoring program dedicated to strengthening the capacities of civil society organizations that provide legal assistance to women victims of domestic violence.

Study visit and exchange of best practices

On October 10, 2025, WLC organized a study visit for organizations participating in the mentoring program:

- AO Biaz Gul (Comrat),
- AO Ophelia (Cahul),
- DACIA Youth and Women's Resource Center (Soroca),
- AO „Stimul” (Ocnita)
- Social Justice Center “ECHITATE” (Criuleni).

During the visit, the WLC team shared their experience and best practices in legal, psychological, and social assistance, as well as in economic empowerment for victims of domestic violence. Discussions focused on case management and the application of a holistic approach, the use of electronic case management systems and personal data protection, as well as the importance of



inter-institutional cooperation for an integrated and sustainable response.

The event ended with a visit to the 112 Emergency Service, where participants learned how emergency calls regarding

domestic violence are handled and how the coordination mechanisms for rapid intervention work. This initiative was made possible thanks to the partnership between WLC and the 112 Emergency Service.

Conclusion of the Mentoring Program

On November 5, 2025, the closing event of the six-month Mentoring Program took place.

During the Program, organizations benefited from:

- During the Program, organizations benefited from:
- a two-day training course;
- individualized mentoring sessions;
- support in dealing with specific cases;
- access to practical materials and tools;
- a study visit to the WLC's specialized service for assisting people affected by domestic violence;
- an informational visit to the 112 Emergency Service.





Impact of the Program

The program had a visible impact on the way organizations understand and manage cases of violence, as well as on collaboration between specialists. Participants strengthened their legal knowledge and capacity for joint analysis of real situations through interprofessional discussions between lawyers, social workers, and coordinators, creating an incipient format for professional supervision.

Organizations reported progress in applying legal provisions on psychological, digital, and economic violence, data protection, and mental health, as well as in using standardized case management tools—guidelines, forms, and safety plans.

At the same time, challenges were identified, such as the low number of long-term cases, difficulties in identifying latent



cases, the lack of an internal supervision structure, and the inconsistent application of new legislative measures.

The program demonstrated the relevance of mentoring as a tool for institutional strengthening and professionalization of legal services, proposing the mainte-



nance of a common supervision framework, coordinated quarterly, for collective learning and exchange of experience. This will contribute to the development of a sustainable network of professionals capable of ensuring a coordinated, empathetic, and effective response to cases of gender-based violence.

The mentoring program was conducted by WLC as part 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 SUPPORT GROUP FOR WLC BENEFICIARIES

In June 2025, WLC, with the support of ARC, launched a support group dedicated to survivors of violence who are beneficiaries of the organization, guided by an experienced psychotherapist. The group was designed as a safe, confidential, and empathetic space where women could express their emotions without fear of judgment and regain their voice, support, and confidence.

Between June and December 2025, **17 beneficiaries** actively participated in **10 group sessions**, characterized by predictability, emotional safety, and mutual support. The activities were constantly adapted to the needs of the group, with an emphasis on emotional regulation, validation, social reconnection, and strengthening personal resources.

An important outcome was the strengthening of the sense of belonging and the reduction of emotional isolation. The supportive relationships formed within the group continued beyond the formal meetings, through active communication on a Viber group, where participants offer each other emotional support and practical advice.

Changes observed among participants:



increased self-confidence and sense of self-worth.



ability to express emotions without fear or shame.



reduced isolation and formation of a strong sense of community.



better understanding and normalization of their own experiences of violence.




Why is emotional support important after violence?

Support groups reduce isolation, shame, and self-blame; they support the healing process and emotional reconstruction; they offer healthy coping models and contribute to the prevention of long-term mental health problems.


The support group has become a place of belonging for WLC beneficiaries. For many of them, this project represented an important first step in the process of emotional reconstruction and strengthening personal autonomy.

Women's voices


"For the first time, I feel like someone is really listening to me." 

"I realized that what I went through wasn't my fault." 

"I feel like I'm not alone. I've found people who accept you and don't judge you."

"The group made me feel stronger and safer." 

"Every little step counts, even if it seems hard sometimes."

"I learned to listen to my emotions and let them exist without judging myself." 

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



Every year, between November 25 and December 10, WLC joins the global campaign "16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence."

This year, the campaign highlights digital violence, an increasingly prevalent form of abuse that affects the safety, dignity, and lives of women and girls. At WLC, we hear daily from those who experience fear and harassment, both online and in real life.

We present the activities carried out during the 16 days, through which we reaffirm our commitment to support women affected by violence and to promote the right of all to a life without fear.

Inauguration of the exhibition "Can you see me? Believe me. Be with me!" at Alecu Russo State University in Bălți



On November 25, WLC, in partnership with UN Women Moldova and Alecu Russo State University in Bălți (USARB), marked the launch of the "16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence" campaign with an interactive discussion with students about gender-based violence and everyone's role in preventing it.

At the same time, the exhibition "Do you see me? Believe me. Be with me!" was opened, implemented by UN Women Moldova, which brings 16 sculptures to the



university space, accompanied by real stories of women affected by violence. Through this initiative, the voices of those who often experience violence in silence are made visible, and the community is invited to look, believe, and act.

During the public lecture, 55 young people were informed about myths and stereotypes related to gender-based violence, forms of violence, and protective measures available to victims.

WLC remains an active partner of the academic community in promoting a culture of respect, solidarity, and non-violence.



National Conference "The Istanbul Convention in Action: Preventing Femicide, Protecting Victims, and Prosecuting Perpetrators"

Over **140** professionals from the justice system, police, public institutions, academia, media, and civil society gathered on November 28 to discuss the issue of femicide at the National Conference (with international participation) "The Istanbul Convention in Action: Preventing Femicide, Protecting Victims, and Prosecuting Perpetrators."

Participants spoke openly about how to prevent cases of femicide, how to effectively investigate these crimes, how to protect victims, and how to build institutional cooperation that really works.

"A central message that was repeated many times was that recognizing the concept of femicide is only the beginning. The real work begins now, in prosecutors' offices, in judges' decisions, in po-

lice interventions, in the services offered to victims, and in the education of new generations of lawyers," said Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari, executive director of WLC and first vice-president of GREVIO.

The conference showed that the Republic of Moldova is taking concrete steps towards a system that protects the lives and dignity of women. And the strength of this effort comes precisely from the collaboration between the state, institutions, civil society, academia, the media, and international partners.

The event was organized by WLC in partnership with the Criminal Law Department of the Faculty of Law, Moldova State University, with the support of the Council of Europe and the Government of Sweden.



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[SEE THE CONFERENCE IN VIDEO FORMAT](#)



Exhibition „Don't blame clothes!” launched at the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

On December 2, WLC, in partnership with UNFPA Moldova and the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, with financial support from Sweden, inaugurated the documentary exhibition “Don't blame the clothes!”, dedicated to combating stereotypes and prejudices related to sexual violence against women and girls.

The exhibition presents the reconstructed clothes of 11 women and teenage girls from the Republic of Moldova, worn at the time they were sexually abused. Through this visual and educational approach, the painful reality of sexual violence is brought to the fore and the misconception that the victim's clothing could justify the assault is challenged.



The launch of the exhibition was followed by a public lesson dedicated to students of the Faculty of General Economics and Law of ASEM, supported by WLC lawyer Arina Turcan. Discussions focused on dismantling myths about gender-based violence, as well as presenting rights and protection mechanisms available to victims.

Attitudes regarding rape in the Republic of Moldova

33% of men and **18% of women** think that if a woman is raped, it means that she did something to get into this situation.

36% of men and **32% of women** believe that if a woman does not resist physically, we can not say that it was rape.

33% of men and **28% of women** believe that it is not considered as rape if the victim is sluggish or has a bad reputation.

Simulation of criminal proceedings – future prosecutors and judges improve their knowledge on the response to cases of violence

45 auditors of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), candidates for the position of prosecutor and judge and students of the Criminal Law Department of the Faculty of Law, USM and students from the Academy of Music Theatre and Fine Arts participated on December 10 in a simulation of criminal proceedings aimed at developing their professional skills in addressing cases of domestic violence with elements of digital violence.

Young people and young women have documented themselves, studied the materials of the case and the existing evidence, thought out the defense strategy and simulated a trial. It was an extremely interesting and useful exercise, in which the theoretical and practical parts were intertwined.



REGIONAL DIALOGUE IN 5 DISTRICTS TO INCREASE ACCESS OF WOMEN AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE TO SUPPORT SERVICES AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

WLC in partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova and UN Women Moldova, organized, on November 18, – December 3, 2025, a series of 5 regional roundtables held in Hincesti, Soroca, Stefan Voda, Balti and Telenesti.

The events aimed to strengthen interinstitutional cooperation to improve access for women affected by violence to essential support services, integrated support and opportunities for economic empowerment.

The discussions were attended by over 100 specialists and specialists in the field of social assistance, employment, gender equality, representatives of public authorities, service providers and development partners. The agenda of the roundtables included the analysis of forms of



gender-based violence, the identification of barriers encountered by survivors in accessing services, as well as the discussion of challenges faced by specialists in providing tailored support. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of cross-sectoral cooperation in the effective management of cases at local and regional level.

During the events, the results of the five local economic empowerment programs



implemented by WLC in partnership with the authorities and service providers from the targeted districts were presented. Around 300 women and girls, including from underrepresented groups, have benefited from support and economic empowerment opportunities.

The participants stressed that only through a real collaboration between local, district and national actors can a functional system be built to protect and support women affected by violence. The experience gained in the piloting phase is a solid basis for expanding economic empowerment programmes and strengthening the multi-sectoral response.



The activities were carried out under the project "Supporting multi-sectoral efforts to prevent violence against women by providing comprehensive services to survivors, including through economic empowerment programs", implemented by the Women's Law Center in partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, UN Women Moldova and with the financial support of Sweden.

THE IMPACT OF LOCAL PROGRAMS OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

On 17 December the round table **“Transformation starts with us”**, an event dedicated to the analysis of the results obtained within the **“project Supporting multi-sectoral efforts to prevent violence against women by providing comprehensive services to survivors, including through economic empowerment programs”** implemented by WLC, was held in partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova and UN Women Moldova, with the financial support of Sweden.

The event brought together **40** representatives of public institutions, local public authorities, service providers, civil society organizations, experts, development partners, as well as women

participating in economic empowerment programs in the districts where the project was implemented – Soroca, Bălți, Hîncești, Telenești, and Ștefan Vodă.



During the discussions were presented:

- the results of the Study on women’s access to essential services and economic empowerment opportunities
- the impact of economic empowerment programs,
- voices and experiences of participating women,
- transformation directions and joint commitments in support of women affected by violence.

PROJECT RESULTS



5 local economic empowerment programs, developed and implemented in 5 districts



- **5** sessions of information about rights and opportunities
- **5** vocational orientation and personal development courses (5 days each)
- **5** courses for the development of income generating activities (3 days each)
- **70** Hours of individual mentoring
- **1** Digital communication course
- **1** Voucher program „TransFormare”
- **300** Women and girls, including from disadvantaged groups, have benefited from essential services and economic empowerment opportunities.
- **85** Social assistance specialists/te, LPAs from the 5 districts, trained/te to contribute to the economic empowerment of survivors of violence
- **24** Women received financial support to gain education or grow their business
- **828 731 MDL** financial support in the form of vouchers
- **1** Project **METHODOLOGY** on cooperation in the process of assisting victims of domestic violence and trafficking in human beings, which requires additional support on the elaborated labor market
- **1** **STUDY** on women’s access to essential services and opportunities for economic empowerment
- **1** Practical guide for women and girls to a violence-free life developed and distributed in communities



Impact of programmes through the voice of beneficiaries

"They helped me to get up and regain my dignity, me and my daughters. I learned to look at myself with different eyes. And the courage was the first step towards freedom."

"I got up, I got stronger."



"Before we live today for tomorrow. Now I can make a plan. I know what I want to do, how to grow, what I can learn."

"No longer depend on anyone."



Tatyana.
Lessons of English.
Lessons of freedom

[CLICK HERE](#)



Beyond fear: the story of the speech language pathologist from Stefan Voda

[CLICK HERE](#)



From the corner of the kitchen, Elena built a business from honey and candles

[CLICK HERE](#)



Georgeta.
Woman who brought "light" to northern Moldova

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THE WOMEN IN CUSTODY RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM THE WLC TEAM

WLC supports access to justice for women detained

On October 7, the WLC team held an information session for women in **Prison no. 16 Pruncul**, focused on their rights during detention and after release.

The WLC lawyer, Tatiana Agachi, discussed with the detainees the importance of knowing and defending their rights, while presenting the specialized services offered by the WLC. In this context, the WLC experience was shared in

the implementation of the support program for women detained in Prison no. 7 Rusca, which includes legal, psychological assistance and the organization of the reading club.

Women showed increased interest in the possibility of implementing a similar program, and at the end of the meeting several participants asked for individual counseling.



“The Christmas transformation” – steps to healing and trust

On December 23, at the **Penitentiary no. 7 Rusca**, WLC organized an activity entitled „Christmas of transformation” – a symbolic end of a year spent with women in detention.

The activity was attended by 25 women – faithful participants of the WLC reading club during the year, but also some new participants.

In the exercise “Candles of Gratitude,” participants symbolically lit three candles – for themselves and the courage to move forward, for their loved ones, and for a meaningful experience in their lives. The discussions brought to the fore the longing for children, the hope and excitement of seeing their families again, especially for women who are about to see their children after long periods of separation.

In another therapeutic exercise, the women were invited to identify a state, a thought, or an emotion, and then to represent it symbolically with a piece of aluminum foil. The emotions were transformed into symbols of inner resources: hearts, butterflies, an apple pie lovingly baked for loved ones, the sea, and the

sun. This exercise opened up a space for dreaming and reconnecting with inner freedom.

Each woman received a set of care products and an inspirational diary – “Love Yourself” – from the WLC team. Participants also received copies of the book “The Price of a Smile” by Ionela Hadârcă, donated by the UN Women Moldova team.

The women expressed their appreciation for the WLC programs, noting that they help them get to know each other better and create authentic connections.

The therapeutic exercises were facilitated by fellow psychologists Cristina Betivu-Șobea and Mihaela Malai from the IFIS team.

The activities were organized by WLC, in partnership with the National Administration of Penitentiaries of the Republic of Moldova, with financial support from Sweden.

WLC OBTAINED THE CONVICTION OF TWO BROTHERS FOR REPEATEDLY RAPING THEIR MINOR SISTER. THE CASE BRINGS TO LIGHT DYSFUNCTIONS IN THE SYSTEM

On December 30, 2025, two brothers, aged 19 and 20, were sentenced by the court of first instance to **10 years in prison** each for repeatedly raping their minor sister.

The crimes took place at their parents' home, starting when the girl was 8 years old. The case came to light after the victim became pregnant at the age of 12.

In the absence of an adequate response from the authorities in this case, reported by the district prosecutor's office in March 2023, WLC intervened with a multidimensional approach focused on child protection and respect for the child's best interests.

WLC provided qualified legal assistance by involving a lawyer who represented the minor's interests in court. At the same time, we helped to mobilise the competent au-

thorities, remove the minor from an unsafe family environment and arrange for her to be placed in protective care. The WLC also facilitated access to complex expertise, which was essential for supporting the evidence and reducing the traumatic impact of the proceedings on the child

Every year, dozens of women who are victims of sexual assault, including those with multiple vulnerabilities, are assisted by the WLC team in gaining access to justice. However, this case required maximum involvement, given its legal complexity and the fact that the minor victim was pregnant.

In this context, WLC faced delayed and insufficiently coordinated interventions by the authorities, which is why it called for firm responses and a victim-centered approach, with strict adherence to the principles of safety and confidentiality in cases involving children.

STOLEN CHILDHOOD



Obstacles to access to justice for rape victims (especially underage girls):

- Psychological trauma and fear of stigmatization, which lead to silence and under-reporting.
- Dependence on parents or guardians, who often deny the deed and prioritize „family honor” or the protection of the aggressor – prevents the initiation of legal proceedings.
- Lack of prompt and coordinated intervention by the responsible authorities.
- Attempts to cover up cases locally.
- The absence of a victim-centered approach and the best interests of the child.
- Limited access to specialised legal and psychological assistance services, particularly in rural areas.
- Attitudes of blaming the victim in society and sometimes even among the authorities.

The WLC will continue to monitor the case to ensure the protection of the victim and compliance with the applicable legal standards in child sexual abuse cases.

WLC CONDUCTED A STUDY ON THE APPROACH OF FEMICIDE AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The WLC has developed a detailed study on the approach to femicide in international and national law, which analyzes the gaps in the recognition and criminalization of this extreme form of gender-based violence, as well as good legislative practices in other countries.

- Femicide is the most serious manifestation of violence against women, resulting from a continuum of gender-based violence and discrimination.
- International law does not currently contain binding norms that explicitly recognize and criminalize femicide, leading to inconsistent definitions and judicial practices.
- Instruments such as CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention recognize gender-based violence, but do not specifically regulate femicide.
- Latin American countries have made significant progress by adopting specific femicide offenses in their criminal legislation, providing relevant models of good practice.
- In many regions of the world (Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and parts of Europe), femicide is not criminalized as a distinct offense.

National context – Republic of Moldova:

- In about 80% of cases of femicide there is a history of domestic violence.
- In 2022–2023, there were 45 women killed in the context of domestic violence, most of them in the common home.
- Following the constant steps of the WLC, the Republic of Moldova has made significant legislative progress:
 - definition of femicide in national law (2024);
 - the introduction of Article 134²⁷ „Femicide” in the Criminal Code (2025), aligning national legislation to international standards.



Conclusions

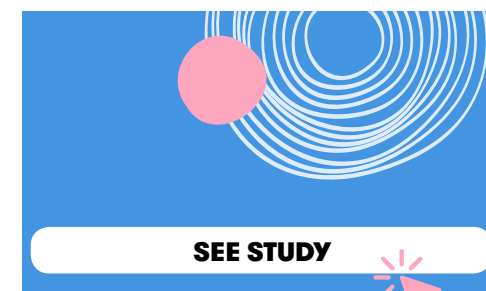
- In the Republic of Moldova, the notion of femicide is recognized at the legislative level, both in Law no. 45/2007 and in the General Part of the Criminal Code, without being incriminated separately in the Special Part of the Criminal Code.
- The lack of a distinct femicide offence limits the practical purpose of this recognition, affecting the uniformity of law enforcement and the individualisation of sanctions.
- The legal definition of femicide poses challenges related to the probation of gender motivation, and a balance between legal clarity and complexity of the phenomenon is necessary.

- National data indicate an alarming rate of femicide – about 24 cases annually, almost double the EU average.
- Although some forms of femicide are currently framed by the crime of murder and aggravating circumstances, they do not fully reflect the gravity and specificity of the phenomenon.

Recommendation:

- Continuing the process of separately criminalizing femicide by amending the Special Part of the Criminal Code;
- Formulating a clear and applicable legal definition based on objective indicators of gender-based motivation;
- Establishing penalties proportionate to the severity of femicide, with a preventive and deterrent role;
- Strengthening measures for prevention, victim protection, and lethality risk assessment, at the same time with legislative reforms, etc.

The study on the international approach to femicide was developed by the Women's Law Center with the support of UN Women and financial support from Sweden.



SEE STUDY



NEWS IN BRIEF

Conference on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women, 5th edition

WLC supported the Conference on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women, organized by the National Coalition “Life without Violence” from October 21 to 24, 2025, an event that brings together survivors of violence, authorities, civil society organizations, and activists in the field.

“The most commonly reported cases of domestic violence, especially psychological violence, are not taken seriously. Police officers sometimes refuse to file a report or complete the risk assessment form, arguing that the victim provoked the aggressor or that she will reconcile with him. The obstacles are amplified by the stereotypes of specialists, but also of society, which blames women and



*minimizes the seriousness of violence,” said **Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari**, executive director of WLC, during the panel discussion “Femicide does not begin and end with the murder of a woman.”*

She pointed out that in about **80%** of femicide cases, there’s a history of domestic violence, repeated police reports, and protection orders.

Serious involvement in every reported case, access to specialized services for victims, assessment of the risk of lethality, strengthening of data collection systems and protection mechanisms are essential for preventing tragedies.



WLC at the USMF Anniversary Congress

WLC was represented by its executive director, Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari, at the anniversary congress “80 years of innovation in health and medical education,” organized on October 22, 2025, by the Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

During the panel discussion on the healthcare system’s response to gender-based violence, she emphasized the role of the medical system in preventing and combating violence against women.

“Healthcare professionals are often the first point of contact with victims of violence. That is why doctors, nurses, and other specialists must be trained to recognize the signs of violence, provide appropriate physical and psychological care, accurately document injuries, and, with the person’s consent, refer the case to specialized services. The healthcare system has not only a

*therapeutic function, but also a preventive and protective one, directly contributing to saving lives.” – **Angelina Zaporozjan-Pîrgari**.*

The panel brought together representatives of organizations involved in responding to gender-based violence: ANPCV Republic of Moldova, UNFPA Moldova, UN Women Moldova, and the International Center “La Strada Moldova.”



WLC presence at international level

High-level international conference against femicide

Angelina Zaporozhan-Pîrgari, Executive Director of CDF and Vice-President of GREVIO, had the honor of participating on November 21, 2025, in the High-Level International Conference on Femicide, organized in Rome by the OSCE and the Italian Government.

In her speech, she highlighted GREVIO's role in monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and in formulating recommendations for the prevention of femicide. She also spoke about the main challenges regarding the protection of victims, the prevention and prosecution of femicide cases, as well as examples of good practices in Europe.



International round table on legal data from a gender perspective

WLC was represented by Eleonora Grosu, Program Director, at the international round table “Reducing gaps in judicial data from a gender perspective,” held on October 24, 2025, in Budapest.

The event brought together representatives of institutions from the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership responsible for judicial statistics, justice policies, and gender equality, providing a framework for dialogue between

the legislative, statistical, and public policy fields. The discussions highlighted the importance of collecting and using sex- and gender-disaggregated data for developing gender-sensitive judicial reforms and ensuring real access to justice for women and girls.

The WLC's participation reconfirms its commitment to promoting Council of Europe standards and strengthening mechanisms for the protection of women's rights in the justice system.



Creative workshop for WLC beneficiaries

At WLC, we believe in the healing power of art and therapeutic activities. For years, we have been organizing workshops designed to bring comfort, relaxation, and joy to women and children who have been through traumatic experiences.

On December 21, 13 beneficiaries participated in a Christmas wreath-making workshop. The sincere smiles on the participants' faces always create a magical atmosphere.

The workshop was made possible thanks to financial support from Sweden.



Documentary film – People who lend a hand

WLC is one of the organizations featured in the first documentary dedicated to NGOs in the Republic of Moldova, produced by **Centrul Contact** with the support of the Soros Foundation. We are honored that WLC is among the voices in this film – a recognition of our constant work for the rights, safety, and dignity of women and girls in the Republic of Moldova.



[WATCH THE DOCUMENTARY HERE](#)

DAMENI CARE PUN
umărul Angelina Zaporozan-Pîrgari
Directoare executivă, Organizația neguvernamentală
„Centrul de Drept al Femeilor”

Media appearances



Emisiune:
Noi legi pentru protecția femeilor în Moldova
[HERE](#) **cu Angelina Zaporozan-Pîrgari**

Women and girls in Moldova now receive more security and protection | Studio-L Căușeni

We have been changing lives together for 16 years!

The Women's Law Center was launched on **December 10, 2009** – Human Rights Day.

The date was not chosen at random. It was based on a clear intention to make efforts to ensure that the rights of all women and children affected by violence are respected.

WLC means people and unwavering persistence!

In our 16 years of activity, we have provided legal, psychological, and social support to over **7,000 women** in difficult situations. We have developed economic support and empowerment programs, training for specialists, public actions, and legislative initiatives.

Today, we reaffirm our commitment to continuing our mission. We want every woman and every child to live in safety, respect, and dignity. We are guided by solid values and work every day for a society where we have #zerotolerance for violence. We thank our partners who have supported us in all our efforts and have given us wings to help women regain their voice.



**WOMEN'S
LAW CENTRE**

We thank the partners who supported us in all our efforts and gave us wings to help women regain their voice.

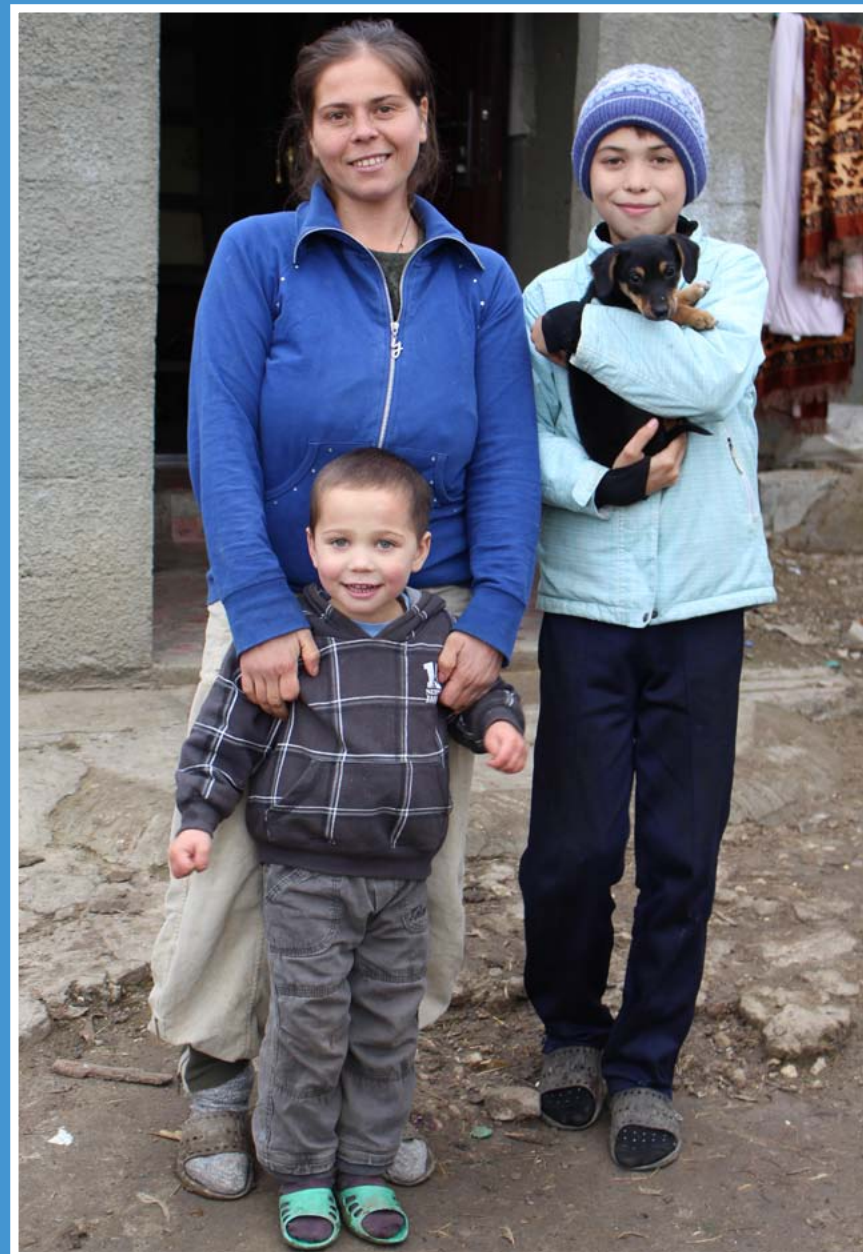
TOGETHER WE ARE CHANGING LIVES!

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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