



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE

WAVE Network and European Info Centre against Violence

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ZVR: 601608559

January 2016

UNITED KINGDOM

Basic Information

Population: 64 308 261

Female Population: 32 659 675

Member of Council of Europe: 1949

Member of European Union: 1973

CEDAW ratified: 1986

CEDAW Optional protocol ratified: 1986

Istanbul Convention – signed: yes (2012); ratified: no

Violence prevalence data: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-violence-against-women-survey>

Gender Equality Index: 58.0, for further information see: <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/gender-equality-index/2012>

UN Women Global Database on Violence against Women: <http://www.evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/europe/united-kingdom-of-great-britain-and-northern-ireland?unstatscountry=56b3246f491f4cc599aedb73c5c85c9d>

CEDAW Concluding Comments¹ 2013:

Violence against women

34. The Committee commends the State party for launching the “Call to end violence against women and girls” in 2010. It notes that the State party intends to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) and to criminalize forced marriage. It is concerned, however, at continued reports of violence against women, including domestic violence, affecting in particular black and ethnic minority women, and the so-called “honour killings” of ethnic minority women. The Committee is also concerned at reports of negative attitudes on the part of the police towards women who are victims of domestic violence. The Committee further recalls its previous concluding observations (*ibid.*, paras. 280 and 281) and is concerned that corporal punishment remains lawful in the home.

35. Recalling its general recommendation No. 19, on violence against women, and its previous recommendation, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To ratify the Istanbul Convention and criminalize forced marriage;

(b) To increase its efforts to protect women, including black and ethnic minority women, against all forms of violence, including domestic violence, and so-called “honour killings”;

¹ Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

(c) To continue public campaigns to raise awareness of all forms of violence against women, including black and ethnic minority women;

(d) To step up efforts to train police officers in order to eliminate prejudices concerning the credibility of victims of domestic violence;

(e) To revise its legislation to prohibit corporal punishment of children in the home.

ENGLAND

Introduction

The following information has been compiled from the research carried out in 2015 for the WAVE Report (http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf) with national experts working in the field of violence against women.² The research methodology involved an extensive questionnaire and a follow-up skype interview. The profile includes information on women's networks, shelters, helplines, centres, and policy and funding. It was not possible to gather any data on prevention, awareness-raising, campaigning and training.

ENGLAND

Women's Helplines

National women's helplines

The national women's domestic abuse helpline is called '[National Domestic Violence Helpline](#)' (0800 2000 247), in existence since 2004. This helpline is run in partnership by Women's Aid and Refuge, both women's NGOs. This helpline operates 24/7, free of charge, and provides multi-lingual support through Language Line, an external organization. There is also TypeTalk, for callers who are deaf or who have hearing difficulties, which provides a voicemail service, responds to emails from survivors of abuse and their supporters, provides a voicemail service, and responds to emails from survivors of abuse and their supporters.

[Rape Crisis Helpline](#) (0808 802 999) supports women and girl survivors of rape or any form of sexual violence. The helpline operates from 12-12:30 and 7-9:30pm.

Other national helplines for victims

The Children's Helpline is called 'Childline' (0800) 111, is free of charge, and offers chat via email and message boards.

Rights of Women (ROW) helpline explains the legal rights to women.

[Broken Rainbow UK](#) (0300 999 5428) for LGBT experiencing domestic violence, with a trans-specific service on Tuesdays, but the opening hours differ day-to-day.

² Data presented in this country profile has been compiled throughout an extensive data collection process, however the final country profile has not been approved by the corresponding WAVE delegate.

[National Stalking Helpline](#) (0808 802 0300) provides support for survivors of harassment or stalking. The website says it is open Monday-Friday 9:30-5, except for Wednesdays when open at 1pm.

Honour Network Helpline/[Karma Nirvana](#) (0800 59999 247) is for survivors of so-called crimes of honor") and forced marriage across the UK, conducting advocacy, school projects, campaigns ("Britain's Lost Women"), education workshops, and police training, and is open to all genders and sexualities. Available 9:30-17:00 Monday-Friday.

[The Survivors UK Helpline](#) (0845 122 1201) is for men who have been raped or sexual abused.

[Men's advice line](#) (0808 801 0327) provides support for men in abusive relationships in England, Wales, and Scotland. It is free from landlines and most mobiles, it is run and managed by Respect, and is open Monday-Friday 9-5.

[Respect Phonenumber](#) (0808 802 4040) is a helpline for DV perpetrators that covers England, Wales and Scotland, which is free from landlines and most mobiles, and is open Monday-Friday from 9-5.

Women's Shelters

There are 243 women's shelters in England, as well as 27 specialised shelters for black minority ethnic (BME) women, and 1 specialised shelter for victims of trafficking (Eaves Poppy Project), with 9 beds. 45 women's shelters have specialized services for BME women, 27 of these are specific BME refuges. At least one shelter offers specialized support groups for gypsy, Roma, and traveller women. The Government has a Forced Marriage Unit, otherwise there are no shelters dedicated to forced marriage, but victims are welcome in any shelter.

There has been a move towards smaller number of large organizations, that are not always from the local area or have local expertise, providing accommodation in many local authority areas. Cuts and changes can be due to local government decisions, or different organizations running the refuges (closing down a refuge run by a dedicated service and replacing/opening a refuge run by a general domestic violence support organization).

In refuges in England, there are 3,611 beds according to the recent database number from July 2015. Women's Aid has developed National Quality standards for services supporting women and children survivors of domestic violence. Not all shelters apply the standards, as it is a fairly new initiative. It is not just for shelters, either, it is for any domestic violence service. Currently 34 domestic violence services are accredited. 10 domestic violence services are in the process of being accredited. Imkaan also has their own standards, Imkaan Accredited Quality Standards (IAQS).

Domestic violence shelters and other shelters

After shelters, women would have to go into private housing or apply for local council or housing association housing.³ There is very little transitional housing for women before they move on to social housing or the private sector. There are some organizations (213 services in England), which offer

³ <https://www.gov.uk/browse/housing-local-services/council-housing-association>

resettlement support. The helpline receives an average of 493 calls per day (not only from women, but also repeat callers and calls from survivors, professionals, and third parties).

Women's Centres

There are a number of women's centers offering a wide range of services, including independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs), independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs) and other professionals doing similar work in England and Wales. There are also 46 rape crisis centres, 30 sexual assault referral centres (SARCs). Additionally, Survivors Trust (TST) is a national umbrella agency with 135 specialized services for survivors of sexual violence in the UK and Ireland.

It is interesting to note that there are some services run by Refuge (a member organization of Women's Aid). For instance, the Gaia centre provides services for all victims of GBV, including sexual violence, stalking, prostitution, trafficking, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and so-called honour-based violence. Gaia centre also supports clients who are transgender. Additionally, Athena Service provides support to those in London who are experiencing gender-based violence, and support women and girls +13, and men 16+, including LGBT.

Women's Networks

[Women's Aid Federation England](#) is a federation of over 220 organisations who provide more than 300 local lifesaving services to women and children across the country (including shelters and community-based domestic abuse services), and provides expert training (Women's Aid National Training Centre), qualifications, consultancy, and award a National Quality Mark for services which meet their quality standards. Their campaigns achieve change in policy, practice, awareness, and encourage health relationships. Women's Aid also has a 24 hour national domestic violence helpline (run in partnership with Refuge), as well as a range of online services, such as Survivors Forum (safe space for women to share experiences and receive direct advice).

[Rape Crisis England & Wales](#) is a gender-specific and women-led umbrella body for a network of 46 independent organizations. It provides a coordinating voice for the rape crisis movement to influence policy development, increase service provision, and challenge sexual violence by leading awareness-raising campaigns and providing a central source of accurate information to the Government. Rape Crisis also has Rape Crisis National Service Standards.

[Survivors Trust](#) (TST) is a network of specialist rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse organizations throughout the UK and Ireland, providing networking and support.

[Imkaan](#) is a network of organizations which provide a diverse range of services including refuge accommodation, advice, outreach, health and legal services, therapeutic services, and women's empowerment groups. Imkaan is a black feminist organization addressing violence against women and girls, and provides support, representation, and leadership to their members through advocacy, development work, research, and information, and peer education. They also campaign with other organizations around collectively-felt issues, and their training programme for professionals is a grassroots response to VAWG with a BME context.

[Against violence and Abuse](#) (AVA) is a national network of agencies which provide direct services to victims, and works to end all forms of violence against women and girls, through conducting trainings to promote best practices, networking, and learning opportunities for those coming into contact with survivors of abuse, and also develop e-learning courses on violence against women and girls.

[End Violence against Women](#) is a coalition of organizations and individuals campaigning to end all forms of VAW. It lobbies the government, challenges cultural attitudes, and aims to prevent violence against women.

Policy & Funding

There is an action plan called 'Call to end violence against women and girls Action Plan' (2011-2015). The Action Plan is reviewed and refreshed every year. However, the UK 2015 General Election saw a change of government and as a result, a further violence against women and girls strategy is in development and should be published at the end of 2015. Although the previous Action Plan wanted to make it a national priority to continue central funding to frontline services over the next four years. Women's Aid is calling for funding for specialist domestic violence refuges and the development of a long-term solution for refuge funding.

The Home Office is overall responsible for the delivery of the strategy, and this is managed at a high level through the violence against women and girls inter-ministerial group (IMG) which is chaired by the Home Secretary. Every year, women's organizations are involved in looking at priorities going forward, and every ¼ year, there are stakeholder meetings. Women's organizations are invited to provide input into the IMG and also attend roundtable meetings held by the Home Secretary and the relevant Home Office minister. Home Office also hosts the VAWG Stakeholder Group, which is a group of non-governmental organizations who meet regularly to share information and get updates from the Home Office on their progress. Women's organizations are also informally involved in the evaluation of the strategy through the Stakeholder Group roundtables and IMG. There are annual reviews by the Home Office, but there is no evaluation office. There are reports and publications by the evaluation and monitoring body on the government's [website](#).

The law allows for funding of women's organizations, but funding of specialist women's support services is not mandated by law/regulation.

Prevention

Women's Aid Federation England has been advising the BBC since January 2015 on how to develop the gripping drama of coercive control in the rural idyll of Ambridge, England. The Archers, BBC's flagship radio soap, has held their 5 million devoted listeners worldwide enthralled by the harrowing tale of Helen Archer's isolation, subjugation and domination by the outwardly charming and plausible Rob Titchener. What began as an illicit love affair descended step by painful step through the daily 12 minute transmissions into sinister and disturbing domestic violence. The extent to which this story has shocked and horrified listeners has been well documented online through Message Boards and Twitter as well as in print media. As a way of getting the message across the Archers has proved, and continues to be, excellent publicity for WAVE and campaigners against violence against women in general.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Women's Helplines

National women's helplines

There is one national women's helpline called "24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline" (0808 802 1414; open to women and men affected by domestic or sexual violence; support for "honor-based violence" and for LGBT victims of domestic and sexual violence; free of charge, 24/7; multi-lingual support; support for those with hearing difficulties or hearing loss) run by WAFNI. They also offer email (24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org) and text support (07797 805 839). The helpline has been in existence since 1995. In 2014, the helpline expanded to cover sexual violence.

Since 2005, the helpline is jointly funded by the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety, the Department of Justice, and the Department for Social Development.

Other helplines for victims

There are seven national helpline for victims in Northern Ireland: [Childline](#) (0800 1111; for children and young people up to 19; free of charge), the [National Stalking Helpline](#) (UK-wide; 0808 802 0300; for victims of harassment and stalking; Mo-Fri 9:30-4pm, except Wednesdays (open at 1)), [Lifeline](#) (0808 808 8000; for people who are experiencing distress or despair; free of charge; 24/7; also is available for deaf and hard of hearing), the Respect Phonenumber (0845 122 8609; for people concerned about their abusive behaviour; not 24/7), and the National Trafficking Helpline (0800 0121 700).

[Rowan Sexual Assault Referral Centre](#), based in Antrim, is state-run and covers all of Northern Ireland. This centre is available 24/7, and has a national helpline (0800 389 4424), and provides information and advice. Services are available for men, women, and young people, and they work closely with the police, make reports, provide medical and forensic aid, emotional support, and follow-up support and counselling.

For further information about all helplines in Northern Ireland, a [website](#) is available.

Women's Shelters

There are 14 women's shelters in Northern Ireland, including not only Women's Aid refuges, but also safe houses and independent living units, and all are run by women's NGOs, existing in all regions of the country. All refuges are free of charge, although those who are not in receipt of housing benefit/welfare pay for accommodation.

All Women's Aid refuges are either staffed 24/7 or are accessible via an on-call worker. There are 332 beds⁴ total in the 14 women's shelters, which are available for immediate and direct access for women in emergency services, depending on the availability. Possible obstacles to immediate access to women's shelters are: lack of bed spaces, no recourse to public funds, failure of responding officer or first point of contact and disclosure to refer or signpost, and complex needs that make woman unsuitable for communal/refuge style accommodation.

The aim of the refuges is to provide short-term crisis accommodation and support for women and their children who have been affected by domestic violence. Refuges do not enforce a time-limit on those staying in a refuge, and a small number of women stay longer due to their unique circumstances.

⁴ Beds are for both women and children

There are accredited national standards for women's shelters, called "Quality Assessment Framework", for Supporting People-funded housing related support services. All women's shelters apply these standards.

There are no specific shelters for BME women or girl victims of forced marriage, but there is one shelter for victims of trafficking (it is not a specific separate shelter for trafficking, but adult victims of trafficking are supported within one of the Women's Aid refuges).

Women's Centres

There are 16 Women's Aid resource centres run by women's NGOs and covering all of Northern Ireland. Resource centres are Women's Aid centres where a lot of work other than refuge support is carried out, such as programmes for women etc. They are also HQ for local Women's Aid groups.

There is one rape crisis helpline run by the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence helpline. The charity [NEXUS](#) also has centres across Northern Ireland providing counselling and support for survivors of sexual abuse). These two services cover all of Northern Ireland.

There is one sexual assault centre, run by the [Rowan Sexual Assault Referral Centre](#).

There are other women's centres across Northern Ireland providing wider, more general support to women in the community.

All Women's Aid local groups provide information and advice, practical support, empowering support, multi-lingual support, outreach, and mobile/floating support. Most provide court accompaniment. Some provide counselling, advocacy, legal advice, and legal representation. None provide specialist support for minority, migrant, or asylum-seeking women. Local Women's Aid groups would provide ad hoc support to women for a wide range of issues, however, they are not professional social rights advisers and would signpost to other advice organizations where legal/other advice is needed.

Other services

There are also a number of children's charities that work in the area of violence against children, such as NSPCC and Barnardos.

Women's Networks

[Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland](#), a registered charity, comprises of nine Women's Aid groups and has a national office in Belfast. Women's Aid groups cover the whole of Northern Ireland, and each local Women's Aid group runs refuge services, outreach services, and other support services in their area for victims of domestic and sexual violence and their children. Activities of the network are: provide refuge accommodation to women and their children suffering from mental, physical, or sexual abuse within the home; run the 24 hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline; provide a range of support services to enable women who are leaving violent situations to rebuild their lives and the lives of their children; provide a range of support services to children and young people who have experienced domestic violence; run preventative education programmes in schools and other settings; educate and inform the public, media, police, courts, social services, and other agencies of the impact and effects of domestic violence; advise and support agencies in the development of domestic violence policies, protocols, and service delivery; and work in partnership with relevant agencies to ensure a joined response to domestic violence.

[Survivors Trust \(TST\)](#) is a registered charity network of specialist rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse organizations throughout the UK and Ireland, providing networking and support. Its main office is located in Warwickshire.

Policy & Funding

There is one draft NAP called “Stopping Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland” (2013-2020). This strategy is a draft and is not yet in effect in Northern Ireland. Therefore there is no link to it yet. The finalization of the strategy has been delayed. The draft strategy is intended to merge two previous government strategies: [Tackling Violence at Home Strategy](#), and [Tackling Sexual Violence and Abuse strategy](#). This strategy is not a VAW strategy per se, but if focuses on domestic violence and sexual violence, and is for women and men. Northern Ireland does not have a dedicated action plan to tackle VAWG.

Since the strategy is still in draft, it cannot be stated now if women’s support services are integrated in the strategy. However, there is an existence of a governmental coordinating body for implementing policies and measures to prevent VAW, called the Regional Strategic Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence (RSG), chaired by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). Women’s NGOs are involved in the work of the coordinating body: WAFNI sits on the Regional Strategic Group, and other NGOs working on domestic violence and sexual violence are also in the group.

THE RSG is also the evaluation and monitoring body, with women’s NGOs also taking part.

The strategy does not have clearly set outcomes for the government to achieve. A significant amount of work to meet targets and make progress in tackling domestic and sexual violence has been carried out by both statutory agencies and expert community and voluntary sector organizations over the course of the previous domestic and sexual violence strategies. However, many actions and targets have not been met. Furthermore, austerity and budget cuts have resulted in the reversal of some key progress and de-funding projects which are set up to meet the objectives and the strategies.

The last evaluation report was called “Tackling Violence at Home Strategy Review Report” (2011). Women’s NGOs do not conduct an evaluation of the strategy.

There are specific governmental funds allocated for activities to combat VAW on the national level. The law allows for funding of women’s NGOs, and governmental funding of WSS is not mandated by law/regulation. The three most common forms of governmental funding for WSS is: project funding, annual core funding, and public procurement funding. There will be a review of core funding in 2016 by the Department of Health. A public procurement/tendering process is being used to fund services.

SCOTLAND

Women’s Helplines

National women’s helplines

[Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) (0800 027 1234), operates 24/7 and is free of charge, and takes calls from men, women, children and victims of forced marriage. The helpline runs 24/7 and is free of charge, and is run by Scottish Women’s Aid.

[Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline](#) (0808 8010 302) is run by Rape Crisis Scotland, assists survivors of rape and sexual assault, and is free of charge, provides multi-lingual support, but does not operate 24/7. The helpline provides referrals to local rape crisis centres, as well as has services for deaf or hard of

hearing individuals, and interpreters are available. The helpline also supports transgender, intersex, and the LGB community.

Other helplines for victims

[Men's Advice Line](#) (0808 801 0327) provides support for men in abusive relationships in England, Wales, and Scotland. The website says it is free from landlines and most mobiles, and is run and managed by Respect, open Monday-Friday 9-5.

[The Childline](#) (0800 111) offers support for children dealing with violence across the UK. According to the website, calls are free. Also can chat via email and message boards.

[Respect Phonenumber](#) (0808 802 4040) is a helpline for domestic violence perpetrators that covers England, Wales and Scotland. The website says that it is free from landlines and most mobiles, and is open Monday-Friday from 9-5.

Honour Network Helpline/[Karma Nirvana](#) (0800 59999 247) is for survivors of so-called crimes of honour") and forced marriage across the UK. The helpline conducts advocacy, school projects, campaigns ("Britain's Lost Women"), education workshops, and police training, and is available for all genders and sexualities, from 9:30-17:00 Monday-Friday.

Women's Shelters

There are 37 women's shelters with about 502 family spaces⁵, all run by women's NGOs with a gender-specific/feminist approach. Women's shelters exist in all regions, and only one is available 24/7. Women pay for the accommodation service, but can access support services free. Some refuges take a limited number of women with no recourse to public funds. Scottish Women's Aid has developed accredited national standards for women's shelters, applied by 22 women's shelters.

There are two BME shelters, but no shelters specifically for victims of trafficking, or for girls and young women victims of forced marriage.

Women who experience domestic abuse are covered by housing legislation and will be defined as homeless and in priority need, which means that they will receive an offer of permanent housing. The problem is that housing stock is low and, depending on the area, it can take a long time to be re-housed, through for instance public housing programs.

Women's Centres

There are at least 22 women's centres in Scotland. There are 14 rape crisis centres run by Rape Crisis Scotland, available in almost all regions with its main source of funding being from the State, but also local authorities, and grant-making trusts.

There are also two women's centres for black/migrant/minority ethnic women run by Scottish Women's Aid, available in two cities.

⁵ It is a room that the family shares and can have a number of beds. Do not have a bed space number.

There are also four sexual violence services and one Sexual Assault Referral Centre (Archway) in Glasgow for anyone over 12 years of age. Archway is open 24/7 and offers various services, including forensics, testing for infections, support and counselling.⁶

Women's Support Project works to raise awareness of the extent, causes and effect of male violence against women, and for improved services for those affected by violence. The Project is based in Glasgow and works across Scotland.

Women's Networks

[Scottish Women's Aid Network](#) is a network of 37 specialist domestic abuse services. Activities of the network focus on the prevention of domestic abuse, such as conducting campaigns, publications and research, trainings, and a domestic abuse helpline.

[Rape Crisis Scotland](#) is a network of 14 sexual violence centres. Activities of the network focus on providing a rape crisis helpline and email support for anyone affected by sexual violence. Rape Crisis Scotland also works with the police, conducts lobbying and campaigns, and hosts conferences.

[National Violence against Women Network](#) is a network of 121 local multi-agency violence against women partnerships, national public sector organizations, and national third sector organizations. The network brings together local violence against women partnership coordinators across Scotland and other relevant stakeholders. Key activities include supporting local violence against women partnerships to connect with each other and share information, learning resources, strengthening relationships between local violence against women partnerships and relevant national public sector and third sector organizations, and providing a collective voice on relevant violence against women issues to help inform and help improve policy and practice at a local and national level.

[Survivors Trust](#) (TST) is a network of specialist rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse organizations throughout the UK and Ireland, providing networking and support.

Policy & Funding

The Scottish government published "Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls" in June 2014. The strategy was developed by the government and COSLA with input from NGOs supporting women (including Scottish Women's Aid and Rape Crisis Scotland), and the justice sector (police and COPFS). The initial phase of the strategic framework runs until the end of 2015, and involves developing recommendations which will inform more detailed action plans.

Equally Safe's outlined objectives include increasing gender equality in access to power, strengthening justice responses, and holding men who carry out violence against women to account. Furthermore, the framework recognizes a gendered understanding of VAW as an inequality issue. Equally Safe is a strategic framework, not a delivery plan. It is complementing Scotland's National Action Plan for

⁶ Country Report 2013 & 2014

Human Rights (SNAP) 2013-2017, which recognizes that tackling violence against women and girls is key to ensuring the human rights of all citizens, and fits into the one of the 13 equality points for Scotland as part of the National Performance Framework. There is a national body/institution entrusted with the evaluation and monitoring of the national strategy, which is a multi-agency group (Accountability Working Group), led by women's NGOs, however there are no reports or publications by them yet.

The government funds NGOs, and in 2014, there was approximately €4 million available to be applied for. There was also violence against women funding to specific services and groups for 2015/2016 of €16,425,133. The law does allow for funding of women's NGOs, however there is no governmental funding of specialist women's support services mandated by law/regulation (the government has the power to fund, but are not mandated to). Governmental funding for specialist women's support services is in the form of annual core funding. Until recently, funding was allocated for three years, but has been annually for the past two years and there is an indication that it will be annual funding for 2016-2017.

WALES

National women's helplines

Women's Helplines

"[Live Fear Free Helpline](#)" (0808 80 10 800) 24/7, free of charge and provided by Welsh Women's Aid on behalf of the Welsh Government. The helpline also provides multi-lingual support, with trained specialist call takers fluent in English and Welsh and access to a further 150 languages via Language Line.⁷ The helpline is accredited with the Helplines Standard (originally Quality Mark), by the Helpline Association, which defines and accredits best practices.

Rape Crisis Helpline (0808 802 9999, 0208 239 1124) not free of charge, free from UK landlines, Virgin, Orange, EE, O2, 3, T-Mobile, Vodaphone mobile phone networks) supports women and girls survivors of rape or any form of sexual violence. According to the website, the helpline is open every day 12-2:30, 7-9:30pm, and additionally on weekdays 3-5:30pm.

Other helplines for victims

Bawso BME domestic abuse helpline (0800 731 8147); black and ethnic minorities threatened by abuse (e.g. forced marriage, FGM, human trafficking); [Broken Rainbow](#) (UK; 0300 999 5428) LGBT+ domestic violence; differing operating hours, [Childline](#) (0800 1111); free of charge; additional online services, FGM Helpline (0800 028 3550) free of charge; 24/7); Forced Marriage Unit (England and Wales; 020 7008 0151); [Men's Advice Line](#) (0808 801 0327) support for men in abusive relationships and free from landlines and most mobiles; New Pathways Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Helpline (01685 379 310) women, men, children and young people who have been affected by rape or sexual abuse; [Respect Phoneline](#) (0808 802 4040) for domestic violence perpetrators and free from landlines

⁷ <http://www.allwaleshelpline.org.uk/>

and most mobiles; Mo-Fri 9-5; Safer Wales [Dyn Project](#) (0808 801 0321) male victims of domestic abuse, free of charge, not 24/7.

Women's Shelters

There are 54 women's shelters in Wales, with 299 bed spaces,⁸ most of which are non-governmental organization charities (all free of charge). Women's shelters exist in all regions. Most women's shelters are available 24/7 – all refuges have 24/7 staff on call, not all have 24/7 staff attendance. Most women's shelters provide immediate and direct access in emergency situations, and most provide non-residential support. There is no upper limit for the length of time for women to stay in shelters, but the most common stay is two months long.

Women's shelters in Wales provide access for: women with children, women without children, older women (above 60), women with disabilities, lesbian and/or transgender women⁹, women from other provinces of the country, migrant women, and minority ethnic women¹⁰, women from other provinces of the country, migrant women, and minority ethnic women¹¹. There is also access for asylum-seeking women and women from other EU countries across Wales through the BME service and WWA member Bawso. Some shelters provide access for undocumented migrant women, only five of WWA's member groups reported accepting women with no recourse to public funds (other reasons for not admitting: criminal convictions, e.g. crime or arson, due to safety concerns and insurance purposes).

Through WWA member Bawso, Wales has specific BME shelters and shelters for girls and young women victims of forced marriage.

There is a variety of second-stage or 'move-on' accommodation available for those leaving refuge.

Women's Centres

N/A (do not collect this data), Although Rape Crisis England and Wales is a network which includes rape crisis centres in Wales. The number is unknown.

The WAVE Report 2014 states that there are a number of women's centres in Wales, including centres for survivors of sexual violence, and a number of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs).

Women's Networks

[Welsh Women's Aid](#) comprises of 25 local Women's Aid groups across Wales, providing direct services for women and children victims of violence against women. The network conducts prevention work (awareness-raising, campaigning), provision for members, protection and support, information, training, coordinate access to emergency refuge provision for survivors (UK Refuges Online System).

⁸ WWA asks members for the number of units (bed spaces) that they provide. Number of units has been provided by all WWA's members and 1 combined WWA's direct service. Total number of bed spaces in Wales is 299.

⁹ Policies on the acceptance of transgender women into refuge are currently being created

¹⁰ It is difficult to say the amount of women's shelters who provide access, as they only recently began to collect data on demographics.

¹¹ It is difficult to say the amount of women's shelters which provide access, as they only recently began collecting data on demographics.

[Rape Crisis England and Wales](#) is a network of 46 rape crisis centres in England and Wales. The network is an umbrella body or network of rape crisis centres and provide a coordinating voice for the rape crisis movement, to influence local, regional, and national policy development, increase service provision, and challenge sexual violence by leading awareness-raising campaigns and providing a central source of accurate information to government. It is gender-specific and women-led.

[Women's Equality Network](#) (WEN) Wales is a network of 500 organisations and individuals committed to making Wales safer for women and girls.

Wales Violence against Women Action Group has diverse members interested in ending violence against women, consisting of for instance, universities and NGOs, including Welsh Women's Aid, Women's Institute, and Survivors Trust, as an alliance of organisations working on VAWG issues in Wales and campaigning for policy change.

Women Making a Difference (WMAD) is a Wales based capacity-building programme that educates and empowers women in Wales to have the skills, confidence, and mind-set to become the leaders in their communities and decision-makers at all levels of public and political life.

The Wales Assembly of Women is an NGO accredited to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Their representatives have attended every major U.N. world conference for women since Nairobi in 1995. Membership is open to all women in Wales who share the Aims of the Association. Membership is open also to women living elsewhere who have connections with Wales and who have affinity with and interest in life in Wales.

Women's Equality Party Wales is a network of individuals as a political party for: equal representation in politics, business, industry, and throughout working life; equal pay; equal parenting; an education system that creates opportunities for all children; address the ways in which the portrayal of women in the media impedes progress towards equality; seek an end to violence against women.

Policy & Funding

There is one national strategy, "The Right to be Safe" Strategy (2010-2016)¹² in Wales and one national action plan, "A Call to End Violence against Women and Girls Action Plan" (2011-2015)¹³. These will be replaced with new legality mandated strategies created under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

There is a governmental coordinating body for implementing policies and measures to prevent VAW, called "Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Team", part of the Community Safety Division within the Welsh Government. This sits under the Minister for Public Services. As of October 2015, Wales also has National Adviser for VAW and other forms of GBV, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, created by the VAW/DA/SV Act, who sits within the Welsh Government.

Women's NGOs are also involved in the work of the coordinating body. They have standing meetings with officials, including a Strategic Leadership Group with the Minister and officials each quarter, as well as subject groups on FGM, so-called 'honour' based violence and forced marriage.

¹² <http://lyw.cymru/topics/people-and-communities/communities/safety/domesticabuse/publications/besafe/?lang=en>

¹³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97903/vawg-action-plan.pdf

Representatives from the sector are recognised as specialists/experts. Women's NGOs are able to provide feedback and input in these meetings.

There is also a national body/institution entrusted with the evaluation and monitoring of the national strategy/body, which is the same as the governmental coordinating body. Women's NGOs are not involved in the evaluation and monitoring body, as currently it is an internal Welsh Government process. The evaluation and monitoring body measures the achievement of indicators in report and dissemination

The Welsh Government website publishes information and reports relevant to this work. The 4th Annual Report on the Right to be Safe Strategy 2013-14 has been published.¹⁴ A report on the Call to end Violence against women and girls (2014) also outlined new goals going forward, and objectives to achieve for 2015, called "A Call to End Violence against women and Girls Action Plan 2014". A report reviewing the services delivered in Wales around VAW/DA/SV was also completed by the Welsh Government in 2014.¹⁵ There is also a public evaluation report.¹⁶

Although governmental funding of women's support services is not mandated by law/regulation, there is new legislation in Wales which aims to improve women's support services and preventing violence against women. The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 legislates for a national strategy to be developed in consultation with sector experts to replace the Right to be Safe Strategy after 2016. The Act also calls for local strategies to be developed and outcomes to be measured in the 22 local authorities and local health boards across Wales. This Act became law in Wales on 29 April 2015. The legislation aims to improve: arrangements for the prevention of GBV, domestic abuse and sexual violence; and support for people affected by GBV, domestic abuse and sexual violence, improve consistency, quality, and join-up of service provision in Wales. The Act also includes duties to prevent VAW, track progress, a National Training Framework, informative sharing, cooperative working, and guidance for commissioners when funding services.¹⁷

¹⁴ <http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/right-to-be-safe-annual-report-2013-14-v2-en.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/building-effective-responses-independent-review-violence-against-women/?lang=en>

¹⁶ <http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/right-to-be-safe-annual-report-2013-14-v2-en.pdf>

¹⁷ Welsh Women's Aid, WWA Briefing: The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.