



EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
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EWL Observatory on Violence against women Terms of Reference¹

Background

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) Observatory brings together a dynamic group of women who have extensive expertise and experience in the area of violence against women, coming from different countries in Europe² and appointed by the European Women's Lobby members. This extensive and Pan-European expertise and experience has been instrumental for the European Women's Lobby to design its advocacy and policy activities on the basis of a comprehensive understanding of the situation in Europe regarding the different types of male violence against women (VAW), and the challenges and opportunities that women and women's organisations face. The EWL Observatory gives also a feminist space for sharing knowledge and information; bridging with regional initiatives; developing common tools; stimulating reflection and mobilising members and women's organisations.

The EWL Observatory on violence against women was established in 1997, two years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, when the states committed to take action to combat violence against women. Having identified violence against women as one of their top priorities, the EWL members decided to create this unique structure to put strengthened political pressure towards ending violence against women. The EWL Observatory plays a key role in identifying burning issues and monitoring progress towards a Europe free from male violence against women.

The work of the EWL Observatory on violence against women is in line with the EWL Charter of Principles on violence against women³ adopted in 2007, reiterated in EWL 2016 factsheet on violence against women⁴, and with the EWL Position paper "European Women's Lobby Position Paper: Towards a Europe Free from All Forms of Male Violence against Women"⁵ adopted in 2010.

Purpose and Objectives

Taking into account the wide expertise and experience that the members of the Observatory bring together in terms of regional diversity and areas of expertise from grassroots to EU level, the EWL

¹ Adopted by the European Women's Lobby Board of Administration in June 2016.

² Member States of the European Union, the European Economic Area countries, countries in the formal process of accession to the European Union and neighboring countries.

³ http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?action=acceder_document&arg=4447&cle=dd137c1e473dfd89b093bd9c01182ce551912f91&file=pdf%2Fcharter_of_principles_on_vaw.pdf

⁴ http://www.womenlobby.org/IMG/pdf/ewl_factsheet_on_vaw_2016-final.pdf?4440/91f0a080d64657d23185662e37057600aeee7cf5

⁵ <http://www.womenlobby.org/Towards-a-Europe-Free-from-All-Forms-of-Male-Violence-against-Women-December>



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Observatory has an instrumental role in maintaining a global perspective on violence against women across Europe, in identifying critical and emerging issues, and in monitoring progress in combating violence against women at the national, EU, and international level.

The main aims of the EWL Observatory are to:

- Support the EWL to gather information, trends and burning issues on the prevalence of different types of violence against women, bringing information about the reality on the ground, in order to support EWL advocacy work on ending VAW.
- Identify gaps in legislation, policy and practice in the provision of services to prevent VAW and protect its victims; inform the EWL about the situation on the ground and make proposals as how to address them.
- Provide a feminist space for sharing knowledge and information, promoting networking, connectivity and solidarity. It also aims to provide the opportunity for its members to exchange best practices, connect with each other and create links and bridge with regional initiatives.

The work of the EWL Observatory on violence against women contributes to achieving:

- EWL Strategic Framework 2016-2020⁶, and in particular its Strategic Aim 4: To put an end to all forms of violence against women and girls and promote a society of peace, human security and dignity.
- The EWL organisational mission as described in the EWL statutes⁷.

Profile of the EWL Observatory experts

The EWL Observatory on violence against women is composed by experts that are appointed:

- by each EWL national coordination in each country;
- by the European EWL member organisations that want to take part;
- by the EWL Board in the case of those European countries where the EWL does not have a national coordination.

The experts of the EWL Observatory on violence against women will meet one of the following profiles:

- Recognised experts on the overall issue of violence against women and/or a specific form of violence in their country (researchers, legal experts, lobbyists, activists, etc.) with connections or links with front-line NGOs working on VAW.
- Representatives from a front-line NGO providing services to protect women victims of violence or developing activities to prevent violence against women.

⁶ http://www.womenlobby.org/IMG/pdf/european_women_s_lobby_strategy_2016-2020.pdf?4410/d7704962dd5be41a1d89d1c20ec794fce7016bed

⁷ http://www.womenlobby.org/IMG/pdf/ewl_statutes_adopted_2013_en_pour_web.pdf?3530/fb746357d86a2674de9a5b42c4695271fecbf536



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Criteria for selection

Specific criteria are needed to appoint the EWL Observatory experts taking into account the specific purposes of the EWL Observatory.

The members of the EWL Observatory on VAW are appointed on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) Agree and be familiar with EWL policies, values and the EWL Charter of principles on violence against women.
- b) Be willing to make a contribution to and share their knowledge with the EWL Observatory on violence against women, as described in its purpose and objectives.
- c) Have a good knowledge of the issue of violence against women, from different angles, and of policies and measures and service provision status in the field of violence against women in their country.
- d) Have the capacity to gather information about different types of male violence.
- e) Have a good knowledge of the situation on the ground and connections/links with the NGOs that work at grassroots level in the field of VAW in their country.
- f) Be willing to regularly work and engage with the EWL national coordination or the European EWL member organisation they are related to.
- g) Have a command of English that allows to feel comfortable to effectively understand and communicate in English (both written and spoken).
- h) Be familiar with the general work of the EWL.
- i) Be a woman.

Nomination and appointment of the experts of the EWL Observatory

The process of nomination and appointment has three stages:

1. Nomination

The EWL Secretariat will provide an application template for EWL members so that they can collect the right information about the candidates for the position of Observatory expert, and can compare and make a decision.

A deadline will be proposed for EWL members to nominate their experts.

There are three types of nominations:

- a. All the **EWL national coordinations** will nominate an Observatory expert who meets the criteria stated above, through their EWL Board member.

A nomination form (provided by EWL Secretariat) will be signed by the President of the national coordination, the EWL Board member and the proposed Observatory expert. This form will be sent to the EWL President describing the motivation to nominate this person in relation to the criteria and the profile described above.



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b. The **EWL European member organisations** interested in taking part in the Observatory will nominate an Observatory expert who meets the criteria stated above, through their EWL Board member (if any) or the president of their European network.

A nomination form (provided by EWL Secretariat) will be signed by the President of the organisation, the EWL Board member (if any) and the proposed Observatory expert. This document will be sent to the EWL President describing the motivation to nominate this person in relation to the criteria and the profile described above.

c. In **countries where EWL does not have a national coordination**, an expert to the EWL Observatory will be nominated by the EWL Board in coordination with the EWL Secretariat.

2. Reflection period

The EWL President, with the support of EWL Secretariat, will compile all nominations, and share them with the Executive Committee, within a defined timeframe.

The Executive members can submit questions to the national coordinations and European member organisations regarding the nominations.

After receiving the replies from the national coordinations and European member organisations, the Executive will submit the list of names, comments and recommendations to the EWL Board for confirmation. The EWL Board will have a defined timeframe to confirm all experts.

3. Appointment

The EWL Board will confirm the appointment of the EWL Observatory experts.

The EWL Observatory experts will express their commitment by signing these Terms of Reference and the EWL Charter of principles on violence against women.

Mandate

An Expert shall be appointed to the EWL Observatory on violence against women for three years.

An expert may be re nominated and appointed for a further three years.

An expert may not belong to the EWL Observatory on violence against women for more than 6 years continuously.

If an Observatory expert decides to step down from her mandate before her term of office, she must send a resignation letter to the EWL Secretariat. Once this letter is received, the EWL Board member can send a nomination for a new expert and follow the above mentioned process.

If an expert will be absent for a significant period of time for justified reasons (maternity/parental leave/care leave/sick leave, etc.), the EWL Board member can appoint a temporary substitute. This needs to be clearly communicated by the EWL Board Member to the Secretariat indicating contact



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details and a description of the expertise of the substitute and explaining how the information will be transferred back to the EWL observatory expert.

Role and duties of the experts of the EWL Observatory on violence against women

- Advise and inform the Observatory on policy issues, good practices, current situation and developments in the field of violence against women, including legislative proposals, new publications, research, etc.
- Actively share and engage in the exchange of good practices and technical capacity (disseminating information) on VAW amongst women's NGOs working in the field.
- Identify and relate on VAW critical and emerging issues, gaps in policy provision, and make proposals on how these could be addressed, including the development of tools for monitoring and mainstreaming VAW at national, EU level and European level.
- Fulfill work requirements, in writing when necessary, according to the annual work plans of the EWL Observatory on VAW.
- Take active part in the virtual work of the EWL Observatory as well as in the meetings of the EWL Observatory on violence against women. Contribute to the agenda setting of the EWL Observatory meetings on VAW and facilitate sessions when agreed.
- Contribute to the EWL communication tools (web articles, social media, etc.), in concertation with the EWL national coordination and/or European member.
- Actively disseminate the work of the EWL Observatory on VAW in different fora at national level and/or regional and international level.
- Actively identify funding opportunities that will serve the EWL Observatory on violence against women to resource its work and meetings.
- Promote the EWL values and principles on violence against women.

Expected commitment from the experts of the EWL Observatory on VAW

Observatory experts are expected to cooperate through long-distance communications tools (mainly through e-mail, and occasionally through Skype and phone) in close cooperation with the EWL Secretariat to develop the duties above mentioned and the work foreseen in the EWL Observatory work plans.

The Observatory will periodically agree on a two-year work plan – with annual milestones – that will contribute to the EWL overall work plan on violence against women. The work plans will acknowledge the fact that the experts of the Observatory are taking part in the EWL Observatory on a voluntary basis.

Being part of the Observatory requires a certain time commitment that is estimated to be one hour a week during a year. The workload might vary depending on the timetables agreed in the work plans.



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Furthermore, experts will commit to attend the annual Observatory meeting (if funding available). If the EWL Observatory expert is unable to attend a meeting, the EWL Board member can nominate a substitute by informing the EWL Secretariat by the deadline for registration for the meeting.

EWL Observatory experts will not act as representatives of the EWL Observatory nor are they entitled to represent the EWL, unless agreed otherwise with the EWL Board, in coordination with the EWL Secretariat.

The experts of the EWL Observatory commit to keep regular communication and take part in at least two annual briefing meetings with the EWL national coordination in their country or their European member organisation and the correspondent EWL Board member (if any). Ahead of the EWL Board meetings, the expert of the Observatory and the Board member (if any) or the EWL focal point for the European member organisations who are not represented in EWL Board, will liaise to ensure proper communication and updates.

EWL Observatory experts are accountable to the whole EWL Board and Executive, through the liaison Board/Executive member to the EWL Observatory.

Expected commitment from the national coordinations and European member organisations

1. The national coordinations and the European member organisations will organise at least two annual briefings on developments between their Observatory expert, their organisation's President and their Board member (if any). The minutes of these meetings are sent to the EWL Board and the EWL Secretariat.
2. The national coordinations and the European member organisations will also facilitate a briefing process and a handover process between their former Observatory expert and their newly appointed Observatory expert.

Functioning of the EWL Observatory

The EWL Observatory on violence against women functions according to feminist and ethical principles to ensure that a safe space is created to enable the experts to express themselves freely, even if they are not English native speakers.

The EWL Observatory functions mainly through long-distance communications tools: e-mail, Skype or other virtual meeting platforms and phone.

When funding is available, an annual meeting of the EWL Observatory against violence is organised by the EWL Secretariat.



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The position of chair will rotate on a yearly basis. Supported by and in close coordination with the EWL Secretariat, the chair will have the responsibility of chairing the meeting; coordinate the facilitators of the sessions; and coordinate the minutes taking process.

The EWL Secretariat, and specifically the Policy and Campaigns Officer working on violence against women, coordinates, supports and manages the overall work of the EWL Observatory. She reports, as required, to the Policy and Campaigns team and to the EWL Board on the Observatory's work and disseminates the minutes of the EWL Observatory meetings to the full members. Once the minutes are adopted by the EWL Observatory, the EWL Secretariat will disseminate them within a month. The EWL Secretariat informs the Observatory experts of the dates of EWL Board meetings, in order for each expert to fulfil her liaison obligation with her respective Board member or European organisation.

When working groups are created, two co-lead facilitators will be identified to coordinate, animate, follow-up and report on the work of each group.

Link between the EWL Observatory and the EWL Board and EWL Executive: liaison person

In the past years, there used to be that at least one of the experts was also an EWL Board member. If this is the case, if there is an expert who is also Board member, then the Executive asks her to be the liaison person with the Board. If there are several experts who are also Board members, the Executive will decide of the liaison person.

In case there is no Observatory expert who is also Board member, then the Executive will be appoint a liaison member for this specific mission, from the Executive Committee. In this case, the term of the liaison person to the EWL Observatory coincides with the Executive term of office.

The liaison person reports to the Board on the EWL Observatory's developments and attends the Observatory meetings.

In the occurrence of communication and or performance problems with an expert of the Observatory, the process of problem solving is as follows: the Observatory liaison person will consult with the Secretariat, the national coordination or European member, and the expert.

The EWL Executive can alert the EWL Observatory on emerging issues through the Observatory liaison person.



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Disclaimer

EWL Observatory experts will keep confidentiality on sensitive topics, upholding the integrity of the EWL at all times, and striving to work for the good of the organisation.

We are committed to fully comply with the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into effect on 25 May 2018. Upon EWL Observatory experts' consent, a list of EWL Observatory experts will be made available in the EWL website aiming at detailing their names, titles, organisations, contact detail information and a short bio. The EWL Observatory experts will be able to provide, access, modify or delete this information at any point and they will be able to state if they wish any of these pieces of information not to be made public. If an expert wish to modify this information or to be removed from the list, the expert will need to send a request to the EWL Secretariat.

Pictures and/or video tapes of the Observatory meetings can be taken during the meetings for promotion/visibility/communications purposes, which will be used on the EWL website, social media and other communications tools. If as expert of the Observatory is not comfortable with this and wish to opt-out, she should inform the EWL Secretariat during the registration prior to the meeting.