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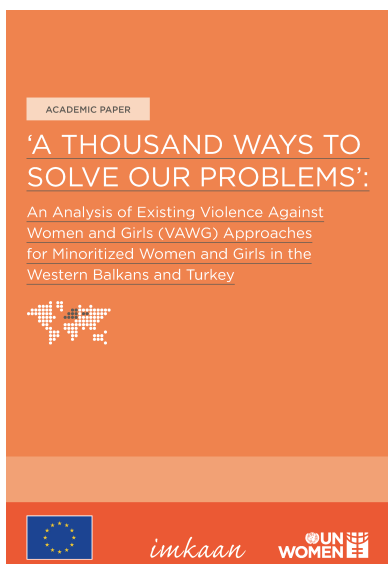
# IMPLEMENTING NORMS, CHANGING MINDS

## YOUNG MEN HELP TO FIGHT EARLY MARRIAGES IN KOSOVO'S MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Qerim Emini, a 25-year-old man from the Ashkali community in Lipijan, Kosovo recently became a volunteer for a door-to-door campaign to prevent early marriages in minority communities. Thanks to the initiative, these communities are learning about the detrimental effects of early-marriage, as well as the mechanisms for preventing violence against women. Read the story [here](#).



## REGIONAL PROGRAMME LAUNCHES A STUDY ON INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES TO ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY



The EU-UN Women Regional Programme, 'Implementing Norms, Changing Minds', has published a new research report, 'A Thousand Ways To Solve Our Problems': An analysis of existing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) approaches for minoritized women and girls in the Western Balkans

and Turkey. The study was conducted by Imkaan, a second-tier women's organization dedicated to addressing violence against Black and minoritized women and girls. The report highlights the main challenges that 'by and for' women's organizations in the region face in

incorporating an intersectional approach, as well as in monitoring and reporting on Istanbul Convention implementation, monitoring and reporting to CEDAW, and engaging with the EU accession process.

As part of the study, Imkaan interviewed representatives from 18 'by and for' organizations across the Western Balkans and Turkey. The majority of these groups are led by minority women – Roma, Egyptian and Ashkali women, women with disabilities, LGBTQI women and rural women. Within these organizations, the vision, mission and ways of working – and consequently their strategies for combating violence against women and girls – are framed by the needs and unique experiences of minority women.

This research paper sets out the scenario and road map for the establishment of a regional expert working group on intersectional and multiple forms of discrimination in the context of violence against women and girls across the region. See the report [here](#):

## CIVIL SOCIETY REVIEWS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION IN SERBIA



Representatives of civil society organizations and other institutions tasked with combating violence against women and girls in Serbia, met in Belgrade to review the draft of a 'shadow report' on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the country.

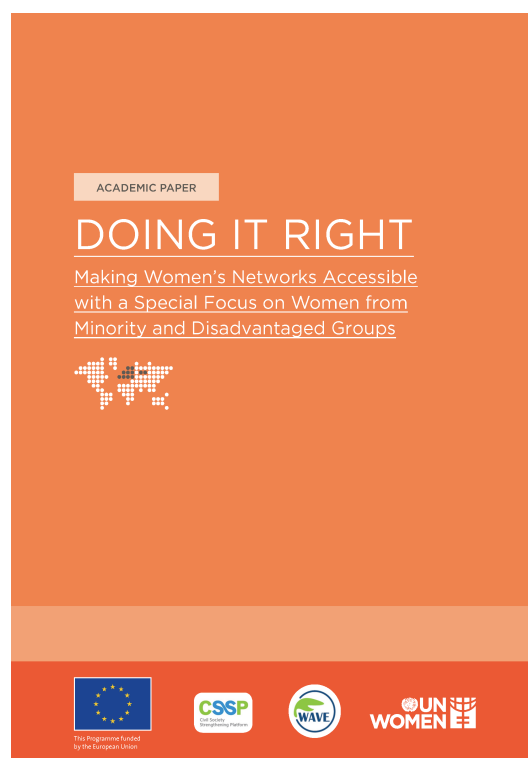
The draft report was prepared by the SOS Vojvodina Network which led a coalition of civil society organizations as part of the EU-UN Women regional programme "Implementing Norms, Changing Minds". Presented by gender activists and researchers, the draft report covers relevant fields including the principle of equality and non-discrimination and general obligations to prevention, protection and support, migration and asylum, substantive criminal law, as well as integration policy and data collection. The presentation was followed by a constructive debate which resulted in recommendations on how the draft report can be improved.

## NEW REPORT HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORKS FOR ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

A new research report on increasing the accessibility of civil society networks, especially for women from minority and disadvantaged groups, has been released by Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE), under the EU-UN Women regional programme, 'Implementing Norms, Changing Minds'.

Produced as part of a project to support the establishment and strengthening of regional platforms of civil society organizations, the report offers an overview of the current situation regarding the accessibility of networks in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

The study, prepared by the Gender Alliance Development Centre and the Albanian Women Empowerment Network, both WAVE members, shows that networks can be made more accessible to women from minorities and/or disadvantaged groups by either tailoring their access to services according to the needs of these groups or by partnering with organizations that specifically work with them. Read the report [here](#):





## “THE RATIFICATION OF THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION HAS BEEN CRUCIAL FOR OUR WORK ON ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN”

Maja Balsha is a social worker specializing in psychosocial work. She is currently working as project coordinator at the NGO, HERA, a partner of the EU-UN Women regional programme, ‘Implementing Norms, Changing Minds’.

[Read more:](#)



## “ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IS ESSENTIAL FOR PREVENTING VIOLENCE”

Mevlida Mehanović is the president of ‘Podrinjka’, a recently established association working to economically and socially empower returnee women in Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, a small municipality located on the eastern border with Serbia. A returnee herself, Ms. Mehanović found her calling in the village of Skelani, where she is helping other returnee women to build a new and better life following the war. [Read more:](#)

## VIDEO

The European Union and UN Women are partnering with civil society organizations to end gender-based discrimination and violence against women in the Western Balkans and Turkey. Thanks to our programme, over 250 organizations are better equipped to monitor and report on human rights legal instruments; over 1,500 law enforcement and service providers are being trained and 3,500 women, including minority women, have gained a better understanding of their rights, and of how to access available services when facing violence. Check our [latest video](#) for more information.



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