

European Network for the Work with Perpetrators  
of Domestic Violence e.V. (WWP EN)  
Greifswalder Strasse 136  
10409 Berlin

Berne, November 13, 2023

## **Statement of solidarity from the Swiss Violence Counselling Association FVGS**

We have noted with concern the opposition to [the European Commission's directive on violence against women and domestic violence](#). The aim of this directive is to provide a minimum level of protection against such violence. The new rules are intended to criminalize a range of crimes, including female genital mutilation and cyber violence, and to ensure the following for victims: Access to justice, entitlement to compensation and free access to counseling services and crisis centers for rape victims.

The directive is currently being consulted on by the member states. They are now questioning key aspects of the directive. The inclusion of rape and sexual exploitation in the directive is in doubt. Sexual exploitation also includes obtaining power and dominance over another person for the purpose of sexual gratification as well as acts carried out without the voluntary and informed consent of a woman or in situations in which the woman is unable to exercise her free will due to physical or psychological conditions. For the WWP EN, it is completely inconceivable that a European directive against violence against women and domestic violence should not include rape.

Furthermore, measures against first-time offenders should be mitigated. WWP EN is firmly of the opinion that first-time offenders of sexualized and domestic violence should also be held accountable beyond criminal consequences and that there is no reason to wait for a second conviction or a second offence to take measures such as specific rehabilitation programmes.

The Swiss Violence Counselling Association FVGS would like to express its solidarity with WWP EN and fully supports [WWP EN's call for legal reform](#), dated October 30, 2023.



Isabelle Fisher, General Secretary

Fachverband Gewaltberatung Schweiz (FVGS)