MARINE: Good morning.

We're waiting for everyone to connect

to start the webinar.

We see the number of participants

increasing, just a few more minutes.

Good morning and welcome

to this webinar

on ending violence against women

and girls with disabilities in the EU.

It's organized

by the European Disability Forum

in cooperation with Inclusion Europe.

I'm Marine Uldry

and I'm EDF Human Rights officer,

before we start, I’ll share with you

some logistical information

and housekeeping rules

for how the webinar will work.

All participants are on mute,

use the chat box for technical issues

and also during the Q&A, we'll be able

to activate your microphone,

so you'll be able

to ask your question.

In case you have any issue,

please really use the Chat box,

You can write to my colleague Raquel,

who'll help you.

The webinar has interpretation

in international sign language

and you can pin the interpreter

to have a better visibility.

We have live captioning

that you can activate through Zoom.

And there's also an external link

in the chat box that you can use.

We want to thank already

very much our interpreters,

Lisa and Gerdinand

and our live captioner Kimberly.

Useful documents will be posted

in the chat box during the webinar,

so have a look

from time to time in the Chat box

to download access specific links.

The webinar is recorded

and it'll be available afterwards,

so we'll send a link

to all participants.

The way the webinar will work is

we'll have two panels,

with a ten minutes break in between,

so around 11:10

so there'll be time to ask questions

or make comments after each panel.

To ask questions, please use

the Q&A box, not the Chat box.

Please, specify

your name and organization.

Or you can also use

the anonymous option

if you'd like your name

not to be known or mentioned.

We'll give the floor to participants

to send questions during the Q&A.

If you don’t want to be given

the floor orally, please tell us,

and in that case we'll read

the question for you.

For persons using sign language,

please indicate

that you'll need your webcam

to be turned on

for the interpreter

to be able to interpret.

Please specify which speaker

you’d like to address your question.

That's it from my side, for now.

Now, without further ado,

I'll give the floor to Ana Pelaez,

our EDF vice-president

who will open

and moderate the webinar.

Thank you Ana.

ANA: Thank you very much.

(NO AUDIO)

and vice-president

of the European Disability Forum.

I'm chair of this event, here,

from Spain,

with the participation

of many organizations present today.

I’d like also to share some information

about how and why

violence against women and girls

with disabilities is a key issue,

an important issue in the agenda

of the women with disabilities' rights.

Following the information

provided by UN women

and World Health Organization (WHO)

the 19.2% of women are

women with disabilities.

The lower status of economic situation

on social situation,

the violence against women

and the harmful practices against women

provoke these high percentage

of disability among female population.

When we look at the global population

of people with disabilities,

we have to say, here in Europe,

in the region,

in the European Union, not only,

but in the whole region in Europe,

are women or girls with disabilities.

That means more or less

being women or girls

having a disability.

without any consideration

in any violence policy,

in any policy against violence

against women.

But, when we're talking

about 60 million citizens,

we need to think about a population

more or less the size

as for example

the population of Italy.

What would be the reaction

of the society

if a country such as Italy

is not considered in any policy?

This is what is happening now

in relation with the situation

of women and girls with disabilities.

That is also very important

in relation with violence against them.

The aim of the webinar

we have today in front of us is,

first of all, to know exactly

how is the situation.

Identify forms of violence faced

by women and girls with disabilities,

perhaps not only women

and girls with disabilities,

perhaps also, the impact of violence

against women

in relation with mothers of children

with disabilities for example,

which is also very important.

The second issue here is to discuss

with EU actors and partners,

including for example

the European Commission,

the Council of Europe,

the Women's Organization, DPOs also

about how to work together

to end violence

against women and girls

with disabilities.

This is our agenda and this is

we need to work in this regard.

To develop all these objectives

we’re going to present

two different panels

with professional and expert people.

The first panel is going to identify

forms of violence

faced by women and girls

with disabilities.

And the second one is going

to analyse and discuss

about how to act

in relation to end violence

against women

and girls with disabilities.

So this is why I think we need also

to address the situation.

And this is very simple way

to consider violence

against women and girls

with disabilities

and mothers of children

with disabilities in our organization.

First, identify the situation,

and second to organize and to plan

how to react and to combat

this situation.

So it's really a pleasure for me

to start this webinar

with the participation of a woman...

I don't know if the first speaker

is already with us.

I'm looking for Senada Hallievic.

I don't know, is she already connected?

Raquel or Marine?

SENADA: Hello.

ANA: Hello, are you there?

SENADA: Yes. Hello.

ANA: Hello.

ANA: This is wonderful.

Welcome to the webinar.

The first speaker, as I mentioned, is

Senada Hallievic.

She is former chair of European platform

of self-advocate

and also vice-president

of Inclusion Europe.

It's a pleasure to have you

with us today.

She'll be supported by Daniel.

Thank you also, Daniel,

for this support.

She's going to tell us

about violence in institutions

of women and girls with disabilities.

Senada, welcome to this first panel.

You have the floor for 15 minutes.

Thank you for the invitation.

Damien is here with us

but I’ll assist Senada.

Hello, everyone, my name is

Senada Hallievic,

and I work in the association

for self-advocacy in Zagreb, Croatia.

I'm the former president

of European platform for self-advocacy.

We talked about violence

with our members for a very long time.

In 2015-2016 in cooperation

with Inclusion Europe

and six other organizations,

we’ve studied more carefully

violence of women

with intellectual disabilities.

According to the methodology

made by [Inaudible] Paula

and Inclusion Europe, we did a research

with members for self-advocacy.

We adjusted and translated

the methodology in Croatian.

We interviewed ten self-advocates

in the research

and [Inaudible] experience

in [Inaudible] violence,

Women mentioned physical violence,

psychological violence,

economic violence, sexual violence,

disrespect for privacy,

and the denial of freedom of movement.

We've noticed that some of our members

didn’t recognize all types of violence.

Some of them didn't recognize

that denying the freedom of movement

or opening their private mail

was actually violence.

The focus of our research was violence

that women experienced in institution,

we've established that violence

was happening everywhere.

In institutions, in families

in foster families

and in community-living

support services.

The main problems we recognized

in Croatia in violence

on women with intellectual disabilities

are the followings.

First, the lack of support

for victims and the lack of information.

Many self-advocates

cannot recognize violence

and cannot or don't know

how to report violence by themselves.

Second, the lack of trust towards people

with intellectual disabilities

even when self-advocates were trying

to report in secret an action of abuse

they had the impression

no one believed them.

They thought everyone believed

the person who abused them but not them.

All this has a very bad affect

on women with intellectual disabilities

who often remain exposed to violence

for a very long time.

Therefore, we believe it'd be useful

there would be legal obligation

to provide information when the position

of users will be strengthened.

Service providers in [Inaudible]

are not equal.

Mostly when the users

are deprived of their legal capacity,

when they have intellectual disabilities

and when they are women.

It’s concluded that despite

other measures adopted so far,

the protection of women

with intellectual disabilities

from violence most depends

on someone else's goodwill and humanity,

and that should not be so.

Thank you for your attention.

If you have any questions

you can ask, thank you.

ANA: Senada, thank you so much

for your intervention,

you really are an inspiration

for many women,

especially for those

with the most intensive disabilities

and need of support.

Thank you very much

because with your example,

you can also motivate the participation

of women with intellectual disabilities,

psychosocial disabilities,

or deaf-Blindness, which is fundamental.

And also congratulations

to Inclusion Europe

for supporting the participation

of self-advocate women in your network.

So, really, congratulations,

and as you mentioned, perhaps later,

we can have some questions

or reflections about your intervention.

It's a very important issue,

violence in institutions,

especially for women and girls

with disabilities, so thank you.

So now we go to my country, to Spain

and my organization,

CERMI Women's Foundation,

to share be you

the important result

in relation with forced sterilization

in our legal system in Spain.

To present this situation

I’d like to give the floor

to Isabel Caballero who is coordinator

of CERMI's Women's Foundation.

Isabel, welcome to this webinar

organised by the EDF.

Thank you very much

for your presence today.

ISABEL: Good morning, Ana,

thank you very much.

Thank you for taking into consideration

the work of CERMI women's foundation

in defending the human rights

of women and girls with disabilities.

First of all, I'm going to introduce

my organization,

CERMI Women's Foundation is

a non-profit organization

created in 2014

by the Spanish Committee

of representatives

of persons with disabilities, CERMI,

to advocate for the full exercise

of all Human Rights

and fundamental liberties

by women and girls with disabilities,

a population of 2.5 million citizens.

CERMI Women's Foundation takes

as its main reference

the Convention on the Rights

of Persons with disabilities (CRPD)

the one on the elimination of all forms

of discrimination against women,

the Convention on prevention

and combatting violence against women

and domestic violence

of the Council of Europe.

In my speech, I’ll deal

with the forced sterilization in Spain,

how is regulated in our penal code

and how we've contributed

to the eradication

of forced sterilization in my country.

Legally, this issue is included

in the Spanish Penal Code as I said,

where the forced sterilization

is authorized as a safeguard,

but the problem is that incapacitation

still exists as a legal institution.

Article 156 of the current Penal Code

states, and I'll read it literally:

Sterilization agreed by judicial body

in the case of persons

who are permanently unable

to give the consent won’t be subject

to punishment provided.

It's an exceptional case

where there is a severe clash

with a legally protected assets

with the aim of safeguarding

the interest of the affected person

and according to the provision

of the civil legislation.

The procedure in this Article provides

that sterilization must be authorized

by a judge in the procedure of modifying

the legal capacity

or in a latter contradictory procedure.

So we can affirm

that the current Spanish Penal Code

still allows forced sterilization

to be performed

on persons with disabilities

and has become a practice

with a clear gender bias

as it's mostly practiced on women.

Submitting to this mutilating practice

without the consent of the woman

it breeches different articles

of the CRPD,

as for example article 17

or article 23.

The precondition of prior modification

of the legal capacity of the individual

in these cases raises

particular concerns

as it means further obstacles

of these women

when accessing justice to defend

their rights

when they're victims of violence.

Because they have to use

an intermediary person, a tutor,

who may also be the person perpetrating

the acts of violence.

To gain a deeper understanding

of the issue,

CERMI Women's Foundation

has condemned this practice

contrary to the Human Right Treaties,

so in 2017,

CERMI Women's Foundation

published a study titled

Putting an end to forced sterilization

of women and girls with disabilities,

which reveals one of the system problems

is the lack of transparency

a violation of International Convention

on Human Rights.

Existing data of the general council

of the judiciary in Spain show

that the total number of resolved cases

amounted 140 in 2016.

And there is no way of knowing

the final resolution in each case

or the impact on women and men

as the data isn't disaggregated by sex.

The information received

by the competent organization show

that this practice affects

mostly women.

The annual average is close

to 100 authorizations for sterilization

or the use of contraceptives

without informing the individual

or even against his or her will.

This lack of data shows

a lack of compliance

with the recommendations made

by the UN Committee on the CRPD

to the Spanish state in 2012 and 2019.

These recommendation arch

the development of policies aimed

at compensating people with disabilities

especially women and girls

who have been sterilized

providing measures to train

women with disabilities

on their sexual and reproductive rights

and repealing the laws allowing

for the forced sterilization.

What as CERMI Women's Foundation done

in this context?

For us it's urgent to develop

training programmes for stakeholders,

especially including

the most immediate social circle

closest to women with disabilities,

and we're working on this issue,

precisely now, in fact,

in the beginning of the year 2021

we’ll begin to implement

a state project focused

on training

in sexual and reproductive rights

for women and girls with disabilities.

It's important to highlight the work

CERMI omen's foundation has developed

raising awareness about the need

to end forced sterilization.

I’ve previously made reference

to our publication, edited by our entity

together with the EDF, but here

I also have to refer

the work of raising awareness

carried out by CERMI Women's Foundation

among women's organization in Spain,

as well as among public bodies

specialized in gender violence.

An ideal setting for this work

was the working groups

that were created in 2017 to draft

the measures of the future estate pact

against gender violence in which

representatives of women organization

and public bodies specialized

in this matter participated.

In this context, an interesting debate

took place related

to the conceptualization

of gender violence.

I have to explain the Spanish law

recognises a very restrictive definition

of gender violence,

limited to violence exerted by men

against his female partner

or former partner.

This law doesn't refer

to other forms of violence

such as female genital mutilation

sexual violence or forced sterilization.

The law responds to only a specific form

of violence against women.

Those work meetings to prepare

the state pacts

against gender violence were

very interesting

because they allowed us,

as a social organization to present

to a large audience our demands focused

on the ending forced sterilization.

A very unknown issue

for the feminist movement in Spain.

And also to remember

the obligation of the Spanish state

to comply

with the Istanbul Convention.

Many of these women organizations

didn't know

that the Istanbul Convention prohibits

forced sterilization in article 39.

Our speeches in these working meetings

served to raise awareness

about an issue that wasn't included

in the agenda of the feminist movement.

It was even seen as if it wasn't part

of the feminist demands.

In this sense, there is

a certain social consensus in Spain

in considering sterilization

of women and girls with disabilities

as a protection measure, and not

as a violation of Human Rights.

ANA: One minute, Isabel.

ISABEL: Yes.

We clearly perceived this consensus

every time demonstrate in the streets.

There are people who approach us

in those demonstration

to remind us that what we’re demanding

is not part of the feminist agenda

and that implies the elimination

of a measure of protection.

Despite this misunderstanding

and ignorance

we still participate in demonstrations,

organize conferences and workshops

focused on the demand of the elimination

of forced sterilization.

And these actions have already served

to undermine those preconceptions

shared by society about sterilisation

and this work has also been done

with the families of women

and girls with disabilities.

ANA: Okay, so thank you,

thank you so much, Isabel

for this great contribution here

to the discussion today.

I think harmful practices against women

and girls with disabilities is

a fundamental issue

in relation with violence against them

and I’d like to share with you that EDF

has already a publication in this regard

in collaboration

with CERMI Women's Foundation

so perhaps we can share the link

with this publication in the chat.

And also, I’d like to offer

another important tool here

the general recommendation offered

by the CEDAW and the CRC Committee

it's the general recommendation

number 31 for the CEDAW

and general comment number 18

for the CRC on harmful practices.

And where, for example,

forced abortion, forced sterilization,

genital mutilation, etc.,

are considered in this regard

and it's very important

to bear in mind this important tool.

So, once again, thank you very much,

Isabel, for your contribution.

Now we go to France, to talk

about the domestic violence,

sexual harassment and access

to services for victims

who are women and girls

with disabilities.

So, in this regard we have

today with us, Claire Desaint.

Claire Desaint is the co-president

of Femmes pour le Dire Femmes pour Agir

one of the very little organization

of women with disabilities in Europe.

It's really a pleasure to have with us

and welcome here today Claire.

Bonjour, Claire. Tu es là?

CLAIRE: Do you hear me?

ANA: Yes, we can hear you.

CLAIRE: I'm co-president

of Femmes pour le Dire Femmes pour Agir,

which is an organization to promote

women with disabilities in the city,

and we fight violence against women

and girls with disabilities.

I’m going to speak

about domestic violence

and access to services

for women with disabilities.

Please, can you put the next slide?

Domestic violence covers

a variety of forms of violence

that occur within the family unit,

current or former spouses and partners,

and in a broader sense

domestic violence also involves

violence against children,

parents of the [Inaudible]

It takes a number of forms,

including physical, verbal,

emotional, economic, reproductive

and sexual abuse, which can range

from subtle to coercive forms

to marital rape and physical abuse.

Domestic murders include stoning,

bride burning and dowry deaths.

The Istanbul Convention defines it

as all acts as physical, sexual,

psychological or economic violence

within the family or domestic unit

between former or current spouses

or partners

whether or not the perpetrator

shares or has shared

the same residence with the victim.

So that is a very broad definition.

Yes, please the next one.

Disability specific violence

for girls and women with disabilities.

Victims of domestic violence are

overwhelmingly women,

For women with disabilities it includes

forms of violence faced by all women

but there are specific violence

for women and girls with disabilities.

They need high support

and so they're more at risk

such as restraint, removal or control

of communication aids,

as means of payment as credit cards,

use of physical power,

sexual abuse

during the daily hygiene routine

violence in the course of treatment,

overmedication or withholding medication.

Vast, vast means of violence.

In the EU, there is a lack of data

on domestic violence

faced by women and girls

with disabilities.

In the report of 2007, a figure

of nearly 80% which shows

women with disabilities are victims

of psychological and physical violence.

Data available now show

that 34% of women with health problems

or disability have experienced

physical or sexual violence

by a partner in their lifetime.

It's two to five times more

than women without disabilities.

This number is certainly

under reported,

as we know that many women and girls

are not reporting violence

due to a variety of reasons

I'll mention later.

I'll give you the link

to find the report

of Europe on the figure of nearly 80%.

In France data isn't available,

even in the last survey called Virage,

we asked to have

a criterion with disability,

but there was only one question

asking for the health status.

And they didn't go into institutions,

which is the place

where there are a lot of violence.

Aware of the extension of this violence

our association opened in March 2015

Écoute Violence Femme Handicapée,

which is the first help line in France

to provide legal, social

and psychological support

to disabled women

who are victims of violence or abuse.

They're run by volunteers trained

in the specifics of this kind of victims

In 2015 we produced

a film of eight video clips

directed by Catherine Cabrol

which highlights eight testimonies

of women with various disabilities

victims of violence.

Through our hotline we receive

a lot of testimonies about violence.

For example, husband pushing his wife

in a wheelchair into a slopping street

slapping in the face, a husband

and a son doing hair-pulling

strangling, telling her

they're going to kill her.

A woman deprived of food to be lighter

when a father or brother carries her

a husband doing what he wants

in sexual life…

Next slide please.

This is the data hotline in 2019,

we had 1093 calls

and a lot of meetings with lawyer,

with psychologist,

with someone to help

for lodging or work.

Next slide please.

Qualitative data from the hotline show

that 35% of reported violence occurs

within the couple committed

by the spouse.

Psychological abuse is 71%

and physical violence 45%.

So tomorrow we launch

a new website specifically

on violence against women

and girls with disabilities

to invite to a videoconference

and this site is intended to promote

the actions of the association,

but also to be a resource centre

on the issue of violence

against disabled women and girls.

You could send us Articles

to be put on this site.

In France we had a big forum last year

called le Grenelle

It was a very big forum on the fight

against domestic violence.

and one group was dedicated

to violence against women and girls

with disabilities.

Three measures have been adopted

on November 2019

in each version there will be

a resource centre to support

women with disabilities

in their intimate life and parenting.

We’re going to do information

to remind all institutions,

and medical and social services

of the need to respect privacy

and sexual and reproductive rights

of accompanied women.

And also to launch

a certified online training programme

to increase the skills

of the various professionals

that work in medical

and social establishments and services.

Next one.

The French Senate wrote a report

in 2019 and we met with the Senate

and in January, the Senate unanimously

adopted a resolution

to denounce and act against violence

against women with disabilities.

It provides important recommendations,

the need of data, financial autonomy

and an effort to train professionals

in the specific on sexual violence

committed against women

with disabilities,

extended to all potential stakeholders

the accessibility of refugees, etc.

Now, there was a big impact of COVID-19

and lockdowns on domestic violence.

We know in France domestic violence

has intensified with the lockdown.

It has increased by 32% for all women.

And women and girls with disabilities,

especially those with health issues

and or high support needs were obliged

to stay at home, often for longer time

had no more nurses

or medical carers coming home,

no visits from outside, as fiends,

and they were isolated.

And a lot of them had

to rely on their abuser for support.

So the violence has increased.

ANA: Claire, one minute.

CLAIRE: What?

ANA: One minute, please.

CLAIRE: So the French government did

an extended campaign

so that women could report violence.

And there was also certificates

for people with disabilities

so that they could go out

more and further.

Next slide.

Now, we saw in the hotline that calls

were diminished during the lockdown,

maybe because they were afraid

of their partner

who was in the same place as them.

But after the lockdown

there was a big increase of calls.

So now, I’ll tell you quickly

the causes of underreporting...

ANA: Sorry, Claire, unfortunately,

we don't have enough time now.

But perhaps later

in the discussion with the participants

you can offer more information.

Okay?

CLAIRE: And the participants

will have the presentations?

ANA: Sorry?

CLAIRE: I think the presentation

will be given to the participants.

ANA: Yes. Thank you very much, Claire

for this wonderful information

about your experience with victims

of violence with disabilities.

So we go to another important issue

with this sexual harassment consent

and also linking with disabilities

to consider this situation

in relation with violence against women

and girls with disabilities,

we have Katarzyna Zeglicka

Autonomy Foundation,

Article 6 collective, and we also have

Agnieszka Krol

coming from Jagiellonian University

Medical College.

Perhaps it's not the best pronunciation,

sorry about that.

Thank you very much to both of you

for coming and joining us.

You have, both of you, together,

KATARZYNA: Hello everyone.

You hear me as well?

Agnieszka: Yes. Hello.

KATARZYNA: Good morning, everyone.

We’ll be tackling sexual harassment

and disability

and the complex realities

women with disabilities face

when navigating consent and inabilities

in a patriarchal world.

We'll share our presentation:

the first part will be presented by me

and the second part

by Katarzyna Żeglicka,

they are both informed by our work

in feminist Disability rights groups,

and, we are located in Poland, a country

where the government announced

that they aim to withdraw

from Istanbul Convention.

I'll start and then I'll give the floor

to Katarzyna Zeglicka.

When speaking about sexual harassment

against women with disabilities we think

in the divergence between the prevalence

of violence of women experiences

and the silence on this topic

in public space and social policies.

So, I was doing a PhD research

on reproductive justice

and experiences of women

with disabilities

even though I didn't focus

on violence itself,

it became a central topic

due to the ubiquity of stories.

Such cases are usually presented

in media as isolated ones,

which hinders in fact, understanding

of structural power relations

that shape those experiences.

So why is this so crucial

that women's voice against rape culture

is very loud and amplified

where need [INAUDIBLE],

we think the perspective

of women with disabilities

on sexual violence isn't visible enough

despite the persistence of violence

and inadequacy of social policies

which has consequences

for women regardless of their abilities.

It's also manifested

by statistical research

that intersection of patriarchal

and ableist structure leads

to higher prevalence

of sexual violence in disabled women.

We've welcomed very much

the recent publication by EU women,

sorry UN women on sexual harassment,

and also the joint statement

by CEDAW and CRPD Committee

on ending sexual harassment,

against women with disabilities

that recognize sexual harassment is

a Human Rights violation

of gender equality principles,

and this intersecting

with other dimensions of inequalities

such as those related to disability

that involves sexual contact

from looks to words, to touching,

to interfering with assistive devices

to physical contact

and to sexual assault and rape.

There is also to the homophobic

and transphobic violence

that is present, especially

it was vocal unfortunately in Poland

and it's also experienced

by persons with disabilities

who are not CIS gender

or non-heterosexual.

When talking about sexual harassment

and disability we need to remember

that consent and body autotomy

for persons with disabilities means

tackling also when and how,

yes or no expressed

by disabled women

is being taken seriously.

It starts with no consensual touch

by strangers, of course,

and speaks to legal capacity and how

it shapes broader discourses on them

Moreover, we highlight

that women with disabilities experience

sexual violence from people providing

everyday assistance.

The research I've done,

it was mostly partners, husbands,

father, carer

and accessibility providers.

It was happening at home,

in the campus,

in the religious communities,

rehabilitation centres and institutions.

And when women were seeking justice

they encounter accessibility barriers

but also assumptions about the sexuality

of people with disabilities.

The assumption that people

with disabilities aren't sexual beings

makes it truly difficult for them

to address sexual harassment.

As the discourses believing women

get even stronger,

they undermine their credibility

and sustained beliefs

that they are unreliable witness

when seeking justice.

On the other hand we also observe

that some parents are trying to save

their daughters with disabilities

from sexual violence by preventing them

from participating fully

in the community

thus hindering

their Independent Living.

So we noticed the structure of failure

to prevent violence,

it's connected with the enjoyment

of Independent Living by all women.

My last point would be also

it’s crucial to understand

to whom women share their experience

of sexual violence.

In my research it was basically

women sharing their experiences

within their friendship networks

which not all women had access to.

As for the effectiveness of informing

about sexual violence in their community

among all the participants

of the research,

no offender bore any consequences

only two women among fifteen of them

decided to take the case to court.

First was time [INAUDIBLE] and second

just didn't find enough proof.

So, I'll stop here and give the floor

to Katarzyna Zeglicka.

KATARZYNA: I am a woman

with disabilities.

I am also a WhenDo trainer, which is

a feminist self-defence

and assertiveness training

for women and girls.

I teach women with disabilities how

to recognize violence and react to it.

From my meetings

with women with disabilities,

I can tell that we have

a collective experience of physical,

psychological, economical

and sexual violence.

We are touched without our consent.

We are treated as children.

It is assumed

we don’t have sexual desire

but we experience sexual harassment

and violence.

Most of the offenders

aren’t punished.

Society teaches us to be silent.

When we are in danger,

we are afraid to scream.

In a meeting with women

with intellectual disabilities,

we were talking about what to do

when someone touches us

without consent on the bus.

One option is to scream.

This will bring

the attention of the passenger.

After the meeting,

one carer came to me,

she said, don't teach them to scream

because people will think

they are mentally ill.

In Poland, we don’t get

sexual education.

We aren't taught body awareness.

Often we do not know

when and how to set boundaries

and when behaviour is

violence or harassment.

In the consent workshop that I led

a blind couple participated.

They've been together for some years.

They told me they don’t know

what is sex

and what is allowed

to intimate relations.

They don't know how to speak

about their own needs.

They do not know each other's bodies.

Women with disabilities complain

that others touch their wheelchairs

and their wide sticks

without permission.

Therefore, they learn how to use

these devices for self-defence.

The crutches or the wheelchair

become their self-defence tool.

From January 2020

the autonomy foundation

an organization from Belgium, France

and Germany

they've been coming out a project

for women with disabilities

No means no.

We organize empowerment workshops.

We also collect their success stories.

They tell us

how they react to violence.

The success stories will be included

in the guide.

The aim of the guide is to help

other women with disability learn

how to react and record

their own stories.

In my experience it's very important

for trainers and women with disabilities

to share their experience,

support each other

and learn to recognize

and respond to violence.

Finally, I'd like to stress

that we must remember

that most of the work

must be done by men.

They are 95% for their offenders.

There are also men

with disabilities among them.

Violence prevention means

educating men

and men should take responsibility

for changing

harmful assumptions

around sexual violence.

Thank you very much.

ANA: Thank you both of you,

Agnieszka and Katarzyna

for your wonderful reflection

and information provided.

I’d like also to ask my colleague

to offer for participants

the joint statement by UN women,

the CEDAW Committee

and CRPD Committee

on ending sexual harassment

against women and girls with disabilities

which is key regarding this topic.

Sexual harassment against women

and girls with disabilities.

So now we have

a little time for participants,

so I’ll pass the floor to Marine

to know who is asking for the floor

or perhaps sharing

some reflection in the chat.

Marine can you please tell us

about our participants today?

MARINE: Yes, thank you, Ana.

Just to mention

that all the links to the document

were posted in the chat

so to all the participants please

check the chat to have the information.

We received a few questions.

Maybe I can tell you three of them,

and then they can be addressed

by speakers...

ANA: Perhaps, do we have someone

asking for the floor directly?

I’d like to hear some voices,

perhaps from participants.

MARINE: So we have a question

from Eliona

if you want to take the floor,

early if possible.

ANA: Eliona, hello, welcome.

ELIONA: Hi, can you hear me?

ANA: Yes, we can.

ELIONA: Thank you very much

for the floor,

and to all the presenters

for such a great insights.

My question is well, first of all,

I'm PhD studying violence against women

in Iceland and UK

in relation to access to justice.

For those for women

who are subjected to violence.

You talked about what's happening

and there's research to back this up.

My question is, okay,

violence it is happening,

so what are these NGOs

that presented today doing

about enabling or supporting women

to access justice in terms of reporting,

investigating or prosecuting

the violence?

ANA: Very good question, thank you.

We're going to take some more questions.

Who is the next, Marine?

MARINE: We have two anonymous questions,

so I can read them.

One question is

on the situation in Poland

and whether the movement

of persons with disabilities is aware

of intersexuality as a concept.

The second one is

more addressed to Claire, I think,

about domestic violence,

it's whether we have an information

in the violence between Lesbian

and heterosexual couples,

so whether violence is perpetrated

by men towards women.

ANA: Okay, I’d like to share

the questions with different speakers.

Perhaps for access to justice,

Isabel,

would you please answer the question

made by our colleague from the UK?

ISABEL: From CERMI Women's foundation

we're working with parliamentary groups

to remove the incapacitation system

in our country

because this is the first obstacle

that women with disabilities face

in the access to justice.

On the other hand, we're also involved

in the implementation of the measures

of the State Parties

against gender violence,

which recognize very important measures

related to the configuration,

a new figure of support of women

with disabilities in accessing justice.

Perhaps they have,

they need specific support

to understand

the different steps in the trial

or if they need specific

or accessible information

regarding the laws and services

available for victims of violence.

That's the main work that we're doing

in our organization.

ANA: Claire, do you have

in your organization

through your information any difference

between the partners,

lesbian partners

and heterosexual partners

in relation with domestic violence?

Do you have any distinction

for example,

in the numbers of complaints

or situation?

CLAIRE: Well, no, I don't think we have.

But maybe I can ask the administration,

because maybe they have got some data,

but I don't think they have a lot.

I’d like to answer to Eliona too.

In our organization we train

the police and judges

on women with disabilities

so the can know more

how it's for those women

to file a complaint,

to answer to them

and to be quite benevolent.

We do training for the police,

judges and lawyers.

ANA: Thank you very much

also for this contribution

regarding the access to justice

which is fundamental.

In relation with the previous question

we're going to...

We're going to try

to collect information,

perhaps to offer this information

to our participants,

a bit later

or perhaps through emails.

If you give us your email address,

we can also answer by written.

So, our last question is

for our colleagues,

Katarzyna and Agnieszka,

regarding the situation

for all the comprehension

of intersectionality in Poland

for women with disabilities

more specifically.

Will you please answer

the question?

AGNIESZKA: Thanks for the question.

I’ll translate Katarzyna's answers.

(Speaking in Polish).

The very concept of intersectionality

isn't really a well addressed

in the mainstream disability movement

in Poland.

Though what we observe is

that it's more and more well known,

It's not like structurally addressed

as it should be,

but we observe in academia are using

more and more this concept

with regard to women

with disabilities but not only.

We'd wish it's more addressed

in mainstream Disability movement.

ANA: Thank you very much also

for these answers

and for your support in translation,

thank you so much.

Now it's time for a break

of 10 minutes, please don't leave us,

stay connected and we'll come back

in 10 minutes

to continue with our second panel.

Marine, you want to say something?

MARINE: Thank you.

Just for the panellists,

stay on mute because the webinar

won't be stopped

so participants are still able

to hear you and see you.

If you have any question, please

write directly in the chat box

and I'll see you in 10 minutes.

ANA: Okay. Wonderful.

So enjoy your break.

ANA: It's time to start again.

Once again, a very warm welcome

to all the speakers and participants.

Now it's time to go

to our second panel.

Acting to end violence against women

and girls with disabilities.

And to start this panel

we're going to focus

on talking to women in institutions

who experienced violence.

And for this important issue,

we have Juultie Holla,

she's independent consultant

for Life After Violence project

with Inclusion Europe.

So, please, Juultje, you have the floor.

I don't know if I pronounced

your name correctly.

JUULTJE: Don't worry about that.

ANA: How do you pronounce your name?

JUULTJE: My name is Juultje

ANA: Okay, wonderful. Thank you

for being with us

JUULTJE: Thank you for allowing me

to be here.

Inclusion Europe asked me to do

a research about Life After Violence

and violence in institutions,

and...

Of course institution is

a very broad term.

We thought

about residential care facilities

where the residents are isolated

from the broader community,

and where they don’t have control

over their own lives

and over the things that affect them.

That can be a big institution,

you can even have an institution

just one person if you don’t have

any control over your life.

The research, the first step I took

when doing this research was

to speak to self-advocates

because I'm not the one to decide

what violence is or what is experienced

as violence in institutions

as I've never lived in an institution.

And also I included them or I asked them

how should we talk about violence?

What is a good way to discuss

this difficult topic with everyone?

Also because people told me

not to talk about violence

because it’d damage people,

for instance.

So I realized it was

a difficult topic,

and self-advocates were going to help me

discuss it in a good way.

We created pictures together

so that's one way that they told me

that we could talk about violence.

We created pictures with red borders,

which is the colour of violence,

and each picture depicts

a different type of violence.

We had different pictures

on the left with physical violence,

for instance, the person

with the blue eye,

there is

many different types of violence.

These pictures are not

the be all or end all.

This is not the only violence

that there is,

but these are the types

we heard most often.

And we drew them really just

to start a conversation.

There's the physical violence,

sexual violence,

not getting care or medication,

getting all the lousy jobs,

not being able the speak up

for yourself,

getting medication

when you don't want to get medication,

being physically locked up or locked up

by rules of an organization,

There is so many different forms.

We put these pictures on the table

and used them to start a discussion.

We asked what do you see

in these pictures?

And have you had

any of these experiences.

So, we also used these

in different countries,

so we first tested them

in the Netherlands,

then we went to different countries

On the right of your screen,

you see two pictures

of one of the women

showering and not getting the privacy,

someone just coming in.

And also from Romania,

that was something from Romania,

everybody agreed that people

were getting presents,

but once the camera left

the presents were taken away again.

That resonated to all the women

we spoke to there.

There's many types of violence,

it really helped to discuss these.

Can you go to the next slide?

What we'd do is

everything we did was using pictures,

and everything did was

together with self-advocates.

Self-advocates, they are the ones

to lead this discussion,

they're the ones

that can talk about it.

So I'd be there as a support,

but not as the discussion leader.

And that really helps

to get the discussion going.

What we did also to be able

to include everyone is

we made case studies

of the most common stories we heard

The case studies weren't

just black text on a white sheet,

because that again excludes people,

there were drawings like comic strips,

even though there wasn't

very much comical, I'm afraid.

The story is really constantly

getting told,

if you do something wrong,

I'll send you to a psychologist.

If you get angry or don't calm down,

I'll send you to psychologist,

When something really happened

and she was sent to the psychologist,

it was the right thing to do,

because of all the threats earlier on,

she was not able to go

and not see him as a punishment.

We use these kind of drawings also again

to discuss situations

to discuss situations with people

also working in care.

Next slide?

This is again one of those case studies

where... yeah, that's fine too.

This is where rules

are making life hard

Thank you, Marine.

Rules making life hard,

so many rules, in this case,

it really, you know,

it makes such an impact on someone

that they start behaving violently.

And this person was telling us

that she would be held down

by three or four men

at the same time, undressed.

She'd get clothes on

and she'd be locked in isolation.

That to her was no different than being

sexually abused, which she experienced

Because they were men,

undressing her against her will.

So for her, for the care system,

this was a good way of reacting,

for her, this was violence,

very traumatic, there was no difference.

I think we'll skip the next picture

because I don't have that much time.

Go to the next one again.

I only have two minutes left.

So, we created all these pictures.

Can you go to the next one, Marine?

We created all these pictures

to talk about violence

with women

with intellectual disabilities.

We went to other countries

and adapted them.

We saw in the research

there is a lot of direct violence,

under direct violence we’d have

physical or sexual abuse, for instance,

but underneath that

is a lot of structural violence.

We're talking

about intersectionality earlier

on where people have, yeah,

just a different place in society,

which, you know, opens them up

to various kinds of violence.

And the structural violence is

a very big issue,

underneath the violence

people are experiencing.

Also the lack of people

that care about you,

and actually listen to you,

that was a huge problem.

Now you're seeing

a summary of part of the research,

so it talks about that direct violence,

about structural violence,

all that results in, so people

have experienced a lot of trauma,

few changes, people think

they're not enough, not good enough,

they're not allowed

to have anything good.

Also they have coping strategies:

not making contact to avoid the pain

or just staying quiet,

or being happy all the time.

Once they leave an institution

they bring that with them,

they need to right help and someone

who really cares about them

to sort that out and to get better

from the experiences they've had.

But, the main point is always working

with self-advocates,

finding ways to make

the conversation appropriate for them

so that they can really tell

their stories.

Thank you.

ANA: Thank you very much

for this important intervention

with this important pictures.

I think it's really fundamental

to show how is

the situation for the individual.

In this case women and girls

with disabilities in institutions.

I congratulate you and Inclusion Europe

for this important initiative.

JUULTJE: I had forgotten one thing.

The materials are available

from Inclusion Europe.

There is a link in the description

so it can be used by others as well.

ANA: Thank you so much, Juultje.

Thank you very much.

So now we need to know

the role of the European Union

in ending violence against women

and girls with disabilities.

And for this important issue

we have with us Lesia Radelicki,

member of the cabinet

of Commissioner Dalli

from the European Commission.

I don't know, I'm sure

you are already there, are you there?

LESIA: Yes, I'm here.

ANA: Wonderful, welcome

to this important webinar.

Thank you for your contribution,

you have the floor.

Thank you, and thank you for EDF

for giving me the floor,

I’d like to thank the previous speaker

Juultje,

for making, actually,

an issue accessible in discussing it.

Because that is

one of the issues as well,

that we need to bring that discussion

to the table and mainstream it.

Bring it to not just to closed circles

that work on these issues,

but to widen it so that

we understand what violence is.

Your pictures have touched

upon the fact that indeed,

violence against women and girls

with disabilities takes so many forms,

and they need to be recognized.

And, before going into what

the European Commission is doing

to combat violence against women

and girls with disabilities,

I'd like to take as a starting point

the Gender Equality Strategy.

I don't know whether people in the room

are aware of what the strategy is,

but basically the strategy was launched

in March with the idea to see

how we can, as European Commission,

put forward concrete actions,

ambition actions to make sure

that we progress

on women's rights

and gender equality.

This was done under three pillars.

And one of the pillars

was making sure

that women and girls, boys and men

and other diversity are free.

And free from violence.

So we have a chapter

in the Gender Equality Strategy

that deals with the issue

of combating violence.

And in that chapter it sets out

a series of actions that we,

as the Commission, are going to do

in this mandate to combat violence.

In other point that is important to know

about the Gender Equality Strategy is

that the motto of the strategy was

we want a Europe for women and girls,

boys and men

in all their diversity,

to live, thrive

and be free in Europe.

Now the important part is

the very first part of that sentence

in all their diversities,

so the intersectional approach

in this strategy,

which was a new approach

in what the Commission was doing

is key.

Because what we're saying is

we want to do, in the Commission

under the mandate

of Commissioner Dalli,

it's to look at how different aspects

of people's life,

women and men in all their diversities

can have

multiple forms of discrimination

or multiple forms of violence.

So taking those two starting points

into consideration,

when we lack at this chapter

of being free,

the issue of being free of violence is

the most important

by taking one of the important tools

that already exists into consideration.

And that is the Istanbul Convention.

For us the Istanbul Convention

on combating violence against women

and domestic violence is

the golden standard on this issue.

And for us, it’s important

to make sure

that we have the golden standard

for all women in Europe

to protect and prevent from violence.

The Convention sets out

a whole set of rules and proposals

like making sure

there is 24/7 help lines,

that there is assistance

and support services available,

such as medical, judicial, social

that there are shelters,

that laws are adapted

to make sure

that all women and girls

and victims of violence can have access

to the best supports and protection.

Now, while most of EU Member States

are supporting Istanbul Convention,

we have some blocking Member States,

and while there are

those stumbling blocks ahead of us

in ratifying the Istanbul Convention

it remains the key priority

for the Commission

to ratify the Istanbul Convention.

And the President

of the Commission has underlined

several times this and repeated

that she wants to do

everything we can

to assure protection

of victims of violence

and to pursue the perpetrators.

In the Gender Equality Strategy

that's also what we're saying,

we'll do everything we can to make sure

The Istanbul Convention is ratified.

However, we do recognize

that if we aren't able to do that,

we’ll look into alternative avenues.

And so, while the board is lacking

into this case,

we’ve started a repertoire work

for this alternative avenues.

We're launching the fitness check

so we can look

at what legal frameworks,

what laws already exists

in terms of combating violence

against women at national level,

so we can prepare what we can,

the things that we can improve

or where the loop holes are

for an European approach,

so that's one thing that we can do.

The other thing

that the Commission did

before the summer, is

that we adopted

the victims' rights directive.

It's also wants to make sure

that all Member States in the EU provide

the best protection for victims,

but that's for all types of victims.

You’d also like to know next year

we'll be setting up a network of experts

on violence against women

and domestic violence.

Now, keeping in mind

that everything we do,

we do from an intersectional

and with a mainstreaming approach,

so this is for women

in all their diversities

and therefore also

women with disabilities.

I'm sure in the previous panel

this has been highlighted,

but it was clear that the pandemic

had a gendered dimension

and thanks to the work

of Civil Society Organization

this was flagged to us,

Commissioner Dalli raised this issue

with the Member States very swiftly

asking also

for a gender response

in this pandemic.

And that's not only

in terms of making sure

that women are taken on board

in the policy proposals

but recognizing that domestic violence

against women had significantly gone up.

Also, the pandemic

not only highlighted that issue,

but also highlighted

other inequalities that already existed.

Women with disabilities facing

different and difficult situations.

So we also called Member States

from taking that on board.

When we know 16% of women in the EU

are women with disabilities

or that 60% of the people

with disabilities are women,

we need to take to take that

on board in our policy responses.

That means to look at what it means

when we talk about access to care.

When we talk about to have

access to information.

How we can make sure that women

and girls with disabilities can remain

dependent and that with the pandemic,

we saw

that keeping that independence

was a challenge

and pushing them sometimes even

into the risk of domestic violence.

So apart from the Istanbul Convention

that is important

to combat violence against women

and girls in domestic violence,

and victims’ rights directive,

there is also

the upcoming Disability rights strategy

that we're working on

on where we'll also have

a strong angle

on women and girls with disabilities.

And there it'll be the opportunity

to look at how we can increase,

improve, access to justice

access to information,

including the digital information

and the digital worlds,

making sure that there is access

to protection and shelter.

The previous speaker also mentioned

that the challenge

of women with disabilities

in institutions or resident settings,

and making sure their fundamental rights

are being respected.

But we also need to work

with care workers and assistants

to see how we can help them

to combat violence against women.

That's in a nutshell

what we're doing,

but the Disability rights strategy

will be presented next year.

And at the moment there have been

consultation processes going on.

I’ll stop here because

I think I've taken my time. Thank you.

ANA: Thank you. Thank you

for this important commitment

from the European Commission

and from Commissioner Dalli.

Thank you very much

for your intervention here today.

Now let's go to The Istanbul Convention

with this fundamental instrument

All of the speakers are talking

about its importance

Actually we organized at EDF a webinar

for women and girls with disabilities

in relation with this instrument,

the Istanbul Convention in May,

and we prepared with the collaboration

of the Inclusion Europe,

Autism Europe, don't remember well

an Easy-to-read version

which is also available for all of you,

I ask also Marine

to share the link

with this important tool for everyone,

but also for our women

and girls with disabilities.

To address the issue on the importance

of Istanbul Convention,

we have with us

Rachel Eapen Paul.

Member of the GREVIO,

which is the mechanism

for monitor the implementation

of the Istanbul Convention.

Rachel, thanks you very much

for being here today.

You have the floor.

Are you there?

RACHEL: Yes. Thank you.

ANA: Wonderful. Thank you.

RACHEL: You’ll be helping me

with the slides

ANA: Yes.

RACHEL: Thank you for that.

A very good day to everybody and hello

and thank you

to the EDF and Inclusion Europe

for having me here on this panel.

And also engaging with GREVIO,

we thank you for that.

I want to go ahead

with my presentation.

Like the persons before me,

especially the person before me sais

the Istanbul Convention is really

a gold standard in implementing

women's rights and working

against violence against women.

In my presentation I thought

I’d deal with... Give a presentation

of the Convention and also its relevance

to women and girls with disabilities.

As you all know, really,

truly a comprehensive tool

to tackle violence

against all women and girls.

The Convention is a regional treaty

adopted within the Council of Europe.

There are 34 countries who have adopted

who have ratified it,

which means they must implement

the Convention.

You can see on the map the ones

that have ratified are in blue

and the ones that have signed

in red,

and those that have neither signed

nor ratified are in grey.

The Convention is

a key achievement on women's rights.

It really breaks new ground.

As a Treaty, it translates

women's rights into real change.

The Convention uses some terms

and definitions.

Violence against women

is multifaceted,

and therefore the Convention uses

different terms to identify

and talk about violence

against women.

These terms are generally understood

as describing violence against women

by the UN also.

The Convention talks about violence

against women as gender-based violence

that results in physical, sexual,

psychological and/or economic violence

It often refers

to gender-based violence against women

as violence directed against women

because they are women,

and that affects them

disproportionately.

And often, when the convention refers

to gender, as such,

it’s referring to the constructed roles,

behaviours, activities and attributes

that the society considers appropriate

for women and men.

The article that is very relevant

for the rights

of women and girls with disabilities

is the principle of non-discrimination,

article 4 of the Istanbul Convention

that ensures protection of women

without discrimination on the basis

of their sex, gender, race, colour,

language religion, political opinion

social origin, sexual orientation,

gender identity, age, disability,

migrant or refugee status.

So this principle is the main principle

that is relevant for us.

Regarding the Convention itself

as it has been said,

it’s a really truly comprehensive tool.

And it addresses four macro areas

that is generally referred to

as the 4 P's

of the Istanbul Convention,

which means that The Convention takes

on four pronged approach

based on these four P's that refer

to the macro areas in society

where The Convention requires

States to intervene

and to implement measures

and develop policies.

The four P's are prevention,

I'll go on.

Prevention is one of the P's

and it's about raising awareness,

running campaigns, education is

a very important aspect of prevention.

And education and schools,

right from childhood onwards.

Protection... protection measures

is other P, the other pillar.

We refer to protection

in the gender services

but also States are required

to have specialized services

for women victims of violence,

shelters,

support for victims of sexual violence

and protection of child witnesses.

I'm going fast

because time is short.

When it comes to prosecution,

the Convention requires States

to criminalize

a number of forms of violence

that aren't yet criminalized

by a number of States.

And when it comes

to integrative policies,

States are acquired to allocate

appropriate funding,

support to NGOs and Civil Society.

And particularly important is

that States are required

to have a dedicated body

to develop integrative policies

and to implement them.

Now to go on to the Convention

and its relation with relevance

to women and girls with disabilities.

First of all, I want to say

that GREVIO does its evaluation

and visits different countries,

GREVIO really do makes a point

of meeting

with women's Disability rights groups.

GREVIO often receives Shadow Reports

and GREVIO encourages women's group

to continue this and keep

engaged with GREVIO

and use the evaluation reports

in your advocacy work.

Regarding the rights of women

and girls with disabilities,

the Istanbul Convention calls States

and calls the attention of States

to the need

to develop integrated

and gender sensitive measures.

And the States' duty to support

and appropriately fund NGOs

representing women with disabilities

and data collection is a key aspect.

States are also encouraged

companies and media

to handle violence

against women with disabilities,

and the victim's right

to legal remedies

and the victim's right to have access

to support services,

sensitive to Human Rights needs

of women with disabilities.

It's an important aspect

of the Convention.

That the Convention

calls for, as I said earlier,

sanctioning violence against women.

Some forms of violence against women

that are specifically important

to women with disabilities are

sexual violence

and forced sterilization.

It calls for response against violence

of women with disabilities

by law enforcement

and judicial services.

I just want to go into two countries,

Serbia and Finland.

Not because they were specially

bad or good.

But just to give you some examples

of what review has identified

in these two countries,

and how GREVIO works to have an idea.

In Serbia, we identified

a number of priority issues

among others,

the need for the provision

of women support services

with a gendered approach.

And GREVIO found the need

for an expansion

of the provision of [INAUDIBLE]

in Serbia.

And the need for heightened respect

among legal guardians

and medical professionals

and free decision-making

in relation to medical procedures

like abortion and forced sterilization.

Cases where women with disabilities

had been raped for example,

the offense used by prosecutors

and law enforcement agencies

it's sex or sexual intercourse

with helpless person

and it isn't seen as rape.

So this is serious.

In Finland, another example,

GREVIO identified a number of issues

regarding preventive measures

which article 12 of Convention covers.

There was a lack of awareness

of the needs of women with disabilities.

Although measures seek to ensure

the availability of places and shelters,

Disability rights groups pointed out

to GREVIO

that the number of barriers

that exist continued.

And weren't being addressed,

for example,

there was no timely transport

to shelters,

inaccessible sanitary facilities,

they weren't admitting assistance

so women couldn't take with them

their assistance.

And also prevalence data points

to heighten the exposure

of violence towards women.

But yet GREVIO observed

no particular effort

in addressing this by the state.

ANA: Please, just one more minute.

RACHEL: Okay.

And the national Action Plan

in Finland did address

the need for protection

of women with disabilities,

but it seems that the shelters

and other counselling service,

particularly those online,

and this is extremely relevant today

that these services weren't accessible

to women with disabilities

ANA: Okay, so, thank you.

RACHEL: I'm thanking everybody

for allowing me to be here. Thank you.

ANA: It was a pleasure. Thank you

for being here today with EDF

and with supporting women and girls

with disabilities victims of violence.

So, I’d like to take this opportunity

to express our congratulations

to those organizations part of EDF

in France, Italy, Spain,

in other countries also

which are already working

with GREVIO preparing Shadow Report

about the situation

of women with disabilities

in their own countries

when they're going to be considered

under the Istanbul Convention.

This is the best way to highlight,

and make visible

the situation of women

and girls with disabilities.

I’d like also to take this opportunity

to express my gratitude

for the work of my colleagues

in EDF Women's Committee,

many of them are already with us today

as participants or speaker,

which is really great.

I’d like to announce that tomorrow,

proposed by the EDF women's Committee,

EDF is going to launch a declaration

in relation with violence

against women and girls

with disabilities due to the day

for the elimination

of violence against women,

which is also fundamental.

Our last speaker today,

also my last intervention here

because after that I have to leave.

Our last intervention today

in this second panel is

in relation to recommendations

from the women's movement

for how to address and to end violence

against women with disabilities.

And in this case we have with us

Claire Fourçans.

Policy and campaign Director

of The European Women's Lobby.

European platform

where EDF is also part of.

So Claire, thank you so much

for being here with us today.

So I pass you the floor

to hear from you

and also I pass the coordination

of this panel to Marine,

because I have to leave.

I'm sorry about that.

Congratulations to all of you

for this wonderful initiative

So, Claire, you have the floor.

CLAIRE: Thank you very much, Ana.

Thank you for giving the floor to me.

I'm Policy and Campaigns Director

at European Women's Lobby.

I’d like to share my presentation,

if you'd allow for a few minutes.

So, yes, thank you very much,

The European Women's Organization is

the largest umbrella organization

of women in Europe

with more than 2,000 organizations

in EU countries and accessing countries

but also European coordination

like European Disability Forum.

I'm really pleased to participate

to this webinar, thank you again.

I'd like to present the recommendations

from the women's movement

We're fighting for a feminist Europe

for 30 years now.

We have important focus on the fight

against violence of women and girls.

I’d like to specify the framework

in which we work,

which is that we'd like

to underline the continuum of violence.

Violence is a systemic issue

that affects women all over Europe

and unfortunately that knows

no borders, no social limitations, etc.

So all women in Europe and beyond

are affected by violence.

Long-term systemic violence

is actually infringing

upon the rights of women to live a life

free as it was already underlined.

This violence existed

before the COVID-19 pandemic appeared

but it has worsen

with the crisis unfortunately.

We know women with disabilities has been

clearly and brilliantly said previously

by my predecessor to be exposed

to violence, in particular

to some specific forms of violence

like sexual violence,

domestic violence, forced sterilization

and forced abortion.

So it's crucial

to really tackle the issue,

and also to take into account

the particular situation

of women with disabilities

if we want to ensure

all women in Europe are protected.

Unfortunately as the situation worsened

under COVID-19

because of the enabling environment

for perpetrators

and because it was more difficult

for women to get to seek assistance.

A lot of services weren’t accessible,

we still [INAUDIBLE]

so it was really

a very worrying situation

during the first lockdown

and probably continuing right now.

We’ve been calling for new commitments

from Member States of the EU

but also from the European institution

to tackle the increase,

but also to implement that

within the long transition.

We've been calling

on all Member States to declare

all the services to protect women,

victims of violence essential.

Meaning that they should be open,

be staffed properly and funded properly.

Also, we've been calling

on those countries to ensure

accessibility of women

with disabilities in particular,

to helplines, support services

and to the judicial system.

Also recalling the intervention

of the colleague from GREVIO

we need to underline how important

it’s to have specific access

for women with disabilities.

Also we've been calling

on all responses to COVID-19

to have a woman's perspective.

Not only as Lesia said before,

making sure that women are part

of the decision making process,

that's already a first step.

That's really important.

But also making sure

their specific situation,

we know women having particularly

in situation of care during the crisis

and this is often undervalued.

That needs to be corrected.

We have also been calling

on all the Member States

and mobilizing

our work membership to ensure

that women organization are

systematically consulted in the crisis.

Really now, more than ever,

what we need,

what is absolutely necessary is

to have EU coordinated action

to end violence

against women and girls.

We need the EU to act

in a unified way to protect

all of the women and girls everywhere

in Europe wherefore they are,

and to end all forms

of male violence.

This means accelerating the EU accession

of the Istanbul Convention.

Needless to explain now how important

the Istanbul Convention is.

Our colleague from GREVIO explained

the importance of its provisions

to protect women from violence,

from the fear of it,

and to ensure

they have access to justice,

also to have an enabling environment

with the right policies.

So it's necessary, really that the EU

access to this Convention

that it is implemented properly

and consistently everywhere in Europe

at all times also in crisis

like the crisis we're living in.

As Lesia said earlier, we also believe

that the necessity

to go for alternative routes

and we're calling on you

to take this alternative route

ASAP.

We know that the ratification

of the Convention at EU level is broad.

We’re calling on the European Commission

to propose a legislation

that really takes on board the standards

of the European system [INAUDIBLE]

to include violence

against women and girls,

all forms of violence also to those

that are affected in particular,

women with disabilities

to counteract EU crimes.

This would give clearly basis

for the EU to act

upon against this widespread violation

of women's rights.

That would allow the EU

to adopt a directive.

So really a legislation

that would prevent and combat

all forms of violence

against women and girls.

Of course this legislation needs

to have specific provisions to ensure

the protection and accessibility

of women with disabilities.

This needs to go with adequate funding

following the development

at the EU level right now.

There are discussions

on the next long-term budget

of the EU.

The latest has been positive

in terms of the increase in funding

to fight for quality

between women and men.

We are really calling

for this extra funding,

increased funding to ensure

that grass roots organization

and women's organization in general

can really fight,

welcome woman but also a fight

against the violation of women's rights.

I’d like to conclude

by thanking you for your attention.

Tomorrow is the international day

for the elimination of all violence

against women and girls,

we're entering the 16 days of activism

against violence

against women and girls.

We're mobilizing and call on you

here to raise awareness

of this widespread violation

of women's rights.

I thank you very much

for your attention.

MARINE: Thank you very much,

Claire and to all the speakers

for providing your views and ideas

on what action the EU

and European countries can take

to fight

violence against women

and girls with disabilities.

I'm taking over now from Ana.

We have some time for questions.

We already received a few questions

of the for all speakers.

The member from the cabinet

from Commissioner Dalli had to leave.

If I'm correct Lesia is already gone.

Yeah, I don't see her anymore,

we'll have to see

who can take those questions.

The first one is from Luisa.

Do you want to take the floor

to ask your question?

LUISA: Yes. Can you hear me?

MARINE: Yes.

LUISA: I understand the member

of the cabinet

of Commissioner Dalli left

the conference,

because my question is for her.

The question was,

how can the gender strategy influence

compliance with the strategy itself?

And how we can use against strategy

to force our government

[INAUDIBLE] of women with disabilities

to be free from all violence?

If there is someone

who can answer that for me...

Not a good experience

as attendee on this...

from Miss... I can't remember the name.

MARINE: Thank you, Luisa.

Maybe Claire can take this question

because the European women's lobby

is working on the implementation

and advocating for the implementation

for the Gender Equality Strategy.

CLAIRE: I'm not sure I got all

of the question, I couldn't hear well.

We’ve been working

on the Gender Equality Strategy

launched

by the European Commission in March.

We've been working, influencing it,

when they were drafting it.

And after that we’ve been working

also to make sure

that the European Parliament

and the Member States

not only take on board the strategy

but also take it a step further.

It's an amazing tool. It's disability

has been long since we didn't see

a proper political strategy

at the EU level

on equality between women

and men

with strong commitments against violence

of women and girls.

We are pleased with the content

of the strategy

but there are of course areas

where we’d see progress,

we’d see improvements.

In terms of application,

implementation, obviously

we're calling on the Commission

to start implementing the commitments.

There's already a road map on violence

against women and girls.

We have heard lately

that by the end of 2021

there'll be a proposal

in terms of legislation

to combat some forms of violence

against women and girls.

As I said, our call is really

to have comprehensive legislation

for all forms of violence against women

and girls, not only some of them.

We believe this phenomenon

is really infringing

upon the value of the UN, the EU has

a common interest in combat it together.

And also, obviously,

we’ve been [INAUDIBLE] members

pushing for different Member States

to adopt strategy of [Inaudible]

(BAD AUDIO QUALITY)

Hopefully, this strategy will have

some [INAUDIBLE] at national level.

I hope that answers

your question.

MARINE: Thank you, Claire.

I was informed that Lesia is still here,

if you want to reply

to this question as well.

Another question

that we received for you, is

because you said that

in the Disability Rights Strategy

there would be some aspect

on access to justice.

The question is what is

the current plan for that?

And how can NGO and also individual

contribute to the strategy?

So Lesia,

if you're still with us...

You can unmute yourself.

LESIA: I apologize

for just being a bit messy,

as I was about the leave

I saw questions coming in,

so I'm trying to answer them

quickly before leaving.

So, how we can make sure

that Member States are on board

on the Gender Equality Strategy

and on making sure

that we're combating violence

against women.

That Strategy is what the Commission

will be doing for the next five years.

It's a set of actions

and these actions

we’ll be rolling out bit by bit

as Claire just said.

We’ll need to have Member States

on board if we want this to work.

The general strategy

isn't just something

that we only are already owners of.

It's something,

a commitment

that we'll have to adhere to.

So, that's one thing.

On the issue of Women with disabilities,

as I mentioned, there is

the upcoming Disability rights strategy

and there, again, this is something

that we'll be presenting next year,

this is something that's not just

committing the Commission to do things

but there'll be actions

to also work with Member States,

societies organizations,

European Parliament and so forth

to progress or move forward

on those issues.

In terms of how to contribute

to the strategy, as I said

there's been

a series of consultations,

I think that EDF

has been part of that.

If there are any other inputs

that you’d like to share with us,

please feel free to forward them

to the Secretariats of the EDF

so that we can receive them

and take them on board.

What exactly will be in the strategy?

I just said a couple of points

that we’ll need to keep in mind

when drafting the strategy

what will be in there it's difficult

to say at the moment,

because the consultation process

is still happening.

My colleague, Nora, is actually

the one leading on this file

and she'll be maybe more ready

to answer those questions.

So, I hope that I have replied quickly

to the questions,

but otherwise, feel free

to also send them via email

and I’ll try to get back to you.

Thank you.

MARINE: Thank you so much

for being with us

and staying longer

because you had to leave by 12:00.

So we really appreciate

your participation.

Next question that we have

is from Mohammed,

in relation to violence

in psychiatry.

I don't know

if you want to take the floor,

I can unmute you so you can ask

your question or make your comments.

Okay, we cannot hear you Mohamed,

I'll read what you said

and redirect the question

to the speakers.

So in relation to violence

in psychiatry,

it was a general question on

why all complaints on manslaughter

or mistreatment committed against women

and mothers

under psychiatric restraints

are dismissed especially in France.

And how come all Convention

including the UN Convention

on the Rights

of Persons with Disabilities

and Istanbul Convention are still

are still being ignored by States.

And then there was also

a general comment

more on the fact that there are

many cases of women

being still abused in psychiatry

and what is it still taboo,

why is there a stereotype around it?

I’d like maybe to ask Juultje

if you could also mention

in the research that has been done

what was your experience

talking to women

like using psychiatric treatment

and how information was collected.

And then, I’ll ask Rachel from GREVIO

to also provide some comments

on what can be done

when country ignore The Convention

or any advice on that.

So first Juultje.

JUULTJE: Thank you for the question.

In my experience during the research

talking to people

who had been through the institutions

quite a few of the women had also been

in psychiatric units, to be honest,

the worse cases of violence that I heard

took place in psychiatric units, by that

the most traumatizing forms of care.

Because this is a form of care,

it’s seen as doing the right thing

because we’re caring

for that person.

Obviously, horrible things

happen in that context.

I think there was a lot of women

in the Netherlands

and a lot of other countries as well

being labelled

as having a psychiatric disordered,

maybe not have been recognized

having an intellectual disability

and needing different support.

One woman that often does

the presentations with me

she tells about her story

about being stuck indoors

in a psychiatric unit for 16 years

not being able to get out.

There's a lot of horrible things

happening.

I think by her telling

this story to professionals,

that's the only way I think

that we can start seeing a shift

in thinking where, you know,

we can start shifting from.

This is what we do to help people,

oh, okay,

so what we're doing is actually

harmful to people as well.

I don't know the specific example

that you're mentioning,

of the woman that was killed.

Unfortunately that happens,

unfortunately people

don't have the status in society

to get the attention

that deserves.

I don't have an answer

in the terms what to do about it

other than talk about it,

and letting people know

who is been through that experience

talk about it.

Giving them a platform.

That's all I can say.

MARINE: Thank you very much.

Now I'm going to give the floor

to Rachel.

We have another question

on Istanbul Convention

on how to combat dangerous narrative

coming from governments

in Europe against women's rights

and really do you think

that the EU has a role

as EU Member States

that ratified the Istanbul Convention?

I know the question is political,

so you can reply to the first part only

if you wish, Rachel.

RACHEL: I can first deal

with the second question.

You're very right, it is up to the EU

to thrush this out.

And it's a topic

that is being discussed in the EU

and it's up to the EU

to finally decide

whether they want to ratify

the Convention or not.

But the Council of Europe and GREVIO,

I'm speaking on behalf of GREVIO,

and GREVIO is a monitoring body,

so what we do is

to conduct evaluation reports,

and like I said earlier on,

it's very important that,

especially NGOs in this wind

that is hitting all of us

where there is a lot of...

how shall I put it?

Resistance.

There is, I can't say

a lot of resistance,

but we all know there is resistance

to...

to us achieving women's rights

and therefore, in my opinion,

there is resistance also for example,

to the Istanbul Convention which is

which is really a unique tool

for the protection of women's rights.

Including women

and girls with disabilities.

So, it's in this wind

that is attacking us,

what I think we should do

is not give up.

And NGOs and women's rights groups

really have a very important role

but I also understand

it's very difficult to work as NGO

in a climate where there is

such strong resistance

to women's engagement

for their own rights.

It’s difficult but we have to stand

together and move forward.

What the GRAVIO does,

that I also want to say is

all the countries that we’ve visited

and engaged with

they've responded

more or less positively to us.

They do make space for us,

they engage with us,

we at the GREVIO engage

with them in a dialogue so...

We just have to wait and see

because it's a long process

and GRAVIO's work is a process

of dialogue with the States involved.

So I still believe

that it makes a difference

in order to engage with States,

because in the end

it's States that are accountable

for women to achieve their rights.

I feel that's what I want to say

at this point.

Thank you.

MARINE: Thank you very much, Rachel.

I was talking without my mic being on.

So thank you very much

for your reply.

We still have one or two minute

for a last question.

I'll ask Magda, if you want to ask

your question orally

that is more on the role

of NGO and Civil Society,

and Claire if you can reply

to her question.

So Magda if you want

to ask your question.

MAGDA: Hello, can you hear me now?

MARINE: Yes, we hear you.

MAGDA: Okay, so my question is

that seems that over the years

various NGOs and collectives

have accumulated a lot of, you know,

relevant know how about the situation

of women and girls with disabilities

as well as many recommendations

have been formulated by them

and how to achieve tangible changes

in Member States and at the EU level.

My question is there

an initiative or movement

that makes use of all that work?

And that builds on that

in order for us

to move forward quickly,

with concrete policy and advocacy.

Because we're all aware

that institutional monitoring,

it takes time and it makes sense,

but the clock is ticking,

and there is a lot of know how

that we already have,

so how can we already make use of it

to bring tangible changes

to people's lives as they're happening

at the moment? Thank you.

MARINE: Thank you very much. Claire,

if you want to reply to that question.

CLAIRE: Thank you,

this is an amazing question,

and the question I'm asking myself

every day, actually.

So, yes, meanings,

success of our work,

we want to make sure that the advocacy

and the monitoring we do

at the EU level in the case

of European Women's Lobby secretariat

it's having an impact

on women's life

so the process at the EU level

is very long.

It takes a very long time

to create legislation

and also the hurdles

[INAUDIBLE]

you have all Member States denying

behind a position and policies.

Sometimes, this could be discouraging,

but I think as Rachel was saying,

it mixes very well

with the previous question, actually.

If we keep being acting together,

we’ll see change happening.

The women's movement is active

since decades now.

We have some progress. Maybe it doesn't

as fast as we to, but we did.

At the European Women's Lobby

we are lucky to have members,

numerous members all over Europe,

so we try to exchange ideas,

exchange know how, as you said,

in order to be more effective.

On the Istanbul Convention, to link

with the previous question,

we have members working together

within the Group of Experts called

the Observatory on Violence

against women and girls since 30 years.

This group exchanges best practices,

know-how and campaign together

to move the needle

at the national level,

but also support our work,

it's an interaction.

I imagine that Lesia just left,

but we are also in contact,

but we are also in direct contact

with the new Commissioner.

Back in July we had a working session

with Commissioner Dalli and our members

from the EU countries

that haven't ratified the Convention.

This is about building the movement,

building solidarity, exchanging ideas.

We can do that

because we have a structure,

movements like this one are really key

to build up this movement.

MARINE: Thank you, Claire, thank you

to all the speakers of the second panel.

So, now it's time to conclude

and to end this event.

In this webinar we heard

about the various forms of violence

faced by women and girls

with disabilities

and that some types of violence are

those faced by other group of women,

like domestic violence,

sexual harassment,

but also other parts of violence

that are more specific

to women with disabilities

that need to be addressed.

We heard about forced sterilization,

forced contraception.

We also heard about violence

in institutions and in psychiatry.

Unfortunately we see

that in many countries

those type of violence

are still looked at as legal.

They're authorized by law,

and there's still a lot of work

to be done to eradicate

all those abuse and violation

faced by women and girls

with disabilities.

In addition to violence,

we also need to address

the structural discrimination

and sexism and the patriarchy

that still exists

in all European societies.

We also heard about stereotypes,

and the notion of consent,

the fact that especially for women

with intellectual disabilities,

psychosocial disabilities,

it's really hard to report violence

and to be trusted

by the trusted system.

There are also the barriers faced

by women with disabilities

such as inaccessibility.

We'll share the presentations

from speakers,

but also from Claire Desaint

who address specifically

as a form of barrier

the reporting to the justice system

and that's something

that we also really need to address.

So how to do that? More specifically,

what can we do at European level

and at national level

to address violence?

From what we heard

from the different speakers

in the second panel,

we really need to work at all levels

it comes from people working

in institutions, carers,

grass root movements

and also policymakers

and lawmakers at national

and European level

But also really start with working

with women and girls with disabilities

not only listening to them,

but involving them on measures

that need to be adopted,

because it's only by listening

to women with disabilities,

victims of the violence

that we can address those issues

that are deeply enshrined in society.

At the European level, we heard

about the need to advocate

for the ratification

of the Istanbul Convention,

and also the need to work

with GREVIO on its implementation.

You’ll see in the chat

all the links on the Convention,

but also webinar that explain to you

how you can report to the Convention

to the GREVIO Committee,

to the Group of Experts.

Tomorrow EDF will launch specific pages

on the Istanbul Convention

with all the information

about its reporting process

So you can check

the website of EDF tomorrow.

We also need to take into account

the various strategies

that have been adopted

by the EU and that will be adopted.

For our organization it's important

to work on the implementation

of the Gender Equality Strategy

that was presented by the commission,

but also the Victims’ Rights Strategy

that was already adopted,

and the Disability Rights Strategy

that will be adopted next year

and the Child Rights Strategy

that will also have specific information

on girls and hopefully on girls

with disabilities as well.

We received a few questions on what's

the role of the EU outside of Europe.

On that question,

I also wanted to mention that tomorrow,

the EU will launch

these gender Action Plan

that's related to gender equality

in foreign policy outside of the EU

we'll see how women and girls

have been included

and what is the plan

for the EU on that.

I advise you to check

on that document.

We need to work on that,

we need to work on holding,

keeping the EU

and national government accountable.

In the strategy you'll see

specific recommendations

for Member States, you can also use it

in your advocacy at national level.

We can also advocate

for specific legislation.

We heard from Claire about alternative

to the Istanbul Convention,

the EU Directive on preventing

and combating all forms of violence,

which is a really,

really important initiative.

And we also heard from Isabel

from Spain on what has been done

to prohibit forced sterilization

of women and girls with disabilities.

That's example of legislative initiative

that can be taken.

As I mentioned, tomorrow is

the international day

on eliminating all forms of violence

against women and girls.

You'll find more information

on that on EDF website tomorrow.

Also wanted to advertise

another webinar that will be organized

by the European Union of the Deaf

on supporting

deaf women

victims of domestic violence.

So we'll post the link

to register in the chat box

if you're interested

to attend that event.

We want to thank all of you,

all the participants for attending,

for your questions, for participating

actively also during the Q&A

I want to thank

all the wonderful speakers

that we had today

for sharing their expertise.

Also, thank you to Raquel and Aoife

for your support,

to Helene from Inclusion Europe

for helping us

Many tanks to the captioner, Kimberly,

for your great work

and to our two interpreters

for the interpretation.

And on this we'll close the webinar.

Don't hesitate to be in touch with EDF.

My email address is in the Chat box

we'd be happy

to continue the conversation

with all of you.

Have a great day

and have a good afternoon. Thank you.