



**WEST CORK
BEACON**

TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE
& SEXUAL VIOLENCE

West Cork Whisper

WEST CORK BEACON MAGAZINE

ISSUE 84

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2025



The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual global campaign to showcase that violence against women is a human rights violation. In 1991, feminist leaders worldwide recognised that violence against women was a global human rights crisis – yet was invisible in human rights discourse.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

25 NOVEMBER - 10 DECEMBER



Each year, from 25 November to 10 December, World Human Rights Day, the 16 Days of Activism campaign calls for action against one of the world's most persistent violations of human rights – violence against women.

During the 16 Days of Activism, people around the world unite to raise awareness about gender-based violence, challenge discriminatory attitudes and call for improved laws and services to end violence against women for good.



HOW DID THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM COME ABOUT?

The Mirabal Sisters were political activists whose deaths were commemorated with the establishment of The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

On 25 November 1960, sisters Patricia, Minerva and Maria Teresa Mirabal, three political activists who actively opposed the cruelty and systematic violence of the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic, were clubbed to death and dumped at the bottom of a cliff by Trujillo's secret police.

The Mirabal sisters became symbols of the feminist resistance, and in commemoration of their deaths 25 November was declared International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in Latin America in 1980. This international day was formally recognised by the United Nations in 1999.

In June 1991, the [Centre for Women's Global Leadership \(CWGL\)](#), alongside participants of the first Women's Global Institute on Women, Violence and Human Rights, called for a global campaign of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Violence against women continues to occur at an alarming scale in every country in the world. Too often it is accepted as normal behaviour and the global culture of discrimination against women allows violence to occur with impunity. Recent movements such as #MeToo and #TimesUp have propelled this issue onto the global stage.

Speaking out against women's rights abuses is something that women's rights organisations do every day. From lobbying governments to improve laws and services to working with communities to change discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, organisations and individuals are working all over the world to respond to and prevent violence against women.

However, violence against women is a global problem and it requires global action. Calls for action like the 16 days of Activism are crucial because they shine a spotlight on the issue of violence against women. They are a moment to create public awareness about what needs to change to prevent it from happening in the first place at local, national, regional and international levels.

WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED?

To end violence against women, we need to challenge the attitudes that perpetuate, rationalise and normalise that violence, and deny women's right to safety. Men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of gender-based violence. To see violence truly eliminated, the attitudes of men need to change. Shifting these behaviours is hard and slow, but gender equality means all of us, and working with all genders is the only way to see true change.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Participating in the **16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** is a meaningful way to contribute to the global effort to end domestic violence. Here are some ways to get involved:

- **RAISE AWARENESS:** Use your voice and social media platforms to raise awareness about domestic violence, its impact, and the importance of supporting survivors.

- **1 Organisations** (workplaces, universities, community groups) can use the campaign's resources from Women's Aid and adopt the colour orange, use the #NoExcuse tag, hold awareness workshops.

- **2 Workplaces:** explore how you can embed domestic-abuse responsiveness into your policy or training (since this is explicitly part of the 2025 focus).

- **3 Community groups:** host arts, story-telling, panel talks, or local walks/awareness displays (as many campuses are doing).

- **ATTEND EVENTS:** Participate in local or virtual events, workshops, and seminars organised by advocacy groups and organisations working to end domestic violence. Check for your local county or organisation hosting activities.

- **SUPPORT SURVIVORS:** Show support for survivors of domestic and sexual violence by volunteering at shelters, offering resources, or simply being a compassionate listener.

- **EDUCATE YOURSELF:** Learn more about the root causes of domestic violence, its consequences, and how to recognise and prevent it.

- **ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE:** Advocate for policies and legislation that protect survivors, hold perpetrators accountable, and promote gender equality.

NOV 25TH

International
Day for the
Elimination of
Violence
Against Women

NOV 29TH

International
Women
Human Rights
Defenders Day

SELECTED EVENTS & ACTIVITIES FOR 2025 IN IRELAND

- On 3 December 2025, a virtual session is scheduled by Chartered Institute of Housing Ireland: *16 Days of Activism: Working Together to Tackle Domestic Abuse in Ireland*. It's open to housing providers, local authorities and support organisations.

- On 27 November, in Tralee, County Kerry, Kerry Women's Centre will host a conference: *16 Days of Action – Stop Violence Against Women and Children Conference*.

- Across higher-education campuses e.g. South East Technological University (SETU), events include: orange-balloon/umbrella displays, workshops on coercive control and domestic abuse, community-arts project (*One Million Stars to End Violence Ireland*), and a national summit on gender-based violence on the 2–3 December.



WHAT'S NEW / WHAT'S ANNOUNCED FOR 2025

1

Campaign theme & focus

- Globally, the UN Women theme for 2025 is: *End digital violence against all* - addressing how online/digital abuse is part of gender-based violence. unwomen.org
- In Ireland, [Women's Aid's](#) 2025 campaign will raise awareness of how domestic abuse impacts women during pregnancy, and how employers can respond to domestic abuse as a workplace issue.

2

Planning & calls to action

- [Women's Aid](#) has prepared materials and 'resources for local action' around Ireland.
- Universities remain active participants: e.g. University of Galway has already called for staff, students, and community engagement under the #NoExcuse campaign. universityofgalway.ie
- South-East Technological University ([SETU](#)) has already announced its commitment: collaboration with other universities on events, summits, and awareness programmes.

3

Institutional & state commitment

- The Irish government, via *Ireland Marks 16 Days of Activism* press releases, has participated in public messaging around the issue. ireland.ie
- There is emphasis on policy change, e.g. approaches to workplace response to domestic abuse, protection mechanisms, and integrating awareness into public institutions. [Women's Aid](#) explicitly mentions employers' roles in their 2025 plan.



DIGITAL ABUSE, TROLLING, STALKING, AND OTHER FORMS OF TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



WHAT IS TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

Technology-facilitated gender-based violence refers to any act that is committed, assisted, aggravated, or amplified by the use of information communication technologies or other digital tools, that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological, social, political, or economic harm, or other infringements of rights and freedoms.

While many other terms – such as digital or online violence – are commonly used, 'technology-facilitated gender-based violence' better reflects how technology can enable harm, both online and offline.

Take doxing, for example, which is the act of sharing someone's personal information online. It can lead to real-life consequences such as stalking,

threats, and even physical violence. Or consider deepfake abuse, where manipulated images or videos of someone published online can then result in offline reputational damage with lasting and devastating effects on a person's life. These examples show the complexities of technology-facilitated gender-based violence and how its scope can be harder to define, as harm often permeates both online and offline spaces. The digital revolution has both exacerbated existing forms of gender-based violence (such as sexual harassment, stalking, hate speech, misinformation, defamation, and impersonation) and created new forms of abuse (such as hacking, astroturfing, video and image-based abuse including deepfakes, doxing, cyberbullying, and online grooming among others).

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON FORMS OF DIGITAL ABUSE AND TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

Sexual harassment and stalking are the most commonly reported forms of technology-facilitated violence experienced by women and girls. Image-based abuse (sharing intimate photos without consent), unwanted messages, social media posts, and phone calls are the most frequently used tactics for sexual harassment. Women may be harassed on digital platforms in comment sections, bombarded with explicit messages, and tracked through GPS and location-based apps, sparking a digital nightmare that often spills into their offline lives. Misogynistic networks such as manosphere or incel forums exist for this purpose.

Other forms of abuse include:

- Cyberbullying
- Hate speech and disinformation
- Sexual exploitation, sextortion
- Defamation
- Revenge porn
- Doxing - publishing private information.
- Online stalking or surveillance/tracking to monitor someone's activities
- Online grooming and sexual exploitation
- Catfishing and impersonation.

The tools and platforms perpetrators use to inflict harm on women and girls range from smartphones, computers, chatrooms, social networking sites, online gaming sites, GPS trackers, and video streaming platforms.

These acts don't just happen online. They often lead to offline violence in real life, such as coercion, physical abuse, and even femicide – killing of women and girls. The harm can be long-lasting and affect survivors over a prolonged period of time.

Digital violence targets women more than men, across all walks of life, but especially those with public or online visibility – such as activists, journalists, women in politics, human rights defenders, and young women. The impact is even worse for women facing intersecting forms of discrimination, including race, disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

WHO IS MOST AT RISK OF DIGITAL ABUSE AND TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

While all women and girls may experience digital abuse, online violence, or technology-facilitated gender-based violence, some groups are at greater risk.

- Young women and girls: Given that girls and young women are more likely to use technology for learning, accessing information and connecting to peers, they also face increased exposure to online violence. One global study found that 58 per cent of girls and young women have experienced some form of online harassment.
- Women who face multiple forms of discrimination: Women with disabilities, Black and Indigenous women and other women of colour, migrant women, and LGBTQ+ people all face higher risks of digital violence.
- Women in political and public life: Human rights defenders, activists, journalists and lawmakers face increased rates of violence both online and offline too. A UNESCO study found that 73 percent of women journalists experienced online violence in the course of their work. The Inter-Parliamentary Union found that 58 percent of African women parliamentarians had experienced online attacks.

WHY IS DIGITAL ABUSE SO HARD TO STOP?

- Weak regulation of the technology sector or lack of legal recognition of digital violence in countries.
- Lack of accountability from tech platforms and social networking sites.
- Normalisation of violence in manosphere spaces.
- Artificial Intelligence creating new forms of abuse and amplifying digital violence.
- Growing backlash against gender equality.
- Anonymity of perpetrators and cross-border abuse make it harder to get justice.
- Limited support systems for survivors of cyberbullying or personal data leaks.

HOW CAN WE STOP TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

We must all act to stop digital abuse. To mark the 16 Days of Activism, the campaign calls on:

- Governments to pass and enforce laws that criminalise digital violence, protect personal information and strengthen tech sector accountability.
- Tech companies to ensure platform safety, remove harmful content, enforce codes of conduct and publish transparent reports.
- Donors to invest in feminist organisations working to end violence against women and digital rights advocates.
- Individuals to speak out, support survivors, and challenge harmful online norms.
- Empower women and girls to participate and lead in the technology sector, to inform the design and use of safe digital tools and spaces free of violence.

You can take action in many ways – learn and share information from this year's campaign, support local services that support survivors of gender-based violence, host or participate in digital safety sessions, support male allyship campaigns that reject and prevent digital violence against women and girls, and encourage governments and companies to adopt better laws and policies.



Myth Busting

Gender Based Violence

In recent decades, Ireland has had an influx in immigration, and the community in West Cork is no exception. At the same time, across the Emerald Isle, we've also seen a growing movement targeting and scapegoating immigrants for a number of social problems, including gender based violence (GBV). Violent riots and rhetoric are often organised and perpetuated online. *"What began as scattered, localised protests in late 2022 have evolved into an increasingly structured and internationally connected movement,"* (Manzi 2025). From County Tyrone and a burning effigy of migrants to riots in Dublin, Antrim, and Limerick, it's becoming clear that racism and anti-migrant sentiments are growing and fuelling the cycle of violence.

West Cork Beacon is firmly committed to challenging violence of all forms, including those that target individuals who don't identify as white Irish. We believe it's critical to take a firm, anti-racist, anti-oppressive approach to the ways in which we offer our services and support to survivors, regardless of their ethnicity, race, and/or immigration status. Violence is often perpetuated through myths, stereotypes, and lack of education. Gender based violence will never be ended by villainising or blaming entire communities or groups of people for individuals' choices and behaviour.

Here are some common misconceptions and beliefs that we aim to challenge at West Cork Beacon:

MYTH: Migrant men make Ireland less safe for Irish women.

FACT: The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland currently don't have statistics available that identify those utilising behaviours considered domestic and/or sexual violence beyond gender. However, with the *"28 women murdered in Northern Ireland in the last five years 'if there were no immigrants in this country, that number would be 27,"* according to Ms. Elaine Crory of the Women's Resource and Development Agency. Individuals are responsible for their use of violence, not the communities, race, and/or ethnic groups that they call home.

MYTH: Migrants receive undue financial support at the cost of Irish families.

FACT: Many migrants are more likely to live in crowded conditions, struggle to secure work, and some even face a *"life of forced dependency with limited opportunities for self-determination,"* (Reilly 2021). These conditions for survivors both increase vulnerability to and decrease ability to heal from gender based violence. Further, *"Black, ethnic minority and immigrant communities are politically marginalized,"* (Logan 2012).

MYTH: Violence is a justified response when there are allegations of GBV.

FACT: Utilizing GBV as justification for use of violence makes all of us less safe; attacks on migrants, women, queer and transpeople normalise the use of violence, including GBV. Often, protecting women and girls from violence is used as a decoy to engage in hateful, dangerous behaviour like destroying homes and attacking innocent bystanders. This impacts the wellbeing and safety of the people that the violence is supposedly protecting. Not only that, but it also mirrors tactics used by people who engage in gender based violence.

MYTH: GBV services have nothing to do with race, ethnicity or immigration status.

FACT: According to Women's Aid, 20% of those they supported were identified as 'migrant women,' meaning there is an overrepresentation of migrant women who are survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Service providers, like West Cork Beacon, must prioritise advocating for migrant and diverse survivors to address vulnerabilities to violence increased by migration status, poverty, race, and more.

MYTH: Migrant women and children contribute to social problems in Ireland.

FACT: Migrant women and children are more vulnerable to GBV and human trafficking due to their migration status creating opportunities for control, financial abuse, and discrimination while also having less social support.

MYTH: Immigrants are a threat to the white Irish majority's safety and wellbeing.

FACT: Anti-migrant and racist violence is on the rise, and immigrant, minority and Traveller families and children are more likely to experience violence and discrimination than perpetrate it.

MYTH: GBV isn't related to politics.

FACT: According to End Violence Against Women Coalition, *"the far-right has long co-opted sexual violence to promote its racist, white supremacist agenda."* There are instances in which misogynists who claim a desire to protect women and girls' rights and safety, instead reinforce gender hierarchy and power dynamics. In fact, nearly half of the men involved in the race riots outside Belfast in response to an alleged sexual assault had previous domestic violence charges themselves; this calls into question the so called motivation of protecting women

Jennie's Law

Public domestic-violence register will name offenders

The Government has given the go-ahead for the drafting of legislation that would allow those convicted of domestic violence to be named on a public register.

The proposed domestic-violence register of judgments would be managed by the Courts Service.

The General Scheme of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences, Domestic Violence and International Instruments) Bill 2025, known as *'Jennie's Law'*, was published 21 October.

It has been named in honour of Jennifer Poole, who was murdered by her ex-partner Gavin Murphy in 2021. The campaign in her name has been led by her brother Jason.

Minister for Justice Jim O'Callaghan said that victims would have to give their consent before the convicted abuser could be named on the public register.

Consistency on consent

Among other measures, the bill will:

- Strengthen the law on sexual consent,
- Strengthen legislation on preventing and combatting human trafficking,
- Remove dual criminality in respect of certain offences - including forced marriage, and
- Replace references to 'child pornography', which is seen as an outdated term, with 'child sexual abuse material' in legislation and in legal proceedings.



Jennifer Poole

On sexual consent, the minister said that the legislation would ensure consistency in relation to the consent component across rape offences and sexual-assault offences.

"As the law stands at present, an honest belief in consent – whether that belief is reasonable – is a defence to a charge of rape. "We have wanted to change that for some time, but we needed to ensure we were not creating issues in sexual-assault cases," he stated. *"The provisions relating to rape were removed from the earlier bill but will now be progressed alongside provisions on sexual assault, ensuring that any belief in consent must be reasonable, whether this is in relation to a charge of rape or a charge of sexual assault,"* Minister O'Callaghan said.

Dual-criminality change

The bill also plans to remove the requirement for dual criminality for sexual-violence offences such as rape, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and forced abortion and forced sterilisation.

Until now, if such offences were committed abroad by an Irish citizen, they could not be prosecuted by the State unless this behaviour was also a crime in the place where it occurred.

The bill also contains proposals to transpose EU directives on combatting human trafficking and on violence against women.

The draft bill will now be referred to the Oireachtas Justice Committee for pre-legislative scrutiny.

Source: <https://www.lawsociety.ie/gazette/top-stories/2025/october/public-domestic-violence-register-will-name-offenders/>

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/human-dynamics/articles/10.3389/fhumd.2021.642445/full>
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/10/violent-attacks-ireland-indian-immigrants>
https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/emerging-cross-border-dynamics-in-irelands-anti-migrant-mobilisation/



HONOURING Marie Mulholland A Beacon of Feminist Leadership

For over 13 years, Marie Mulholland served as the visionary CEO of West Cork Beacon (formerly West Cork Women Against Violence), transforming the organisation into a vital lifeline for survivors of domestic and sexual violence across the region. A lifelong feminist activist, Marie's leadership was rooted in decades of community work, advocacy, and systemic change.



MARIE'S LEGACY INCLUDES:

- **Founding the Safe House in West Cork:** After years of campaigning, Marie secured a property for emergency accommodation, allowing women and children to remain in their community while accessing safety and support.
- **DV Rent Supplement:** In 2021 Marie initiated a conversation with Eoin Ó Broin, housing spokesperson for Sinn Féin, Safe Ireland and eventually the Dept of Social Protection that led to the 3 month trial of the DV Rent Supplement. Minister for Social Protection Heather Humphries announced plans to make the domestic violence rent supplement a permanent feature of housing supports in 2021.
- **National Advocacy:** As CEO of WCWAV at the Oireachtas Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Pre-Committee Stage Consideration of- The Organisation of Working Time (Domestic Violence Leave) Bill 2020, highlighting the unique challenges faced by rural survivors and advocating for systemic reform.
- **Rebranding the Organisation:** Marie oversaw the transition from WCWAVP

to West Cork Beacon, reflecting a broader, more inclusive mission and a renewed commitment to hope, safety, and empowerment.

- **Expanding Services to Include Sexual Violence Support:** In 2023, she led the launch of WCB's sexual violence service for survivors aged 14+, regardless of gender.
- **Community Voice and Visibility:** Marie's work consistently centred survivors, especially those marginalised by geography, gender, or age. Her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic ensured continuity of care, emergency housing, and trauma-informed support.

Marie's career began in Belfast, where she co-founded the Women's Support Network and led campaigns for housing justice, LGBTQ+ rights, and visibility for working-class women. She received the Constance Markievicz Award in 1987 for her contributions to trade unionism and community activism.

Her legacy at WCB is one of fierce compassion, strategic brilliance, and unwavering commitment to justice. We thank her for lighting the way.



WELCOMING MaryClare Clark A New Chapter for West Cork Beacon

In August 2025, MaryClare Clark stepped into the role of CEO at West Cork Beacon, bringing over 15 years of executive leadership in trauma-informed, gender-based violence and public health services. She led transformative initiatives in the U.S. before relocating to Cork in 2024 with her Irish spouse and child.



MARYCLARE'S BACKGROUND INCLUDES:

- **CEO of a Public Health Consortium:** She grew the budget from under €400K to €1.5M, expanded services for survivors of violence and addiction, and led strategic planning and coalition building.
- **Director of Rape Crisis and Transitional Housing Services:** Her work included court accompaniment, therapeutic programming, and wraparound supports for women and children.
- **Founder of MC Squared, LLC:** A consultancy supporting nonprofits with grant writing, strategic planning, and trauma-informed systems development.
- **Educator and Mentor:** She has taught and supervised social work students across five universities and served on multiple boards and review committees focused on maternal mortality, youth suicide, and homelessness.

CURRENTLY PURSUING A PHD IN APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK, MARYCLARE'S VISION FOR WCB IS ROOTED IN:

- **Survivor-Led Systems Change:** Elevating lived experience in service design and delivery.
- **Feminist, Rights-Based Practice:** Embedding empowerment, inclusivity, and accountability.
- **Strategic Growth:** Strengthening partnerships, expanding refuge development and enhancing outcome tracking.
- **Community Voice:** Ensuring West Cork's diverse communities are heard, respected and supported.

"I am honoured to follow in Marie's footsteps," MaryClare shares. "Her work laid a powerful foundation. My goal is to continue that legacy with integrity, innovation and deep respect for the communities we serve."

REFERENCES
cdn.prod.website-files.com/westcorkpeople.ie

data.oireachtas.ie
www.changingireland.ie
www.acenturyofwomen.com

This card has been designed for you to cut out and keep.

Our freefone number is on the other side

Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen.

Brené Brown

Cork

West Cork Beacon
Freephone 1800 203 136

Cork Sexual Violence
Centre,
5 Camden Place,
Cork City
Freephone: 1800 496496
email: info@sexualviolence.ie

Cuanlee Refuge, Cork
021 427 7698

Domestic Violence
Social Work Cork
021 492 1728

Legal Aid Board, Cork
021 455 1686 / 021 427 5998

Free Legal Aid Clinic
Locall 1890 350 259
Information and referral

Mná Feasa
(Domestic Violence Project)
021 421 1757

OSS, Cork
Freephone 1800 497 497
(Domestic Violence
Resource Centre for men
and women)

Sexual Assault Treatment
Unit 021 492 6100

Y.A.N.A. North Cork
022 53915

Kerry

Kerry's Women's refuge and
Support Services (Adapt)
066 712 9100

Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse
Centre. Freephone 1800 633 333

Legal Aid Board 066 712 6900

Tralee Women's Resource Centre
066 712 0622

National

Women's Aid Freephone
1800 341 900

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre
National Helpline 1800 778888



Open for
Drop-in and
Appointments

Bantry CIC, Vickery's Complex, New Street, Bantry, P75 TV77

Monday - Thursday, 10am -5pm Fridays, 10am -4pm Closed 1-2pm

West Cork Helpline: 0818 07 8390 Email: bantry@citinfo.ie

National Phone Service: 0818 07 4000 www.citizensinformation.ie

CONFIDENTIALITY West Cork Beacon assures everyone who
contacts us that four core values underpin our service:

- Confidentiality
- To be listened to
- To be believed
- Respect for your choice

Speaking to someone, perhaps for the first time, about experiencing violence
or abuse is never easy. Placing your trust in a stranger on the end of a phone
or meeting someone for the first time face to face takes courage. These first
stages of seeking support can be a time of stress and fear for callers.

It is important that you understand that you have the right to
remain anonymous when contacting the service. If you are
comfortable with giving identifying details, these details are
not passed on to any other agency except at your request.

There are two exceptions to confidentiality:

- If a disclosure raises concerns with regard to Child
Protection issues
- If you disclose that you intend to harm another person.



WEST CORK BEACON

TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

West Cork Beacon, Wolfe Tone Square, Bantry, Co. Cork P75 TN96

www.westcorkbeacon.ie

Helpline: 1800 203 136 during office hours

Bantry Office: 027 53847 Mon to Fri: 9.00 am to 4.30 pm

email: admin@westcorkbeacon.ie

www.facebook.com/westcorkbeacon

www.instagram.com/wcb_domestic_violence_service/

We're here to support you

FREEPHONE
1800 203 136

Office 027 53847

Mon to Fri: 9am to 4.30pm