BRAVE-WOW

BUILDING RESPECTFUL AND VIOLENCE-FREE GENDER-INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS IN THE WORLD OF WORK

BRAVE-WOW COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Contents

INTRODUCTION **3**

1. PURPOSE OF A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE **3**

2. OBJECTIVES **4**

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP) CAN BE OBSERVED FROM A SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE. **4**

3. ACTIVITIES **4**

3.1 WORKING GROUPS 5

3.1.1 Working Group 1: Engaging men, boys & bystanders in preventing and combating GBV 5

3.1.2 Working Group 2: Communication approaches to GBV across the media 5

3.1.3 Working Group 3: Cultural & social contexts and their impact on legal frameworks for GBV 5

4. MEETINGS **6**

5. MEMBERSHIP **6**

5.1 NOMINATION OF A MEMBER 7

5.2 VISIBILITY OF THE MEMBERS ON BRAVE-WOW WEBSITE 7

6. CODE OF CONDUCT **7**

INTRODUCTION

BRAVE-WOW (GA 101195252) is EU funded project dedicated to tackling the often undetected and under-reported issue of gender-based violence (GBV) and harassment in the workplace.

With a focus on the health sector, the project integrates data collection and analysis to identify root causes and support long-term, systemic solutions. The focus of this approach is the development of the Gender-Based Violence at Work Questionnaire (GBVW_Q), implemented alongside the Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ) within healthcare organisations in Portugal, Italy, Spain, and Slovenia.

Stakeholder engagement is a core component of the project. Focus groups, interviews, and social media analysis are used to detect, understand, and address experiences of violence and harassment. Based on these insights, the project will co-develop practical procedures and policies, roll out an awareness-raising campaign, and create a Community of Practice.

Project outcomes will be reinforced through a dedicated digital platform and targeted training programmes for employees and managers. Active involvement of policymakers will help ensure the project's long-term impact and sustainability.

1. PURPOSE OF A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A **Community of Practice (CoP)** can be defined in several ways. Wenger-Trayner et al. (2023) describes it as *"communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour: a tribe learning to survive, a band of artists seeking new forms of expression, a group of engineers working on similar problems, a clique of pupils defining their identity in the school, a network of surgeons exploring novel techniques, a gathering of first-time managers helping each other cope"*.

Others define it as *"a group of individuals who have interests and problems within the same topic and gain a greater degree of knowledge and expertise through regular interaction"* (Williquet et al., 2021).

Within BRAVE-WOW, the purpose of a CoP is to mobilise and engage the relevant stakeholder community and foster their participation through inclusive and dynamic dialogue to identify, understand, prevent, and combat gender-based violence and harassment in workplace settings, fostering a culture of respect, diversity and accountability.

The CoP is established to share knowledge and best practices, develop new initiatives to address common challenges, and facilitate the exploitation of the EU-wide survey and dissemination of the GBVW_Q and DWQ to all EU countries.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Community of Practice (CoP) can be observed from a short-term and long-term perspective.

The **short-term goals** can be listed as follows:

- Gathering a pool of experts for inputs and insights.
- Sharing best practices and methods.
- Elaborating ways to empowering and motivating healthcare workers to continue the positive change once the project is finished.
- Encouraging more coordination among stakeholders who are pursuing the shared goal of preventing gender-based violence (GBV) in the health sector.
- Disseminating an EU-wide survey.

As for the **long-term goals, expected** to go beyond the end of BRAVE-WOW:

- Reinforcing the focus on combatting GBV in the world of work within European agendas.
- Creating long-standing working groups.
- Promoting new collaborations and initiatives (e.g. project proposals).
- Raising awareness
- Supporting policy change.

3. ACTIVITIES

The Community of Practice (CoP), both as a whole and through the working groups described below, will meet on a regular basis.

The CoP members will engage in discussions that foster genuine collaboration and the exchange of ideas to identify key issues related to gender-based violence (GBV) in the healthcare sector and workplace settings. Through these discussions, members will support the identification of prevention strategies and actions, as well as contribute to the development of policies aimed at supporting victims.

Members will also meet with representatives of “synergy projects”, typically EU-funded initiatives, although other types of projects may also be considered, that are active and implemented in areas similar to BRAVE-WOW or whose outcomes can generate synergies and contribute to policy impact in alignment with BRAVE-WOW.

The CoP members will be invited to give evidence of their work by **co-designing info sheets**, **presenting papers**, working on **scientific articles**, and developing **new initiatives** to support the sustainability of BRAVE-WOW.

The CoP will help disseminate BRAVE-WOW widely through other projects and identify similar initiatives with which to engage, interact, and exchange knowledge, and will be asked to support the dissemination of the wide EU survey to networks and parters across Europe.

3.1 Working Groups

To explore in depth the specific issues identified by the partners of BRAVE-WOW, it was decided to establish dedicated working groups within the CoP. The activities of these working groups are complementary to those of the broader CoP but focus more closely on specific thematic issues.

Each **CoP member can participate in one or more working groups**.

There are no formal requirements or limits on the number of working group members. Each working group is composed of individuals who are committed to contributing their time and energy to sustaining the CoP.

3.1.1 Working Group 1: Engaging men, boys & bystanders in preventing and combating GBV

This WG is dedicated to developing strategies to actively involve men and boys as agents of change in preventing and addressing gender-based violence, and to exploring bystander intervention models and community-level engagement. The purpose will be to identify barriers to involvement and propose solutions that promote responsibility, accountability, and long-term behavioural change.

3.1.2 Working Group 2: Communication approaches to GBV across the media

This WG will work to assess how GBV is represented and communicated in traditional media, digital platforms, and social media, with the aim of analysing the role of influencers, narratives, and digital communities in shaping public perception of GBV. A particular focus will be dedicated to the AI-generated communication.

3.1.3 Working Group 3: Cultural & social contexts and their impact on legal frameworks for GBV

The focus of this WG will be to examine how cultural norms, social practices, and community attitudes can shape GBV legislation, refine reporting systems, and access to justice. By comparing legal and political frameworks across countries, the groups will identify mechanisms that improve recognition, reporting, and protection.

It was agreed that additional groups could be created at later stage.

4. MEETINGS

CoP events will be scheduled and arranged by SHINE 2Europe.

Notice of meetings confirming the time and date will be circulated to members with a minimum of 3 weeks' notice.

The current plan for the meetings is the following:

CoP meeting 1 (welcome session) *Introduction to BRAVE-WOW CoP, networking exercises, and proposal for organisations in working groups* **February 2026**
Working groups meetings *Working group meetings will be organised, taking into account the availability of working group members, to enable each group to coordinate the development of the infosheets and any additional initiatives that may emerge from the group's shared interests.* **From February 2026 to July 2027.**
Webinar #1 *This webinar will bring together CoP members and representatives of projects implemented in the same areas as BRAVE-WOW (synergy meeting).* **April 2026**
CoP meeting 2 *Participation of a guest speaker, presentation of best practices and findings from research* **September 2026**
Webinar #2 *Second webinar that gathers CoP members and representatives of projects implemented in the same areas as BRAVE-WOW (synergy meeting).* **January 2027**
CoP meeting 3 *Final CoP meeting, wrap up of the work and discussion on the sustainability of the CoP* **July 2027**

The scheduling may be adjusted according to the availabilities of members and the development of the project.

5. MEMBERSHIP

The Community of Practice is non-hierarchical and open to individuals with a demonstrated interest in gender equality, equal rights, workers' rights, and related fields.

By sharing information and experiences within the CoP, members learn from one another, build professional networks, strengthen their skills, and contribute to policy influence.

The CoP does not have dedicated resources; participation is voluntary and undertaken at members' own cost. The community is sustained through a spirit of reciprocity, which ensures it remains active, engaging, and beneficial to all participants.

All CoP members will be invited to confirm their participation by completing a form in which they acknowledge that they have read and agreed to these Terms of Reference.

Upon completion of their participation, at the end of the BRAVE-WOW project (October 2027), all members will receive a certificate recognising their membership in the CoP.

5.1 Nomination of a member

All members of the CoP have been nominated by the Partners of the BRAVE-WOW project.

Additional members can be invited and join the CoP over the course of the project, and members of the CoP are invited to suggest nominations to the Partners.

5.2 Visibility of the members on BRAVE-WOW website

To support the visibility of the CoP and acknowledge their members, it was agreed that the members' names would be published on the BRAVE-WOW website.

All members will be asked to sign a consent form agreeing to their name, role and picture being published on the website. A short biography may also be included.

The members' details will be handled respectfully, and all members may request to be removed from the website and leave the CoP at any time.

6. CODE OF CONDUCT

All CoP members take responsibility for the tone and content of the discussions.

Within the CoP:

- Any behaviour and/or communication aimed to denigrate, belittle and/or disrespect other participant's opinions and comments will not be tolerated.
- Members are expected to be inclusive, promote equality and diversity and challenge discrimination.
- All members will engage in collaboration with fellow members, forming strong partnerships to achieve the aims and priorities of the CoP.