

Brava Ending violence against women together

Formerly TERRE DES FEMMES Switzerland



MEIN KOPFTUCH
IST KEIN HINDERNIS
ZUM ARBEITEN

FEMINISMUS,
DER AUSSCHLISST
IST KEIN
FEMINISMUS!

RASSISMUS
KEIN RANDTHEMA
SONDERN
ALLTAG

«REVOLUTION
IS NOT A ONE
TIME EVENT»

NICHT OINE UNS:
TEILHABE FÜR
ALLE FRAUEN-
UNABHÄNGIG VON
HERKUNFT UND STATUS

Annual report 2025

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Brava combats gender-based violence and sexism in Switzerland.

In so doing, we pay special attention to people living in precarious situations, especially women refugees.

Our vision is a just society, in which all people, regardless of gender, can live free of violence and in a self-determined manner.



Editorial

The year 2025 provided further evidence of how quickly societal progress can come under pressure. Debates on migration, equality and social security became more heated, and populist voices gained ground. It is precisely at such times that the necessity of organisations like Brava becomes evident.

After all, behind the political headlines, there are the tangible realities of people's lives. The number of people turning to Brava rose significantly in 2025. Many were seeking support in situations characterised by violence, a precarious residence status or a lack of protection. This development makes it clear that gender-based violence is not a marginal issue. It is closely linked to migration, discrimination and social exclusion.

Brava responded with determination. We were able to provide further training for professionals throughout Switzerland and to actively help shape political processes. The publication of the parallel report on the Istanbul Convention in autumn clearly showed that although Switzerland has made significant progress in protecting people from violence, there are still major gaps.

At the same time, it remained important to us to create spaces where people not only get support, but also gain self-confidence, knowledge and possible courses of action. In the 'Voices of Refugee Women' project, participants took on greater responsibility and shared their perspectives publicly. The empowerment workshops

also offered women spaces for exchange, information and mutual encouragement. Such venues are essential, especially in a social climate that often marginalises affected persons.

The year 2025 was also marked by internal further development. New staff bolstered our team, our membership base grew and we collectively drew up a strategy for 2025–2029. We thus laid the foundations on which to keep running Brava effectively, boldly and sustainably in the future.

I always find it moving to see how much strength and solidarity people show towards one another, despite difficult circumstances.

The challenges remain immense. This makes our shared commitment to creating a Switzerland where everyone can live free from violence, safely and in a self-determined manner, all the more important.

My heartfelt thanks go to all staff, partner organisations, members and donors who supported Brava over the past year.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Julia Maisenbacher'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'J'.

Julia Maisenbacher, Brava board member

2025 in figures

86 migrant women reached in
3 empowerment workshops

232 professionals and volunteers
trained in 11 training programmes

6 meetings organised for the Voices
project, with around 40 participants

242 queries received from persons
affected by violence

3 on a scale of 1 (worst) to 6 (best)
announced as the rating of
Switzerland's implementation of the
Istanbul Convention

72 mentions in the media

494 021 signatures collected for addi-
tional funding to combat violence

130 000 people reached with just
1 Instagram post

!

“Thank you, Brava, for this opportunity. It was a terrific setting, with so many women. I learnt a great deal. I’d be delighted to take part in the next workshop too.”

Feedback from a workshop participant

“It was a trusting and open atmosphere. The participants saw that they were not the only ones affected. This fostered solidarity among them.”

Feedback from a community leader



Lea Riedener and Tahmina Taghiyeva on the podium at Fotomuseum Winterthur

Empowerment workshops

In 2025, Brava took the opportunity to purposefully evaluate the empowerment workshops and to enhance their content, together with trusted community leaders and participants. On this basis, a new format was developed, which is why the workshops were deliberately scaled back during the reporting year. Thus, a total of three workshops took place, reaching 86 women. The events were held in Bern, each with one community leader and their group. Further sessions were put on hold for the duration of the project's reorientation.

The women taking part were mainly from Turkey and Kurdistan. At the participants' request, topics such as retirement provision for women, gender-sensitive parenting, puberty, and women's rights were addressed. To address these topics in a manner based on real-world practice, external professionals from various fields were invited to share their knowledge.

Interest among participants and community leader remained high. For women going through the asylum procedure in particular, the workshops provided an important low-threshold opportunity to gain access to relevant information, specialised agencies and support programmes. Once again in 2025, the workshops offered a safe space for exchanges and mutual support.

Alongside the workshops, community leader were also involved in other activities. For instance, they attended Brava's feminist brunch, contributed to an interview on the 14th of June (Switzerland's day of annual feminist action) about challenges faced by migrant women in Switzerland, and took part in public events, including a panel discussion at Fotomuseum Winterthur in connection with the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' campaign, and a symposium organised by the women's shelter foundation Frauenhaus Zurich.

Training programmes

Aspiring to improve protection by empowering professionals, Brava continued its education and training work in 2025. A total of 11 training programmes were realised for 232 professionals working in various regions of Switzerland, such as Zurich, Bern, St Gallen, Aargau, Thurgau and Obwalden.

Clients included the Zurich Asylum Organisation (AOZ), the integration office Fachstelle Integration Rheintal in St Gallen, the migration specialist course at Schule für Sozialbegleitung, the Church Contact Point for Refugees (KKF) and Caritas Zurich. Two new long-term collaborations were set up, with AOZ's Housing and Society department, and with BFB Biel.

Demand for training programmes continued to rise in 2025. Professionals and organisations were specifically seeking in-depth knowledge about the intersections where gender-based violence, displacement and asylum meet. At the same time, a persistent sense of uncertainty on how to address such intersections was evident during the training sessions.

Feedback from the field indicates that professionals working in the asylum sector still face challenging framework conditions. This is particularly apparent in the context of the rising number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum, especially girls. The content of the training programmes was specifically enhanced accordingly and adapted to meet these requirements. Intensive exchanges between those who carry out training and counselling work gave rise to new exercises and methods.

Alongside the training programmes, Brava was incorporated into various specialist networks in the context of knowledge transfer and took part in professional exchanges, as well as at national conferences and congresses.

Brava also contributed its expertise to a sounding board set up by Bern's Office for Equality, and helped to develop the city's equality strategy and action plan for 2027–2030.



“The instructors were very good.
Well-organised, professionally
competent and responsive to the
group, they created a calm and
learning-oriented environment.”

↙
“The day was a real eye-opener for
me. I think you put it together
really well and made it very inter-
esting.”

Feedback from training programme participants

Counselling

In 2025, Brava remained an important point of contact for many affected persons who have to live in difficult situations. During the reporting year, the number of counselling queries rose by 80.6 percent. Triage was carried out in 187 cases, 19 of which with support. In 24 cases, triage was not possible, so Brava provided longer-term support. There were 31 requests for specialised counselling.

The main areas of focus were domestic violence, issues relating to migration law and asylum law, and violence abroad. Violence in the context of gender identity or sexual orientation, as well as psychosocial stressors, also played a significant role. Multiple stressors were common and had a significant impact on the counselling.

The rise in queries from women who had fled Turkey was particularly noticeable. In this context, it should be noted that Turkey withdrew from the Istanbul Convention in 2021, and the existing protective structures often fail to ensure effective protection. Several clients who had been deported said that they experienced further violence after their return. There was also an increase in queries made by women from Afghanistan, who were either still in their country of origin or in transit countries, and required information on humanitarian visas. An increased need for support was also evident among women with residence status as per art. 50 FNIA after a stay at a women's shelter, particularly regarding administrative matters.

During the counselling sessions, it also became clear how profoundly the framework conditions of migration policy and asylum policy impact the affected persons' realities of life. Tighter controls at European borders, more dangerous escape routes and more restrictive implementation of the Dublin System are exacerbating vulnerability and increasing mental strain. This was particularly evident among mothers fleeing alone with their children: It is often the case that children are affected by violence themselves or witness acts of violence. These developments significantly increased the complexity of the counselling. The limited access that many clients have to state-provided

victim support remains a key structural challenge. In particular, women going through the asylum procedure who experienced gender-based violence in their country of origin or while fleeing are not covered by the Victim Support Act. Due to this gap, there is a shortage of specialised, funded support programmes. The role that Brava plays in this area is important, but not backed up by the system.

Switzerland's federal structure further complicates matters: Differing cantonal regulations and responsibilities in the areas of victim support, social services, migration and protection against violence make access to support complex, and coordination much more difficult. The framework conditions surrounding migration law, such as uncertain residence status, lengthy procedures and reduced freedom of movement, also exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and hinder sustainable stabilisation.

“Hello, thank you very much,
I feel better and safe now.
My heart is peaceful.”



“I was not aware that you are
such a big strength in my life...
what would I do without you...”

Feedback from clients





“It was difficult at first, because the role was new to me. The provided support made me realise that I can take responsibility and bring in my own ideas.”

Feedback from a coordinator

“In this project, I learnt that I’m not alone and that, together, we can make a difference.”

Feedback from a participant

Voices project

For the 'Voices of Refugee Women' project, 2025 was a year of growth, active participation and political visibility. One key step was the introduction of a coordinator-based approach: For the first time, four participants took on coordinating roles and played an active part in the planning, organisation, implementation and evaluation of the project's activities.

Over 40 refugee women took part in the project. A core group of around 15 to 20 women participated regularly in the activities. The diversity of backgrounds, experiences and languages constitutes a key strength, and has a significant influence on the project's content and perspectives. The coordinators, in particular, developed skills in facilitation, organisation and political practice, and became important peer educators within the group.

At the same time, the project became more closely integrated into political processes. Among other things, the participants contributed to a statement on the partial revision of the Foreign Nationals and Integration Act, as well as to the civil society parallel report on the Istanbul Convention.

Meanwhile, the political climate surrounding asylum, migration and equality became more tense in 2025. Such developments made it harder to directly exert political influence and slowed down processes. The project responded with a strategic adjustment: Political concerns were incorporated more, by means of specialist events, media relations work and civil society platforms. This was accompanied by purposeful investment in internal strengthening of the group, so as to ensure long-term capacity for action and self-organisation.

In terms of content, the focus was on topics such as political participation and self-organisation among refugee women, protection against gender-based violence, living conditions at asylum centres, and structural discrimination, as well as access to rights and to social participation.

Political work

In 2025, Brava's political work required considerable coordination, networking and perseverance. At the same time, key political processes were driven forwards and significant successes were achieved. One main area of focus was the drafting of the parallel report on implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Here, Brava led overall coordination within the Istanbul Convention Network and was responsible for developing much of the report's content. The report was published in October 2025 and accompanied by a press conference, as well as widespread media coverage.

The year's events also made the urgent need for political action clear: The first eight weeks saw eight suspected femicide in Switzerland. Together with Campax and SP Women Switzerland, Brava launched a petition calling for 350 million Swiss francs to be allocated to protection against violence. The petition led to an exchange with Federal Councillor Elisabeth Baume-Schneider, and helped to ensure that urgent measures were discussed and developed further at government level.

Significant progress was also made at legislative level. Establishing stalking as a separate criminal offence addressed a long-standing concern. In our opinion though, this does not go far enough, particularly in the context of domestic violence, as stalking is still regulated as an offence persecuted on complaint only. Nevertheless, this enshrinement in law is a significant step taken to protect those affected. Progress was also made regarding concerns about persons affected by crimes committed abroad: After several rounds of debate, both chambers of parliament finally agreed on the need for action. This constitutes an important preliminary step, laying the foundation for the drafting of a bill. The national prevention campaign that Brava has been advocating for years was also launched in November 2025.

Another key moment was the budget debate towards the end of the year. A broad civil society coalition, in which we were actively involved, made an historic appeal to parliament, backed by 494,021 signatures. The funding increase marks an important success for civil society. Parliament's attempt to cut funding



demonstrates that our efforts to secure more resources for combating gender-based violence are still as important as ever.

Despite the multitude of processes running in parallel and a challenging political environment, key tasks were successfully carried out, thanks to close cooperation within the team. The arrival of Alexandra Gnägi gave our political work a boost, both in terms of personnel and regarding its coordination with the 'Voices of Refugee Women' project.



Above: Brandy Butler concert at the Human Rights Film Festival Zurich
 Below: FINTA table football tournament in connection with the 'Kick Out Sexism' campaign

Campaigns

Human Rights Film Festival Zurich

In connection with the Human Rights Film Festival Zurich, Brava co-presented a performance by Celina Bostic, which was intended to empower, to spark conversations about taboo topics and to encourage people to be true to themselves. Following a last-minute cancellation due to illness though, Brandy Butler, a versatile musician and activist who impressively combines art, community and social engagement, stepped in for the evening at short notice and thrilled an audience of around 50 guests with a powerful performance.

‘Kick Out Sexism’ awareness-raising campaign for the football championship Euro 2025 in Switzerland
The European Championship provided an opportunity to celebrate women’s sport as a festival, while also drawing attention to structural inequalities that women in sport still face today. Our ‘Kick Out Sexism’ campaign combined education, participation and personal encounters.

On social media, a ‘Red card for...’ section helped build anticipation for the tournament from the very start of the year. An interactive quiz addressed historical milestones and ongoing discrimination in football. Over 1500 people accessed the quiz and around 300 took part. With a panel discussion in Zurich and a FINTA table football tournament in Bern, Brava created public spaces where sport, exchanges and equality came together. In total, just under 300 people participated in the events, which featured live broadcasts of the Swiss team’s matches. Over 20 companies supported the campaign with promotions and by providing prizes for competitions.

During the European Championship, the Brava website received around 140 visitors per day on average, roughly double the usual number. Through social media, a total of around 170 000 views were achieved during the campaign period, approximately half of which were generated by people outside the existing follower base. The campaign was complemented by creative initiatives and merchandise.

Public relations work

In 2025, Brava had a significantly stronger public presence than in the previous year and was able to further extend its reach across various channels. During the reporting year, there was a particular focus on expanding the social media channels, especially LinkedIn, so as to reach institutions, professionals and decision-makers. Brava gained 442 new followers on LinkedIn. At the same time, the community on Instagram also continued to grow: Around 439 new followers were reached via posts alone.

The newsletter was also significantly expanded in 2025. Five issues of the newsletter had been sent out in the previous year, whereas the total was nine during the reporting year. This enabled over 7000 people to be reached and regularly informed about political developments, campaigns and projects.

Individual campaigns and political mobilisations achieved particularly high reach figures. During the ‘Kick Out Sexism’ campaign in connection with the European Football Championship, around 170 000 views were generated on social media. In December, three posts on additional funding for protection against violence in the Council of States reached over 230 000 people – and on average, around 75 percent of those reached were outside the existing follower base.

Brava’s media presence also increased significantly. In 2025, Brava was mentioned or made visible in 72 media reports. These included mentions of the organisation by name and interviews with Brava experts, as well as a presence at demonstrations, at events and in the context of the Istanbul Convention Network. One key milestone was the first press conference organised by Brava to mark the publication of the civil society parallel report on the Istanbul Convention.

Brava was also able to boost its visibility by means of events, panel discussions and public appearances. Contributions in connection with the voices project, expert input, campaign events, and cultural collaborations allowed new target groups to experience Brava’s work and raised the organisation’s public profile.



Julia Meier and Alexandra Gnägi speak at the media conference held for Brava and the Istanbul Convention Network

Balance sheet (in CHF)

ASSETS	2025	2024
Petty cash	196.25	49.50
Postal cheque	175 536.56	39 107.68
Banks	1 037 993.85	1 239 203.80
Liquid assets	1 213 726.66	1 278 360.98

Accounts receivable	7 771.00	0.00
Short-term loan	1 316.44	3 239.40
Accounts receivable	9 087.44	3 239.40

Inventory	0.00	664.95
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Prepaid expenses and deferred charges	99 479.49	59 341.35
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Current assets	1 322 293.59	1 341 606.68
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Fixtures and fittings	3 274.55	0.00
IT, office equipment	2 921.60	4 234.65
Fixed assets	6 196.15	4 234.65

Total assets	1 328 489.74	1 345 841.33
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LIABILITIES	2025	2024
Trade payables	109 894.78	135 998.76
Bank liabilities	0.00	8.90
Accrued expenses and deferred charges	88 412.96	113 328.13
Short-term borrowed capital	198 307.74	249 335.79

Short-term borrowed capital	198 307.74	249 335.79
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Organisation capital	1 130 182.00	1 096 505.54
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Total liabilities	1 328 489.74	1 345 841.33
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The full annual statement can be found on our website.

Profit and loss account (in CHF)

	2025	2024
Membership contributions	14 788.00	3 050.00
Donations without a specific purpose	444 097.41	456 535.33
Donations for a specific purpose	176 800.00	102 706.00
Income from patrons	963 425.00	931 957.00
Other income	54 833.65	5 266.00
Total income	1 653 944.06	1 499 514.33
Labour expenditure	732 751.81	584 007.81
Travel and hospitality	4 374.67	5 582.90
Expenditure	213 271.70	168 530.04
Material expenditure	1 587.18	1 668.15
Direct project costs	951 985.36	759 388.90
Patron acquisition costs	304 200.33	334 454.85
Donation acquisition costs	80 087.77	138 966.84
Institutions acquisition costs	37 326.56	20 070.10
Fundraising	421 614.66	493 491.79
Labour expenditure	170 107.79	162 414.79
Travel expenses/further education	14 057.22	14 950.55
Material expenditure	22 668.63	38 667.73
Maintenance costs	39 325.89	32 943.73
Material expenditure	1 587.17	1 668.15
Total Administrative Expenses	247 746.70	250 644.95
Operating result	32 597.34	-4 411.31
Financial profit/bank charges	-1 867.68	1 314.80
Total financial result	-1 867.68	1 314.80
Result before adjustment of fund capital	30 729.66	-3 096.51
Allocated funds (organisation capital)	1 473.40	400.00
Withdrawn funds (organisation capital)	0.00	0.00
Total Fund Adjustment (Organisation capital)	1 473.40	400.00
Annual result	32 203.06	-2 696.51

About us

For Brava, 2025 was characterised by further development and personnel changes. New dedicated staff members strengthened the organisation in various areas, bringing additional skills and perspectives with them. Over the course of the year, we were pleased to welcome Alexandra Gnägi, Jasmin Tana, Karina Nasaeva and Lukas Reinhardt (as maternity cover) to the team. At the same time, we said goodbye to Lara Horisberger, whom we sincerely thank for her commitment and valuable contributions to Brava.

Last year, we had the privilege of welcoming numerous new members. During a campaign in November and December, 58 new members joined our association. We are delighted about that.

There was also significant emphasis on the organisation's strategic further development. The team collectively drew up a new strategy for the period from 2025 to 2029, designed to prepare Brava for the future, both organisationally and in terms of content.

“It takes perseverance, courage and the unwavering determination of everyone at Brava to continue raising awareness, offering support, opening up perspectives, bringing cultures together and refusing to give up. For this, I thank you.”



Major donor to Brava

Acknowledgements

Behind every counselling session, every project, every campaign and every political step forwards, there are people who stand in solidarity with Brava. In 2025, thanks to support from our financial backers, we were able to continue our daily work to combat gender-based violence, discrimination and structural inequality. This solidarity is the basis that enables us to support affected persons, drive political change and help shape social debate.

In 2025, we also secured support for our projects from new foundations and institutional partners. Their trust enables us to continue our existing programmes and to plan new initiatives. Special thanks go to all private donors. Brava is largely funded by private donations. They constitute the main pillar of our funding and make up 81 percent of it, thus allowing us to remain independent, flexible and effective.

To all of you members, funding partners and donors, we offer our heartfelt thanks for your trust and ongoing support. Together with you, we are laying the foundations for a fairer society and for a life free from gender-based violence.

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Evangelical Reformed Parish of Bern

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GABU Foundation

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Karl Popper Foundation

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Become a patron now

By becoming a patron now, you send a clear message against gender-based violence, and help us to conduct tangible, comprehensive and lasting projects that benefit those affected by violence. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts!



www.brava-ngo.ch/en/support-us/donate

Any questions? Contact us:

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