

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Funded<br>by the European Union<br>and the Council of Europe | <br>EUROPEAN UNION | COUNCIL OF EUROPE<br><br>CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE | Implemented<br>by the Council of Europe |
|--|---|---|---|

## EU / CoE Eastern Partnership Programmatic Co-operation Framework 2015 – 2020



**Regional project:** *Improving women's access to justice in 5 Eastern Partnership countries*

**Countries included:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine

**Implemented by:** Gender Equality Unit/ Equality Division/ Equality and Human Dignity Department/ Directorate of Human Dignity and Equality/ Directorate General of Democracy (DG II)

**Duration:** 1 February 2015 – 31 December 2016

**Funding:** 560, 000 Euro

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Funded<br>by the European Union<br>and the Council of Europe | <br>EUROPEAN UNION | COUNCIL OF EUROPE<br><br>CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE | Implemented<br>by the Council of Europe |
|--|---|---|---|

## Programmatic Co-operation Framework (PCF) Women's access to justice

**Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality 2014-2017** provides the strategic framework for the implementation of this project.

**Five objectives:**

1. Combating gender stereotypes and sexism
2. Preventing and combating violence against women
3. **Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice**
4. Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making
5. Achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

Funded  
by the European Union  
and the Council of Europe



Implemented  
by the Council of Europe

## Programmatic Co-operation Framework (PCF) Key strategic objectives

### *Improving women's access to justice in 5 Eastern Partnership countries*

1. To identify and support the removal of obstacles to women's access to justice;
2. To strengthen the capacity of Eastern Partnership countries to design measures to ensure that the justice chain is gender-responsive, including through the training of legal professionals.

Funded  
by the European Union  
and the Council of Europe



Implemented  
by the Council of Europe

## Women's access to justice

Five studies mapping the obstacles to **women's access to justice** in each of the 5 EaP countries. Some of the main findings - OBSTACLES:

- Still **de jure** discrimination of women. Ex.: protective labour legislation restricts women's access to professions; women not allowed to be involved in night work
- **Anti-discrimination legislative frameworks** need to be strengthened, but good examples in the region (ex., Georgia – notion of multiple discrimination)
- **Limited use of international standards in judicial decisions** (e.g., only 18 judicial acts in Ukraine contain references to the CEDAW, mostly by plaintiffs)
- **Limited use of anti-discrimination legislation on the ground of sex**, even when it exists (good examples, however, Equality Council of Moldova and Public Defender's Office of Georgia)
- **Indirect discrimination** of women
- **Employment area:** Access of fathers to parental leave; Determination of alimony and payment of alimony; Unlawful dismissal of pregnant women
- Significant **underrepresentation of women in the judiciary** in Armenia and Azerbaijan
- **Violence against women:** not all forms are criminalised; Severe under-reporting of crimes of violence against women; Very few convictions of rape; Scarce or no state funding for support services in some countries
- **Gender stereotypes and bias** in the justice system (ex.: the investigation of sexual violence). Compounded by other stereotypes (linked to age, ethnicity, social status, for ex.)

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Funded<br>by the European Union<br>and the Council of Europe | <br>EUROPEAN UNION | COUNCIL OF EUROPE<br><br>CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE | Implemented<br>by the Council of Europe |
|--|---|---|---|

## Women's access to justice

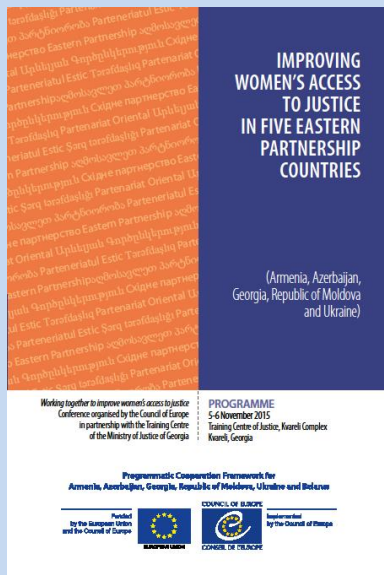
Five studies mapping the obstacles to **women's access to justice** in each of the 5 EaP countries. GOOD PRACTICES

- **Armenia:** An **action plan to promote gender equality and gender balance in the judiciary** was adopted this summer by the judicial self-governance body (the Armenian Council of Court Chairpersons). Measures include development of training materials and thematic training programs;
- **Georgia and Republic of Moldova: Equality bodies**
  - Since 2013, the Public Defender's Office of **Georgia**, the independent equality body of the country, has a specific Gender Equality Department. Mandate: monitors the implementation of gender related legislation and policies; studies complaints and individual cases of violations of human rights based on sex and gender; conducts public awareness activities and trainings for relevant state institutions; collects information from all relevant state institutions and conducts qualitative studies to evaluate the effectiveness of various protection mechanisms from VAW; prepares yearly special reports on VAW and DV.
  - In **Moldova**, the Equality Council was set up under the anti-discrimination law (2013). It is an independent body composed of 5 members that examine individual complaints, including in cases of sex-based discrimination, analyze draft laws from the perspective of compliance with anti-discrimination legislation and conduct awareness raising activities on discrimination issues.
- **Ukraine:**
  - Currently developing an Action Plan on Human Rights with provisions on gender equality closely matching those of the CoE GE strategy.
  - A coalition of women's organisations (the Women's Consortium of Ukraine) established this year an online Virtual Legal Aid Service for women. So far, consultations have been given in more than 100 cases.

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Funded<br>by the European Union<br>and the Council of Europe | <br>EUROPEAN UNION | COUNCIL OF EUROPE<br><br>CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE | Implemented<br>by the Council of Europe |
|--|---|---|---|

## Programmatic Co-operation Framework (PCF) Activities completed in 2015

- National studies drafted by the experts; main findings presented at the regional conference in Kvareli, 5-6 November; currently, the studies are being presented to national authorities in the respective countries
- One regional conference and training seminar organised as a single event on 5-6 November in Kvareli, Georgia
- National institutional partners for the organisation of follow-up trainings in the countries identified (Justice Academy of Armenia; High School of Justice of Georgia and General Prosecutor's Office of Georgia; National Institute of Justice of Moldova; National School of Judges of Ukraine)



## Improving women's access to justice

**Conference in  
Kvareli, Georgia  
5-6 November**

Funded  
by the European Union  
and the Council of Europe



COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



Implemented  
by the Council of Europe

## Follow up to the conference - Outlook for 2016

Regional level materials and events:

- Compilation of good practices and resources in training on women's rights and gender equality for legal professionals, with a focus on judges and prosecutors
- Short movie on gender stereotyping (probably translation of a clip produced by the Women's Section of the Supreme Court of Argentina)
- Compilation of progressive jurisprudence (decisions) from the countries of the project (and more ?)
- Support for gender equality advocates from civil society (possibly support a compilation of examples and lessons learned from the Women's Human Rights Training Institute over its 10 years of activity)

**Regional closing conference in Chisinau, October 2016**

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Funded<br>by the European Union<br>and the Council of Europe | <br>EUROPEAN UNION | COUNCIL OF EUROPE<br><br>CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE | Implemented<br>by the Council of Europe |
|--|---|---|---|

## Outlook for 2016

Country level:

- National roundtables to present the results of the national reports to the authorities
- Publication of the national reports
- Specific letters of co-operation agreed with the national partners (Justice Academy of Armenia; High School of Justice of Georgia and General Prosecutor's Office of Georgia; National Institute of Justice of Moldova; National School of Judges of Ukraine)
  - Selection of national experts to develop the training materials (for judges and prosecutors)
  - Training sessions
  - Invite international experts
  - Regional workshops to exchange experiences in the development of these materials

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Funded<br>by the European Union<br>and the Council of Europe | <br>EUROPEAN UNION | COUNCIL OF EUROPE<br><br>CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE | Implemented<br>by the Council of Europe |
|--|---|---|---|

## Additional information

E-mail: [raluca.popa@coe.int](mailto:raluca.popa@coe.int)