



## **Guidelines**

**for CSOs submitting projects to the Call**

**“Civil society communication and advocacy campaigns on the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention by piloting the joint methodology developed by Council of Europe, WAVE Network and UN Women in one country: Czech Republic, Latvia or Poland”**

## **PURPOSE OF THE METHODOLOGY**

In 2020, the Council of Europe, Women Against Violence Europe Network's (WAVE) and UN Women have jointly developed a methodology for running communications and advocacy campaigns to promote the values, aims and main provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence to be implemented by local civil society organisations (CSOs). The main purpose of these communication and advocacy campaigns is to promote the values, aims and benefits of the Istanbul Convention by generating positive narratives and dispelling myths and misinformation regarding the convention. The promotion of the Istanbul Convention in simple and plain language is expected to increase targeted groups' awareness on women's rights and eventually on how violence against women can be prevented and tackled.

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

The call for proposals *“Civil society communication and advocacy campaigns on the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention by piloting the joint methodology developed by Council of Europe, WAVE Network and UN Women in one country: Czech Republic, Latvia or Poland”*, aims to pilot the joint methodology by supporting projects from CSOs working in these pilot countries in 2021.

CSOs wishing to submit a proposal should present an outline of a communication and advocacy campaign that respond to the purpose of the methodology within the allocated budget for the call (see section III of the call for proposals) and that respond to the guidelines below. Participating CSOs need to address the elements of the guidelines below in sufficient detail including main topics/issues to focus the campaign in view of the national context, description of events including timeline, channels of communication and mapping of national target groups and other stakeholders including how to reach out to the general public.

Once selected, the Grantees will be provided with a full “knowledge pack” including messages, tools and guidance in piloting the joint methodology. The support will also include kick off and wrap-up events with all selected NGOs, training on communication/social media, guidance and expertise sharing from WAVE Network<sup>1</sup> and national meetings with relevant stakeholders.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS:**

### **DEFINING THE PROBLEMS TO BE ADDRESSED**

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<sup>1</sup> The WAVE Network (Women against Violence Europe) is the only European network focusing solely on the elimination of violence against women and domestic violence, comprising more than 150 women's CSOs working in the field of combating violence against women. More information can be found here: <https://www.wave-network.org/>

In light of the proliferation of myths and misconceptions about the Istanbul Convention and even threats of withdrawal, there is an increasing need to raise awareness and understanding amongst key decision makers and the general public on its actual content.

Among the myths and misconceptions about the Istanbul Convention, preliminarily identified issues include the term 'gender'; the argument of 'self-sufficient' legislation excluding the need to ratify the convention; the belief the convention imposes LGBTQ+ values; the belief that by ratifying the convention would lead to an influx of migrants or asylum seekers entering the country.

These issues are not exhaustive and CSOs are encouraged to address also other issues they might find relevant in their countries concerning the ratification/implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

## **TARGET GROUPS AND ALLIES**

The identified key target groups of the methodology for communications and advocacy campaigns are **decision-makers**, including key **political figures** and the **general public**, including victims and potential victims of violence against women.

The above list is not exhaustive and projects may propose to target other relevant stakeholders, while keeping in mind the general objective of the call.

Each CSO running the campaign will be responsible for identifying the respective decision-makers to be approached, as well as resources to use and allies to involve in order to leverage their support.

### Target groups

**Decision-makers** are all figures who have the power to influence decisions regarding the ratification/better implementation of the Istanbul Convention and can be mobilised to support it.

The **general public** refers to a country's overall population with no or limited knowledge about the scope and application of the Istanbul Convention.

CSOs can also decide to reach out to legal professionals, social workers and police officers as specific groups working with women victims of violence.

### Potential allies:

When developing the proposals and considering which groups to target, it is important to **consider potential allies** that can help promote the Istanbul Convention to groups of individuals

which would otherwise be difficult to reach, by either political decision-makers or women's rights CSOs. Suggested potential allies include:

- **Women's rights CSOs supporting the same cause, working directly in the field of violence against women.**
- **Legal professionals or other professionals, such as the police, social workers, health workers, etc.** working in the field of violence against women and domestic violence, already trained and applying the provisions of the Istanbul Convention.
- **Unexpected allies including:**
  - **Religious leaders**
  - **Male and female role models/celebrities** dedicated to raising awareness on violence against women and domestic violence.
  - **Awareness ambassadors** such as young people in local communities.
  - **Local artists** who can help designing infographics and can offer a creative perspective on promoting the main messages of campaigns.

CSOs running the communications and advocacy campaigns are best placed to identify the most appropriate decision makers and unexpected allies in promoting and disseminating positive information about the Istanbul Convention.

## **MEANS OF COMMUNICATION**

The following means of communication are suggested as alternatives for CSOs running the campaigns to target the mentioned groups. CSOs should identify which method is more appropriate and can be successful to achieve the aims of the campaign.

### Targeting decision makers:

- **(Online) focus groups** created by women's rights CSOs running the campaigns in order to define and increase people's understanding of the Istanbul Convention and help identify ways in which it could be positively promoted.
- **(Online) meetings/roundtable discussions** bringing together decisions-makers to directly address and debate the concerns identified during the focus groups. These meetings/roundtable discussions can be integrated in already existing national/local key meetings with the community.
- **Events/trainings to promote the "knowledge pack"**. These should be targeted towards decision-makers, but if so decided by CSOs, also towards professionals who interact with women experiencing violence.

### Targeting the general public:

- Explaining in simple terms what the Istanbul Conventions is, its impact on one's life, and how it can prevent and protect women and their children from violence by depicting a

positive narrative; explaining in plain language what its articles entail; and by breaking them down into specific and clearly relatable information.

- Appealing to people’s emotions, as an effective tactic to get a message across.
- Showing statistics and data on violence against women and domestic to raise awareness and capture the public’s interest.

## PROPOSED TOOLS/RESOURCES

A “**knowledge-pack**” will be provided to Grantees. CSOs will decide what tools to use in their awareness raising campaign, translate and adapt to their national context if needed (funds for translations should be included for around 20% of the total submitted budget). The list of the tools includes:

- A **Question-and-Answer brochure** on the Istanbul Convention<sup>2</sup> produced by the Council of Europe.
- A **brochure**<sup>3</sup> on the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention developed by the Council of Europe.
- A **report** of the Civil Society Strengthening Platform’s social media campaign produced by WAVE.
- Samples of **open letters**.
- A **factsheet** debunking common myths regarding the Istanbul Convention.
- A **brochure** highlighting the importance of the Istanbul Convention.
- A **poster** showcasing the importance of a victim-centred and gender-sensitive response to violence against women and domestic violence.
- An **infographic** showcasing a women’s journey to access support services.
- Sources of **statistics** on violence against women and domestic violence.

## CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

The channels of communication to be leveraged for the communications and advocacy campaigns differ depending on whether the focus is on targeting key decision-makers or the general public, as different means of communication are better adapted to specific audiences. .

- **Political forums/groups** to raise awareness on the Istanbul Convention amongst key political decision-makers.
- **Social media** has become one of the main channels of communication for CSOs.
- **Podcasts** can be leveraged to raise awareness about the Istanbul Convention in a more in-depth way, which offers more flexibility than traditional mainstream media sources.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/istanbul-convention-questions-and-answers/16808f0b80>

<sup>3</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/coe-istanbulconvention-brochure-en-r03-v01/1680a06d4f>

- **Mainstream media** including print media such as newspapers and TV channels, and independent media channels. It can also be an effective channel of communication to target individuals who do not have a smartphone or access to internet.
- **Public advertising** allows for quick and effective dissemination of key messages to a large section of the general public. This includes posters in bus shelters, large billboards, brochures and leaflets in public places as well as installations in open spaces.

CSOs should include in their proposals the channels of communication that would be most relevant in their country to run the communications and advocacy campaign.