



The Converging Impact of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Istanbul Convention: A Scientific Dialogue Between the European Court of Human Rights and GREVIO

Event organised by the Court and GREVIO on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights

Agora Building, Room G3, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

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Concept note

Although violence against women has been a pervasive reality throughout history, it is only in recent decades that the international community has begun to systematically recognise and address it. Such violence—inflicted precisely because they are women—is framed as 'gender-based violence' and is widely recognised as a violation of human rights if unaddressed.

The European Court of Human Rights, through its authoritative interpretation of the European Convention on Human Rights, has developed a substantial and evolving body of case law addressing state obligations to prevent, investigate, and sanction acts of gender-based violence, as well as to protect those at risk. The Court's jurisprudence increasingly reflects the complex realities faced by women, taking into account their lived experiences and the multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination and violence they endure. In doing so, the Court has played a pivotal role in shaping binding legal standards of protection and accountability for gender-based violence across Europe. Moreover, on the basis of the Convention, the Committee of Ministers' supervisory activities have evolved significantly, resulting in the adoption of various individual measures in favour of applicants, as well as general measures—legislative or otherwise—to ensure that states comply with their obligations arising from the Court's jurisprudence.

GREVIO, the independent monitoring body of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (known as the Istanbul Convention), provides vital guidance to the Contracting Parties through its expert monitoring and recommendations. This guidance helps states fulfil their obligations under the Convention, which is

built on four interdependent pillars: prevention, protection, prosecution, and coordinated policies. GREVIO's work supports the effective implementation of these pillars by identifying gaps, highlighting promising practices, and encouraging consistent and effective action by Parties. In doing so, it contributes not only to legal and institutional reform but also to the broader cultural shift needed to eliminate all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. The other part of the monitoring mechanism of the Istanbul Convention, the Committee of the Parties, is driving legislative and policy reforms across Europe, firmly establishing the principle that Parties have a positive obligation to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women, for all women and girls in their full diversity.

These two frameworks—the Istanbul Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights—are not only complementary but also mutually reinforcing. Their cross-fertilisation, through the interpretative work of the independent bodies, the Court and GREVIO, strengthens both legal coherence and implementation of human rights standards. Several provisions of the Istanbul Convention draw inspiration from the Court's case law, while GREVIO frequently references the Court's jurisprudence in its monitoring reports. Conversely, the Court has significantly advanced its case law on gender-based violence—particularly in areas such as domestic violence and rape—regularly citing the Istanbul Convention and GREVIO's findings and reports. Through their authoritative interpretations, the Court and GREVIO have emerged as key drivers in advancing the protection of women's rights across Europe. This progress is further reinforced by the work of the Committee of Ministers and the Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention.

This half-day event offers a timely opportunity to explore the growing synergy between the European Court of Human Rights and GREVIO, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights. By bringing together judges from the European Court of Human Rights, members of GREVIO, as well as Council of Europe member states, academics, practitioners, and civil society actors, the event will serve as a platform for interdisciplinary dialogue and practical collaboration. It aims to encourage reflection on recent developments, promote the exchange of promising practices, and support more coherent and impactful implementation of European human rights standards in addressing gender-based violence.

Ultimately, this conference aims not only to celebrate legal achievements but also to strengthen institutional co-operation in the pursuit of a Europe where all women can live free from violence, fear, and inequality.