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Conseil de l'Europe
Council of Europe

CONCEPT NOTE

Conference of high-ranking representatives of Ministers of Internal Affairs on dealing with Domestic violence

Co-organised within the framework of the French Presidency
of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

“The police, a key player in the fight against domestic violence”

Council of Europe, Agora building - Room G1, Strasbourg

24 – 25 September 2019

The Council of Europe is organising a Conference of high-level representatives of Ministers of the Interior to discuss issues related to the role of police services in the fight against domestic violence.

The police forces play a most important role – and have the great responsibility that comes with it - in fighting violence against women and domestic violence. In most cases police are the first to respond to the distress of the victims, to provide them with protection and advice and to help them get in touch with the relevant specialised services.

This conference will allow exchange of good practices between member States which have experience in protecting women victims of domestic violence, in particular as regards mechanisms to detect, prevent and fight this widespread phenomenon.

We propose to examine these issues against the backdrop of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (“the Istanbul Convention”, CETS No.210). In order to identify areas where operational improvements can bring effectiveness and efficiency in the broader co-operation between the police and the other actors involved in the fight against this type of violence.

The Council of Europe will present the legal tools that we have developed and made available to member States to strengthen their hand in fighting domestic violence, as well as the lessons learned from the findings of GREVIO, the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

The conference may identify fields of co-operation with the various actors in our societies to help prevent all forms of domestic violence, amongst them the private sector in charge of social

networks, the Internet service providers and platforms and the civil society organisations which can raise the awareness and spread the message against this violence.

Fostering such co-operation is important for maintaining and improving the trust between the police and the public.

A training module for judges and prosecutors developed jointly by the European Union and the Council of Europe will also be presented. The HELP Course on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence provides the legal professionals with practical tools for dealing with cases of violence against women and domestic violence in line with a human rights and victim-centred approach.

This Conference aims to reinforce knowledge, to stimulate co-operation between member States in order to enable us to fight even more effectively against this phenomenon and to highlight the importance of a human rights education as a fundamental component of any measure taken to combat domestic violence in a sustainable and proactive way.