



Establishment of working relations with other international organisations

105. Co-operation and partnerships are indispensable prerequisites for successful international action against violence against women and domestic violence. GREVIO is mindful of the need to exchange information and good practices among international organisations concerning their activities, work plans and priorities in the field of combating violence against women and protecting victims. At the same time, GREVIO is ready to explore areas where joint activities can be carried out and which can benefit from the input, institutional support and resources of several organisations.

106. GREVIO rapidly established working relations with international organisations active in the area of combating violence against women and domestic violence. In preparation of its first baseline evaluation reports, GREVIO regularly exchanges with representatives of various international organisations (such as UNHCR, the International Organisation for Migration, UNICEF, UN WOMEN, UNDP and UNFPA) and meets with them during evaluation visits. As appropriate, GREVIO reports take into account and refer to the conclusions reached by UN treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

107. The most important developments in this area are listed below.

United Nations

108. Co-operation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe in the field of violence against women and domestic violence has regularly been one of the topics highlighted in the Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on co-operation between the two organisations, from as early as the drafting of the convention in 2010.¹⁰² GREVIO has engaged in activities with UN Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee), the United Nations Commissions on the Status of Women, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences and is part of what is now the Platform of United Nations and regional independent expert mechanisms on the Elimination of Discrimination and Violence against Women (Platform on EDVAW).

109. The Council of Europe and UN WOMEN developed a regular and tangible co-operation partnership, also through the involvement of GREVIO in various initiatives. This includes, for instance, participation of the President of GREVIO at the time in the global conference in Istanbul on 9-10 December 2015 entitled “Ending violence against women: Building on Progress to Accelerate Change”, co-organised by UN WOMEN, and in the UN WOMEN Expert Group Meeting on Violence against Women in Politics (New York, 8-9 March 2018), which resulted in the publication of a report containing recommendations on this subject. The President of GREVIO also intervened at the regional forum “Promoting Implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the Western Balkans and Turkey – Integrated policies, inclusive partnerships” (Skopje, 27-28 November 2018), which is part of the UN WOMEN Programme “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds – Ending violence against women in the Western Balkan countries and Turkey”.

110. GREVIO actively contributed, by submitting written comments, to the process that led to the adoption by the CEDAW Committee of Recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women (updating General Recommendation No.19).¹⁰³ The General Recommendation was inspired by the Istanbul Convention, as it elaborates on the gender-based nature of this form of violence and strengthens the guidance provided to states in the areas of prevention, protection, prosecution and integrated policies, in line with the state-of-the art standards enshrined in the convention. The President of GREVIO also chaired the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women working group that adopted the recommendation, and the GREVIO Bureau took part in the high-level panel discussion on the launching of the General Recommendation during the 68th session of the CEDAW Committee, on 14 November 2017, at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

111. The GREVIO President and other members, as well as the GREVIO Secretariat, have regularly attended the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women in

102. See Resolution 65/130 adopted at the 65th session of the UN General Assembly: www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/130; the last resolution, 73/15, was adopted on 26 November 2018 at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly (www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/15).

103. https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/GC/35&Lang=en.

New York, taking part in various official and side events organised by the Council of Europe or by other partners.

112. Since its creation, GREVIO established strong contacts with the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and its consequences, Dubravka Šimonović, who was invited for an exchange of views with GREVIO at its second meeting, in November 2015, to discuss avenues for future synergies and co-operation. One of the main outcomes of such co-operation is the involvement of GREVIO in a network of international and regional mechanisms on violence against women, developed on the initiative of the Special Rapporteur, which includes also the United Nations Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, the CEDAW Committee, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa established by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention.

113. GREVIO has undersigned the following joint statements and calls initiated by the Special Rapporteur and other global and regional mechanisms on women's rights:

- ▶ Joint call to end femicide and gender-based violence, on 25 November 2016.¹⁰⁴
- ▶ Joint statement "End the global epidemic of femicide (#NiUnaMenos) and support women speaking up against violence against women (#MeToo)", on 25 November 2018.¹⁰⁵
- ▶ Joint statement at the closing of the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women, on 20 March 2019, joining the UN Secretary-General in the call for strengthened efforts to fight against pushbacks on women's rights in all regions of the world.¹⁰⁶
- ▶ Joint statement "Intimate partner violence against women is an essential factor in the determination of child custody", on 31 May 2019.¹⁰⁷
- ▶ Joint statement "Violence and harassment against women and girls in the world of work is a human rights violation", on 31 May 2019.¹⁰⁸

114. The informal network evolved into a platform¹⁰⁹ in March 2018, with a consultation among seven international and regional mechanisms on the occasion of the 62nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women on 12 March 2018, followed by a High-Level Panel on 13 March 2018, in which the President of GREVIO participated. Since then, the platform meets regularly on the fringes of main UN events and/or of events hosted by the members of the platform to discuss progress with the implementation of regional and international standards and co-ordinate action to overcome barriers and difficulties the mechanisms face in their work. The President

104. www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20911&LangID=E.

105. www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23921&LangID=E.

106. www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24380&LangID=E.

107. <https://rm.coe.int/final-statement-vaw-and-custody/168094d880>.

108. www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/SR/StatementILO_31May2019.pdf.

109. www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/SRWomen/Pages/CooperationGlobalRegionalMechanisms.aspx.

of GREVIO attended these fringe meetings at the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (New York, 12-23 March 2018), at the 169th session of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, (Boulder, Colorado, 2 October 2018) and at the 63rd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (New York, 11-22 March 2019). The Council of Europe hosted the last of such meetings, on 23 May 2019, as a side event to the conference “Women’s rights at the crossroads” on the improvement of international co-operation to end violence against women organised by the Council of Europe in co-operation with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against its causes and consequences, and with the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. The President of GREVIO took part in the opening and closing panels, and one of the sessions of the conference was dedicated to the presentation of the platform.

115. Finally, the President of GREVIO and the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, attended together a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Paris, on 1 March 2019.

Organization of American States

116. Since GREVIO’s inception in 2015, the desire to build bridges between the monitoring mechanism of the convention and the Follow-up Mechanism (MESECVI) to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (namely the Belém do Pará Convention) has emerged. Adopted in 1994, the Belém do Pará Convention represents a pioneering regional legal instrument on violence against women in the Americas, which paved the way for the Istanbul Convention.

117. To promote an exchange of experience between MESECVI and GREVIO, on 15 and 16 October 2015, the Executive Secretary of GREVIO at the time, Bridget O’Loughlin, took part in the sixth Conference of the States Parties to the Convention of Belém do Pará, in Lima in Peru.¹¹⁰

118. Between 2015 and 2018, in the framework of co-operation between the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, members of the Committee of Experts of the MESECVI, GREVIO and its Secretariat participated in three conferences on femicide organised by the Group of the Greens/ European Free Alliance in the European Parliament and the Heinrich Böll Foundation.¹¹¹ In Brussels and San Salvador, the experts from the two monitoring bodies, along with representatives from the European Union, the United Nations and civil society organisations, reflected on the situation of femicide in Europe and Latin America. They also discussed the state of implementation of legislation on femicide in the regions and other proposals to tackle this scourge.

110. See information on the sixth Conference of the States Parties to the Convention of Belém do Pará Convention, available at www.oas.org/en/mese cvi/conferenceofstatesparty.asp.

111. See information on the 9th, 10th and 11th Conferences on Femicide organised by the Group of the Greens/ European Free Alliance in the European Parliament and the Heinrich Böll Foundation, available at <https://eu.boell.org/en/tags/femicide>.

119. On 7 November 2017, the OAS organised a special meeting in Washington DC, which was entitled “Regional and International Mechanisms for a comprehensive approach to addressing Violence against Women and Girls”¹¹² with the participation of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Dubravka Šimonović, the Vice-President of the Committee of Experts of the MESECVI, Sylvia Mesa and the President of GREVIO, Feride Acar. This initiative was conducted prior to the formal establishment of the platform (see above) in March 2018.

World Bank

120. Within the framework of the Law, Justice and Development Week, collaboration has been established between the monitoring mechanism of the convention and the World Bank. The Law, Justice and Development Week is an annual event organised by the World Bank’s Legal Vice Presidency Unit, which gathers together a significant number of development practitioners in Washington DC.¹¹³ It aims to promote legal instruments as key tools for contributing to development.

121. On 6 November 2017, the President of GREVIO attended the Law, Justice and Development Week, which was devoted to “Gender, Law and Development”.¹¹⁴ She took part in the panel entitled “International and Regional Mechanisms on Violence against Women”, along with Sylvia Mesa, the President of the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará convention, and Dubravka Šimonović, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. The participants took the floor to recall the importance of connecting and co-ordinating international and regional instruments and mechanisms on violence against women, in order to foster effective efforts and generate positive outcomes.

122. A year later, during the Justice Development Week dedicated to “Rights, Protection and Development”, the incumbent Executive Secretary of GREVIO participated as speaker in a panel entitled “Human rights of migrant, refugee, asylum-seeking women and girls” on 5 November 2018.¹¹⁵ The event was organised by the Council of Europe in partnership with the Women’s Refugee Commission. The discussion emphasised the difficulties faced by women refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the legal standards established by the convention to protect them in the context of violence against women.

112. OAS, Regional and International Mechanisms for a comprehensive approach to addressing Violence against Women and Girls, 7 November 2017, available at www.oas.org/en/mese cvi/docs/MESECVI-VAWRRegionalMecs-EN.pdf.

113. See Law, Justice and Development Weeks, available at www.worldbank.org/en/about/legal/brief/law-justice-and-development-weeks.

114. World Bank: Law, Justice and Development Week 2017 – Gender, Law and Development, available at www.worldbank.org/en/events/2017/03/28/law-justice-and-development-week-2017.

115. World Bank: Law, Justice and Development Week 2018 – Rights, Protection and Development, available at www.worldbank.org/en/events/2018/05/25/law-justice-and-development-week-2018-rights-protection-and-development.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

123. In 2014, the OSCE's Ministerial Council demonstrated its support for the convention by adopting a decision on preventing and combating violence against women that explicitly calls on OSCE member states to sign and ratify it.¹¹⁶ Since then, co-operation between the OSCE and GREVIO has been ensured through fruitful exchanges of views in the framework of high-level political meetings organised by the OSCE Gender Section and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), such as the OSCE Gender Equality Review Conferences and the Human Dimension Implementation Meetings.

124. In Vienna, members of GREVIO's bureau participated as speakers at the Gender Conference "Combating violence against women in the OSCE region" on 22 July 2016 and the second OSCE Gender Equality Review Conference on 12-13 June 2017.¹¹⁷ These two events brought together key stakeholders from national governments, international organisations, OSCE field operations and civil society, who reflected on a multisectoral response to foster gender equality and combat violence against women, including in conflicts. These discussions focused on the need to create synergies between international high-level standards such as the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and the convention, in order to champion the building and implementation of effective national legal and policy frameworks to combat violence against women. It included supporting capacity-building programmes for the judiciary and law enforcement. The need to challenge gender stereotypes was also central to the debate, including through engagements with men and boys to promote positive gender roles and prevent violence against women.

125. Additionally, the Secretariat of GREVIO regularly submitted written contributions to the Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, which are organised annually to take stock of the implementation of the OSCE Human Dimension commitments. On 2 and 3 July 2018, Simona Lanzoni, Second Vice-President of GREVIO at the time, took part in the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting entitled "Countering violence against women – Everyone's Responsibility".¹¹⁸ This side event aimed to provide opportunity for dialogue between states, international organisations and civil society on existing good practices and challenges to combating violence against women, including measures to empower women.

126. Considering the need to collect systematic and comparable data at the European level, the OSCE published in 2019 a report relaying the results of a survey on violence against women, well-being and safety of women¹¹⁹ conducted in 2018 in in Albania,

116. OSCE Ministerial Council, Decision n°7/14 on Preventing and Combating violence against women, 5 December 2014, available at www.osce.org/mc/130721?download=true.

117. See OSCE, Gender Conference: Combating violence against women in the OSCE region, 22 July 2016, available at www.osce.org/secretariat/249011; second OSCE Gender Equality Review Conference, 12-13 June 2017, available at: www.osce.org/event/2nd-osce-gender-equality-review-conference.

118. See OSCE, Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM): Countering Violence against Women – Everyone's Responsibility, 2-3 July 2018, available at www.osce.org/shdm_2_2018.

119. See report OSCE-led Survey on the Well-being and Safety of Women, 6 March 2019, available at www.osce.org/secretariat/415760.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Moldova, Ukraine and Kosovo. The survey was based on the definitions of the different forms of violence against women, as they are formulated in the convention. To improve the monitoring of laws and practices to combat violence against women, the survey provides data on the prevalence of violence against women, gender norms and attitudes, as well as victims' reporting and help-seeking behaviour. GREVIO members participated as speakers in the launch of the report providing the findings of the survey on 8 March 2019¹²⁰ and in the high-level conference on 6 and 7 May 2019, which aimed to disseminate the main results of the survey and discuss room for improvement with relevant stakeholders.¹²¹

European Union

127. The Istanbul Convention is open for the signature and ratification of the EU. In October 2015, the European Commission issued a road map on EU ratification of the convention with the aim of creating a coherent legal framework at the EU level for preventing and combating violence against women and strengthening EU member states' ability to develop effective policies to this end. The EU signed the convention on 13 June 2017. During the reporting period and under several subsequent EU Presidencies, the Secretariat of GREVIO has maintained regular contact with the EU Council and has attended several meetings of the Council's working party on Fundamental Rights, Citizen's Rights and Free Movement of Persons (FREMP) to present the standards of the convention, illustrate the work of its monitoring bodies and discuss the ratification process. Throughout the reporting period, the European Parliament has repeatedly voiced its support for the convention and has issued a number of resolutions calling on the EU Commission and Council to ensure progress in the negotiations and urging EU member states that had not already done so to sign and ratify the convention. On 4 April 2019, the European Parliament adopted resolution 2019/2678(RSP) "seeking an opinion from the Court of Justice on the compatibility with the Treaties of the proposals for the accession by the European Union to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and on the procedure for that accession".

128. In the period under review, various exchanges occurred with the European Parliament. On 21 November 2017, the Second Vice-President of GREVIO at the time, Simona Lanzoni, attended a meeting of the Inter-parliamentary Committee organised by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality to discuss the state of ratification and implementation of the convention at EU and national levels and GREVIO monitoring. On 27 November 2018, the Executive Secretary of GREVIO at the time, Bridget T. O'Loughlin, attended a meeting of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality at the invitation of the European Parliament co-rapporteurs on the EU ratification, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt and Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy. The Council of Europe Deputy Secretary General, Gabriella

120. See presentation of the OSCE-led survey reveals violence against women in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, 8 March 2019, available at www.osce.org/secretariat/413894.

121. See conference on combating violence against women and girls 6-7 May 2019, available at www.osce.org/secretariat/415760.

Battaini-Dragoni, held a meeting in Strasbourg with Anna Maria Corazza Bildt on 13 March 2019 to discuss ways to ensure progress in the ratification process and to promote the convention.

129. Close ties were also developed with a number of EU agencies or affiliated bodies. At its fourth Meeting (18-20 January 2016), GREVIO held an exchange of views with the European Institute for Gender Equality, represented by its Director at the time, Virginija Langbakk, and Gender-Based Violence Officer Jurgita Pečiūrienė. The meeting offered the opportunity to highlight the synergies and complementarities that can be developed between the European Institute for Gender Equality and GREVIO. Data collected by the European Institute for Gender Equality on gender-based violence are regularly quoted in GREVIO's evaluation reports. At its eighth meeting (7-10 November 2016), GREVIO members held an exchange of views with the Head of Freedoms and Justice Department at the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Joanna Goodey. The exchange of views focused on the outcome data of the 2014 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights survey on violence against women and more generally on the role of gender-disaggregated data for the purposes of monitoring the implementation of human rights standards, in particular as regards gender-based violence. Representatives of Eurostat and DG Just attended GREVIO's 14th meeting (25-27 June 2018), and informed GREVIO members regarding the state of play of the gender-based violence survey under preparation by the European Statistical System, namely by Eurostat in partnership with the national authorities of EU member states, as well as the European Economic Area and European Free Trade Association countries.

130. During its exchange of views with Eurostat, GREVIO members stressed the importance of following a gender-sensitive approach and of basing the survey on the acknowledgement of the prevalence of gender-based violence that affects women disproportionately. They underlined furthermore the need for the survey to be based on the specific indicators that have been developed to measure violence against women, rather than on the generic indicators applied in general population surveys and in crime-based victimisation surveys.