Building trust by delivering support, protection and justice

Switzerland

First thematic evaluation report



GREVIO

Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)

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THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION SAVES LIVES

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Building trust by delivering support, protection and justice

SWITZERLAND

Group of Experts
on Action against Violence against Women
and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)

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Executive summary

This evaluation report addresses progress made in bringing support, protection and justice to victims of violence against women and domestic violence under selected provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. It offers an assessment made by the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), an independent human rights monitoring body mandated to monitor the implementation of the convention. GREVIO's findings identify developments that have taken place since publication of its baseline evaluation report on Switzerland on 15 November 2022 and are based on the information obtained at various stages of its first thematic evaluation procedure as set out in Article 68 of the convention. These stages include written reports (a state report submitted by the Swiss authorities and additional information submitted by a group of specialist associations, the Istanbul Convention Network) along with a five-day evaluation visit to Switzerland. A list of the bodies and entities which GREVIO had exchanges with can be found in Appendix II.

The report assesses the wide variety of measures taken by the Swiss authorities to prevent violence against women and domestic violence and to deliver protection, support and justice for victims, in line with the overarching theme selected by GREVIO for this first thematic evaluation report. In identifying emerging trends in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, GREVIO shines a light on laudable efforts made for the implementation of this convention. Moreover, it provides in-depth information on the implementation of selected provisions in the areas of prevention, protection and prosecution as building blocks for a comprehensive response to the different forms of violence against women that instils trust in victims.

In this respect, GREVIO welcomes the adoption and implementation of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention (NAP IC), which made action against sexual violence a priority and which is co-ordinated by the Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE). The FOGE also does major work to promote and monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. It also awards financial grants from the Confederation for projects to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence. A long-term national campaign (2025-2029) on action against domestic, sexual and gender-based violence has also been launched and minimum standards for the training of various professionals were developed from 2024 onwards with a view to improving and harmonising training of professionals on gender-related, sexual and domestic violence.

The report also points out that there has been an increase, since 2022, in the number of medical units providing specific care for victims of violence, including sexual violence, based on standardised protocols. A federal co-ordination group on forced marriages has been meeting regularly since 2024 to attempt to standardise the response to this form of violence and a centralised national helpline for victims of violence has been set up.

Legislative measures have been taken to punish some forms of violence against women more effectively, particularly sexual violence. With regard to the latter, the police response has been stepped up with the appointment, within the Conference of Cantonal Police Commanders, of a working group on sexual offences. Steps have also been taken to improve the prevention of gender-based killing of women (femicides) including the introduction, in 2025, of systematic feedback on each case of gender-based killing.

Lastly, measures have been taken in the Swiss Army to raise awareness among all new recruits about discrimination and sexual violence and establish rules of conduct in this respect.

Although GREVIO acknowledges the progress made by Switzerland in the implementation of the convention, it has also identified areas in which the authorities should take urgent measures to comply fully with its provisions. It points in particular to the fact that the cantons still do not have common definitions of gender-based violence against women and domestic violence, making it impossible for there to be a common understanding, shared by all the institutions and professionals concerned, across the country. With regard to financing, the report notes that cantons frequently

require measures relating to violence against women to be budget neutral and that such measures attract little funding, which is a cause for concern in a context of increasing demands for support and protection. It also highlights the lack of stable funding for shelters and of a harmonised, country-wide funding system.

There is still no legal obligation for judges to actively seek histories of domestic violence before ruling on custody and visiting rights. Nor is violence against women within couples yet regarded by the professionals concerned as a threat to children or a reason to suspend custody rights. De-escalation and family conciliation projects are implemented in various cantons to promote friendly settlement of family law-related conflicts. It would also seem that parents are strongly encouraged by the different stakeholders operating in the field of family law to show that they are co-operative, meaning that it can be difficult for women victims of violence to refuse conciliation or mediation. Given this, the report points out how important it is to have mechanisms to detect situations of domestic violence so that women are not forced to accept conciliation in such contexts.

Lastly, for want of any data on prosecution or conviction rates, it is still difficult to assess how effective the judicial response is to the various forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention.

GREVIO has identified several other areas in which sustained efforts are required to fully establish a climate of trust, providing protection and support while ensuring that justice is done where acts of violence against women have occurred. This implies the following steps:

- keeping up efforts to devise comprehensive, long-term strategies to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, covering the entire country, and ensuring that the co-ordinating body for policies to prevent and combat violence against women is afforded sufficient resources; making the work carried out at various levels of authority more consistent and ensuring that the policies in place include a gender perspective in relation to all forms of violence and include specific measures for the prevention of violence against women exposed to intersectional discrimination;
- ensuring that a sufficient number of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence with adequate resources are available throughout the country and that they take an approach centred on victim safety and support;
- ensuring that intracantonal co-ordinating bodies are set up throughout the country, that they bring together all relevant bodies and that they operate on the basis of clear guidance on information sharing between the professionals concerned;
- continuing and stepping up the work of harmonising the services provided by general support services and introducing standardised healthcare guidelines throughout the country, based on common protocols;
- ensuring that all women victims of violence, throughout the country, have access to forensic examination and the possibility of preserving evidence, even if they have not pressed charges; guaranteeing all victims of sexual violence medical and psychological care and support which takes into account the trauma they have undergone, provided by qualified professionals;
- removing obstacles preventing women and girls from reporting violence they have suffered to the police and ensuring that all law enforcement agencies are in a position to respond rapidly and appropriately to all forms of violence against women;
- continuing to implement measures for a standardised, gender-sensitive risk assessment procedure to be applied throughout the country and removing obstacles to co-operation between cantons when assessing risks and setting up safety-management measures;
- improving the effectiveness of investigations and prosecutions concerning all forms of violence against women, including those in the digital sphere, setting up a system for proper co-ordination between the cantons when applying protection orders and ensuring that measures to protect women victims of violence and their children from the risks of reprisals and secondary victimisation are properly implemented.

GREVIO also identified other spheres in which improvements are required in order to fully comply with the obligations of the convention under this round's theme. The report insists among other things on the need to step up campaigns for the primary prevention of all forms of violence against women, while ensuring that sufficient funding is available, and to step up prevention work focusing specifically on violence against women and girls exposed to intersectional discrimination. It also points out how important it is to ensure that programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence are available throughout the country and, lastly, to ensure that professionals answering calls on the national helpline have the specific experience and expertise required to properly meet the needs of women victims of the various forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention.

Lastly, GREVIO draws attention to several emerging trends, including measures to combat gender-based killings of women and girls and the growth of movements opposed to women's rights.

Introduction

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, hereinafter "the Istanbul Convention") is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle violence against women and domestic violence.

It sets up a two-pillar monitoring mechanism to assess the level of implementation by its parties: the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), an independent expert body, and the Committee of the Parties, a political body composed of official representatives of the Parties to the Convention. In line with Article 68 of the convention, GREVIO has been providing country-based monitoring reports under its baseline evaluation procedure since 2017. Its baseline evaluation report on Switzerland, offering a comprehensive assessment of the convention's implementation in its entirety, was published on 15 November 2022, following Switzerland's ratification of the Istanbul Convention on 1 April 2018. Switzerland's original reservation not to apply, or to apply only in specific cases or conditions, the provisions established in Article 59, entered in accordance with Article 78, paragraph 2, of the convention, was withdrawn on 3 December 2024. The reservations with regard to Article 44, paragraphs 1.e and 3, and to Article 55, paragraph 1, were renewed by a declaration of 3 December 2024, providing GREVIO the reasons for maintaining them.

This report was drawn up under GREVIO's first thematic evaluation round launched in 2023 focusing on the theme of building trust by delivering support, protection and justice. To address this overarching theme, it describes emerging trends in the areas of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the country. Section two aims to identify developments in key areas such as comprehensive and co-ordinated policies, funding and data collection that have ensued following the completion of the baseline evaluation procedure. Section three sets to obtain more in-depth information on the implementation of selected provisions in the areas of prevention, protection and prosecution, in respect of which baseline evaluation procedures and the Conclusions on the implementation of recommendations of the Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention have revealed significant challenges and the need for further action.

In respect of Switzerland, the first thematic evaluation procedure was initiated in accordance with Article 68 of the convention by letter and transmission of GREVIO's first thematic questionnaire on 16 January 2023. The Swiss authorities subsequently submitted their state report on 30 September 2025 – the deadline set by GREVIO. Following a preliminary examination of Switzerland's state report, GREVIO carried out an evaluation visit to Switzerland, which took place from 9 to 13 March 2026. The delegation was composed of:

- Laura Albu, Member of GREVIO
- Helmut Tichy, Member of GREVIO
- Françoise Kempf, Senior Legal Adviser at the Secretariat of the monitoring mechanism of the Istanbul Convention

During the evaluation visit, the delegation met several senior public officials including Gian Beeli, co-director of the Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE), Laurent Michaud, Head of the Swiss Army's Operations Command, Marina Carobbio Guscetti, Norman Gobbi and Raffaele Da Rosa, members of the Ticino Council of State, Frida Andreotti, Director of the Justice Division (Ticino), and Sophie Delessert, Director of the Equality Office of the Canton of Fribourg. The delegation also met many governmental and NGO representatives working to prevent and combat violence against women. A list of the national authorities, non-governmental organisations and other bodies met is set out in Appendix II of this report. GREVIO is grateful for the valuable information provided by all of them. The evaluation visit was prepared in close co-operation with Ophélie Schaerer, an official working for the Violence Department of the FOGE, who was appointed as contact person for GREVIO's evaluation. GREVIO wishes to extend its gratitude for the co-operation and support provided throughout the entire evaluation procedure, and for the constructive approach adopted by

the Swiss authorities. The state report and the written contributions submitted by civil society have been made public and are available on the official website of the Istanbul Convention.[1]

The present assessment was drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of GREVIO and is based on the information collected during the various steps of the evaluation procedure. In keeping with the approach adopted in its baseline evaluation reports, the findings made reflect different levels of urgency, indicated in order of priority by the following verbs: “urges”, “strongly encourages”, “encourages” and “invites”.

Resulting from a process of confidential dialogue with the aim of offering country-specific proposals and suggestions for improvement within the national context of the party under review, this report describes the situation as observed by GREVIO up until 2 July 2026. Where applicable, relevant developments up until 15 October 2026 have also been taken into account.

According to the convention, national parliaments shall receive this report from the national authorities (Article 70, paragraph 2). GREVIO requests the national authorities to translate this report into their official national language(s) and to ensure that it is widely disseminated, not only to the relevant state institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the government, the ministries and the judiciary, but also to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other civil society organisations which work in the field of violence against women.

1. www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/switzerland

I. Emerging trends in the areas of violence against women and domestic violence

Legislative developments to improve protection for women victims of violence

1. Since GREVIO's baseline evaluation, a number of legislative measures have been taken in Switzerland to punish certain forms of violence against women more effectively. In particular, the criminal law on sexual violence was revised in 2023 to incorporate a definition of rape and sexual abuse based on a "no means no" approach, which came into force in July 2024. It was expressly recognised that when a victim of sexual violence freezes, this is not a sign of consent, and the definition of rape was broadened to include all acts of penetration. Stealthing[2] was also included in the definition of the offence of rape. These changes arose in a context of intense public debate, in Parliament and in society as a whole, on the appropriate response to sexual violence. The National Action Plan for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention (NAP IC), adopted in 2022, made action against sexual violence a priority, while the ongoing revision of the law on victim support is intended to improve access for victims to forensic services. These changes reflect a political commitment to tackling this form of violence, which Swiss society has become more acutely aware of in recent years. It is important that these legislative and political changes continue to be given practical effect through prevention measures, particularly awareness raising among all the professionals concerned, but also through the protection of victims of sexual violence and an appropriate judicial response which limits secondary victimisation.

2. Stalking was also established as a criminal offence (from 2026), which should make it possible to flesh out the legislative arsenal to combat violence against women. In 2024, the legislation was amended to combat marriages contracted abroad with minors and since 1 July 2026, the principle of education without violence, with an explicit ban on corporal punishment, forms part of the Civil Code.

3. Lastly, a major step forward with regard to the rights of migrant women was taken in 2024 when Switzerland withdrew its reservation with regard to Article 59 of the Istanbul Convention following changes to its legislation on foreign nationals relating to the regulations on "hardship" ("cas de rigueur") in cases of domestic violence. The new legislation, which has been in force since January 2025, enlarges the range of beneficiaries of a right to a residence permit or to the extension of the validity of such a permit if it is necessary for them to stay in Switzerland for serious personal reasons such as domestic violence. In addition to the spouse and children of a Swiss or foreign national benefiting from a short-term residence permit, the partner, should he/she benefit from a residence permit, and persons under a provisional right to stay can also benefit from a residence permit. A list of potential signs of domestic violence was added to the law. This change should help to provide better protection for foreign women married to foreign nationals by enabling them to escape violent relationships. It should be ensured that professionals in the migration sector ruling on residence applications for reasons of "hardship" have sufficient training on violence against women to be able to fully implement the new legislation.

Measures to better prevent and combat gender-based killings of women

4. In recent years Switzerland has seen an increase in the number of gender-based killings of women (femicides). According to Stop Femizid, a civil society organisation monitoring this type of murder, the number of such killings rose from 18 in 2023 to 21 in 2024 and 27 in 2025. 17 femicides were reported to have occurred between January and the end of July 2026.[3] The increase in the number of these murders has provoked reactions across the country, particularly

2. Defined as an "offence consisting in discreetly removing one's condom during sexual relations or omitting to use one, unbeknown to one's partner".
3. www.stopfemizid.ch/francais

following a series of gender-based killings of women committed in the first six months of 2025. Public debate continued in May 2026 in connection with the trial relating to a particularly cruel murder of a woman by her husband, from whom she was attempting to separate.[4]

5. The Committee to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, which is made up of members from the federal, cantonal and municipal authorities, met in June 2025 to plan measures to improve the means of preventing this type of murder.[5] The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) and the Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE) respectively published an additional study on homicides in Switzerland between 2019 and 2023, which includes a survey of homicides committed in the domestic sphere, and a study on firearm homicide in the domestic sphere.[6] These surveys provide a number of pointers as to how to improve prevention of this type of murder. It is also planned to set up a real-time mechanism to monitor statistics on homicides including gender-based killing of women, which would provide a regularly updated official database on such murders. In parallel and at the request of the Parliament, it is being discussed whether it might be possible to use the term "femicide" during data collection. The term is already used extensively by the federal authorities and in the media.

6. This increased awareness of the need to prevent and combat the murder and attempted murder of women victims of violence is essential at all levels. For the response to this extreme manifestation of violence against women to be fully effective, GREVIO points to the importance of implementing a comprehensive campaign, including prevention measures, victim protection, a proper judicial response and co-ordinated, adequately funded policies at national, cantonal and local level. It is also essential to highlight some of the underlying causes of these killings, such as stereotypes about the supposed roles of women and men in society, the desire of perpetrators to control their partners or wives and the threads that tie violence against women to murder, so as to be able to devise a targeted response. The Istanbul Convention is one of the keys to the full achievement of this goal.

The growth of movements opposed to women's rights and gender equality

7. Views denying the existence of violence against women and questioning the need to adopt measures to promote gender equality and combat such violence are growing in Switzerland. This forms part of a broader pushback against women's rights in a large number of countries, but whose adverse effects GREVIO has also observed in Switzerland. A recent Swiss study reveals a high level of adherence among young men to ideas of masculinity which legitimise violence and a strong inclination to adopt sexist and hostile attitudes to women.[7] These trends undermine recent progress in promoting gender equality and preventing and combating violence against women. They play a major part in the spread of attitudes fostering a feeling of superiority, which is liable ultimately to become a breeding ground for violence against women, particularly sexual offences.

8. At the same time, intense opposition to school class content on themes such as gender equality, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, gender-based violence against women and sex education has increased in recent years, targeting education professionals and political leaders.[8] GREVIO would point out that education on these topics is a key means of meeting the challenge posed by the spread among young people of views opposing gender equality and denying the existence of violence against women.

9. Studies commissioned since 2021 with a view to understanding the causes of gender-based killings of women have highlighted the processes of radicalisation of masculine ideology, which are

4. The so-called Binningen murder, a particularly cruel murder committed in 2024. In the Basel-Country cantonal court's judgment of 22 May 2026, the murderer was sentenced to life imprisonment.
5. See Article 51, Risk assessment and risk management.
6. Ibid.
7. *Männlichkeit im Wandel – Einstellungen, Lebensformen, Sexualität, Partnerschaft und Gewalt* (Changing masculinity – attitudes, lifestyles, sexuality, couples and violence), University of Zurich, June 2026.
8. See Article 14: Education.

considered to be inextricably linked with forms of male socialisation passed on by culture.[9] One research project supported by the authorities focused on the link between portrayals online of masculinity and violence against women.[10] Political positions have also been taken with the aim of counteracting online messages which glorify violence and hatred of women among young people, and are also intended to determine whether such messages have an impact on gender-based killing of women.[11] Projects of this type have also been developed in several cantons. All of these initiatives can contribute both to better understanding and to limiting the impact of narratives opposing equality and to preventing violence against women, including gender-based killings. They can also act as a basis for the development of policies and measures for the primary prevention of violence against women and domestic violence, as prescribed by Article 12 of the Istanbul Convention.

9. FOGE: *Approches de prévention contre les représentations de la masculinité qui favorisent la violence* (Approaches to preventing portrayals of masculinity which foster violence), report commissioned by the Federal Council on the prevention of femicide in domestic contexts, February 2025.
10. https://projektsammlung.ch/fr/projet/forschungsprojekt-maennlichkeit-im-wandel/.
11. Postulate No. 25.4842: combatting violence against women through a comprehensive approach: www.parlament.ch/fr/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaeft?AffairId=20254842

II. Changes in definitions, comprehensive and co-ordinated policies, funding and data collection in the areas of violence against women and domestic violence

10. Chapter I of the Istanbul Convention sets out general principles that apply to all the substantive articles contained in Chapters II to VII and therefore lay the foundation for a comprehensive and adequate response that ensures the delivery of support, protection and justice for all women and girls at risk of or who have experienced gender-based violence. These include, among other things, that it is a fundamental human right for everyone, particularly women, to live a life free from violence in both the public and the private sphere, that the convention must be implemented without discrimination on any ground, and that the potential for, and effects of, multiple forms of discrimination should be borne in mind. They also spell out that a gender perspective must be integrated into the implementation of the convention and the evaluation of its impact. Chapter II of the Istanbul Convention sets out the core requirement for a holistic response to violence against women: the need for state-wide effective, comprehensive and co-ordinated policies, sustained by the necessary institutional, financial and organisational structures.

A. Definitions (Article 3)

11. Article 3 of the Istanbul Convention sets out key definitions of concepts that are fundamental to its implementation. “Violence against women” refers to “all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”, whereas the expression ‘domestic violence’ is to be understood as recalling “all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim”. The definition of “gender-based violence against women” provided in paragraph d of Article 3 seeks to ensure more clarity regarding the nature of the violence covered, by explaining that this is “violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately”.

12. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that because there was no approved definition of violence against women or domestic violence at national level, cantons worked on the basis of differing definitions and terms of reference. It had also regretted that the Swiss authorities’ work was mainly centred on action against domestic violence.

13. GREVIO notes that there are still no common definitions of gender-based violence against women and domestic violence in line with those of the Istanbul Convention. Even if some cantons have adopted the definitions contained in the Istanbul Convention,[12] the majority of them continue to work on the basis of their own definitions and concepts, making it impossible for there to be a common understanding, shared by all the institutions and professionals concerned, across the country. Even within certain cantons, professionals work on the basis of differing definitions and concepts because there is no common legal reference framework. Moreover, the definitions that do exist at cantonal level are often limited to domestic violence and frequently fail to cover other forms of violence against women falling within the scope of the Istanbul Convention. Although according to the Swiss authorities, the use of the term domestic violence in official documents does not prevent other forms of violence against women from being covered by cantonal laws and action plans, the use of varied terms may lead to confusion about the form of violence being referred to, limit the understanding that violence against women is based on gender and make communication between different disciplines and professions more complicated.

12. For example the canton of Ticino.

14. GREVIO is also concerned that some of the definitions of domestic violence at cantonal level are restrictive, particularly those that require couples to live under the same roof.[13] In other cantons, by contrast, definitions are more inclusive, like for example the law in Geneva whose definition of domestic violence relates to all existing or broken family, marital, civil partnership or common-law ties.[14]

15. In this context GREVIO welcomes the work currently under way, under the auspices of the Swiss Conference against Domestic Violence (CSVD), to draw up a model law on preventing and combating domestic violence and gender-based violence (hereinafter the "model law"). This work, which should be completed in 2026, is intended to build a consensus around common concepts and definitions in order to prevent and combat these forms of violence and to help cantons to establish or strengthen their legal bases for action to combat violence against women. GREVIO notes with interest that there is a desire in several cantons to draw on this model law to devise new legislative and planning tools. It stresses how important it is for all stakeholders to have common definitions and conceptual benchmarks.

16. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to continue their efforts to devise standardised definitions of all forms of violence against women in line with those of the Istanbul Convention, which can be used by all stakeholders.**

B. Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies (Article 7)

17. Article 7 of the Istanbul Convention requires parties to take co-ordinated and comprehensive measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women. Policies must ensure effective co-operation and place the rights of victims at their centre. This includes taking into account and addressing the specific circumstances and barriers experienced by women exposed to or at risk of multiple forms of discrimination,[15] in line with Article 4, paragraph 3, of the convention. Ensuring service delivery, effective protection and justice with a comprehensive understanding of intersecting forms of discrimination is a fundamental element in building trust among all women and girls.

18. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had welcomed the preparation of a conceptual framework for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, a roadmap for the Confederation and the cantons on preventing domestic violence and protecting its victims, and the measures taken by various institutional bodies to harmonise the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and discuss good practices. However, it had also observed that because of the diversity of responses and approaches at cantonal level and the fact that some cantons had failed to adopt a legislative framework or an action plan to combat violence against women, the level of support and protection to which victims of gender-based violence had access still depended largely on their place of residence. It had also highlighted shortfalls in the co-operation relating to measures involving several cantons and regretted the fact that intra- and intercantonal co-operation mechanisms related mostly to domestic violence.

19. Since the baseline evaluation, Switzerland has adopted the NAP IC covering the period from 2022 to 2026, which GREVIO welcomes.[16] The NAP IC focuses on three priority areas, namely public awareness raising about violence and victim support, training for professionals and combating

13. For example, the Law on the organisation of prevention of and action against domestic violence of the Canton of Vaud (Law 211.12).
14. Law on Domestic Violence of the Canton of Geneva.
15. These include, but are not limited to, women from national and/or ethnic minorities, Roma women, migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women, women with disabilities, women without a residence permit, LBTI women, women from rural areas, women in prostitution and women with addiction issues.
16. www.ebg.admin.ch/dam/fr/sd-web/rQCm6xiTEyPi/Nationaler%20Aktionsplan%20Istanbulkonvention_F.pdf

sexual violence.[17] It forms part of the national Gender Equality Strategy 2030,[18] which also includes measures to prevent and combat gender-based violence which are not covered by the NAP IC. The FOGE co-ordinates the implementation of the NAP IC. An initial review of its implementation was published in 2024 and a final review will be published at the end of 2026. Alongside the NAP IC, a joint roadmap for the cantons and the Confederation on preventing domestic and sexual violence and protecting its victims, which was adopted in 2021, has been implemented under the auspices of the Federal Office of Justice.[19] The roadmap covers nine areas, including prevention, victim reception and threat management. An overview of the implementation of this roadmap took place in April 2026.[20]

20. GREVIO reiterates its appreciation for the major work that the FOGE does to promote and monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, as already highlighted in its 2022 report. Since 2022, the co-ordinating body has not only managed the implementation of the NAP IC but also published a large number of studies and recommendations on various subjects related directly to the Istanbul Convention.[21] However, GREVIO regrets that the human and financial resources allocated to the FOGE seem very inadequate for it to carry out its task of co-ordinating the work of the Swiss authorities in the areas of violence against women and domestic violence and the management of the NAP IC, especially as the Swiss institutional system makes the work of co-ordinating the various tiers of authority and co-operation mechanisms so particularly complex.

21. It is true that several other co-ordination bodies have been set up to keep up regular exchanges and harmonise implementation of the convention, acknowledging the fact that Switzerland's institutional system assigns the cantons the powers and responsibilities for most of the work required for this to happen. The committee to monitor the implementation of the convention, which has been in place since its ratification by Switzerland in 2018, is one of the vital links in this co-operation chain. It comprises representatives of the Confederation, the cantons and the municipalities and meets in principle twice a year. Mechanisms for co-operation between the cantons are also still in place (see the relevant paragraph below). GREVIO also welcomes the fact that exchanges between the state and NGOs have been formalised since 2022 through the appointment of a discussion committee, which meets regularly. A national dialogue session on violence, gender and discrimination was also held in November 2024, involving the Confederation, the cantons, city authorities and civil society.[22] Several of the persons whom GREVIO met on its visit said that the NAP IC had made it possible to strengthen co-operation and dialogue between the various tiers of authority, which GREVIO welcomes.

22. At cantonal level, the Swiss Conference against Domestic Violence (CSVD) still plays a key role in the harmonisation of cantonal practices and the co-ordination of work at federal level. Sixteen of Switzerland's 26 cantons have adopted a law or an action plan on violence against women and/or the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Approaches do, however, still vary quite considerably between cantons, with the emphasis shifting between gender equality policies and judicial and policing measures. In this context of major disparities, GREVIO welcomes the CSVD's desire to strengthen the regional approach on issues such as access to specialist services for women victims of violence. Its aim, which GREVIO shares, is to overcome obstacles linked to the financing of services on a canton-by-canton basis, the lack of co-operation between cantons on certain matters and the absence of certain facilities such as emergency shelters in the smaller cantons. This type of regionalised (or supracantonal) approach should make it possible to improve the harmonisation of key specialist services throughout the country.

17. The term used in Switzerland for this type of violence is "sexualised violence".
18. www.equality2030.ch/en/.
19. www.bj.admin.ch/fr/dialogue-strategique-sur-la-violence-domestique.
20. Conference of Cantonal Justice and Police Directors - *Rapport sur la mise en œuvre de la feuille de route sur la violence domestique et sexuelle* – 27 April 2026.
21. www.ebg.admin.ch/fr/publications-violence.
22. An interim review of the implementation of the NAP IC was presented on this occasion.

23. While welcoming the existence of a well-established system of co-operation between the various bodies involved in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, GREVIO notes that because of the plethora of organisations and facilities that have been set up, the Swiss authorities' work in this area can be somewhat indecipherable and fragmented. Its exchanges with civil society representatives have also highlighted how difficult this makes it for women's rights organisations to be involved in devising, implementing and assessing policies and measures at the various levels of authority. Consequently, GREVIO considers it essential to continue to try to harmonise policies and simplify procedures, a need which was highlighted by various people GREVIO talked to, representing both the authorities and civil society.

24. In this context, GREVIO was very interested to hear about the Swiss authorities' plan to adopt a single, comprehensive national strategy on the expiry of the NAP IC and the roadmap, involving all stakeholders. It considers that a joint strategy of this sort, combined with the planned model law,[23] may help to make national policies to prevent and combat violence against women more effective by limiting the dispersal of responsibilities and procedures. It would also make it possible to work towards increased standardisation of the services and protection afforded to women victims of violence by developing joint concepts and understandings. GREVIO also takes due note of the Swiss authorities' intention to include more provision in the new strategy to meet the needs of women victims of violence who are exposed to intersectional discrimination. Lastly, GREVIO notes with interest that in March 2026 the upper house of the Swiss Parliament (the Council of States) tabled a motion proposing the adoption of a federal framework law on combating domestic violence to solve the problem of the fragmentation of protection mechanisms.[24]

25. GREVIO also regrets that many of the measures in place at cantonal level still mostly relate only to domestic violence, as already highlighted in its report of 2022, and that other forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention are hardly addressed, if at all. It welcomes the fact that the NAP IC covers various forms of violence against women, particularly sexual violence, and that additional measures have been taken with regard to forced marriage, including the formation of a national group for co-ordination between the federal authorities and the specialist department on forced marriages to improve co-ordination in specific cases. Despite these measures, the response of the various tiers of authority to some forms of violence is still piecemeal and variable, depending on the cantons' differing priorities.[25] This is the case in particular with violence against women committed in the digital sphere, female genital mutilation, forced sterilisation, stalking and sexual harassment - despite the legislative changes in this respect – and sexual violence. While some cantons have introduced measures to combat some of these forms of violence,[26] many have not, and this means that the provision of services for victims still depends on their place of residence, which GREVIO regrets. Furthermore, as already highlighted in the Recommendation by the Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention on the implementation of the convention by Switzerland, some cantonal policies do not include a gender perspective in their approach to domestic violence.[27]

26. GREVIO also notes that there are disparities in the policies and the practices concerning the intersectional approach required by the Istanbul Convention so that all women victims of violence have access to protection and support. Women exposed to intersectional discrimination such as women migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, women with disabilities, women in prostitution or with addiction issues, elderly women, LBTI women or women belonging to the Yenish or Sinti/Manush minorities are both more exposed to violence and face additional obstacles when they seek protection or support. GREVIO notes with satisfaction that the FOGE's mandate has been expanded to cover issues of LGBTIQ equality and that an action plan to combat hate crimes against these people has been set up. However, information brought to its attention by civil society

23. See Article 3: Definitions.
24. Motion No. 25.4556 (Maret).
25. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
26. For example, female genital mutilation and sexual violence.
27. Recommendation on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence by Switzerland, adopted on 6 December 2022.

representatives shows that while some cantons have taken action in this area,[28] this is not the case throughout the country. The same applies to measures intended to prevent and combat violence against women with disabilities. Little account is taken of the needs of women living in institutions to be protected and informed and many specialist services for women victims of violence are still inaccessible to persons with disabilities. GREVIO therefore welcomes the fact that in 2026, the Federal Office for Equality of Persons with Disabilities made available a tool to help specialist services for women victims of violence improve accessibility; this followed on from the report, published in 2023 by the Federal Council, on violence inflicted on persons with disabilities in Switzerland, which pinpointed a number of obstacles to access to support and protection.[29] GREVIO also notes with concern that according to professionals working with women asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, there is still a general shortage of training on their specific needs, information on facilities which can offer them support and interpreters who can help them with the procedures when they are victims of violence. Overall, GREVIO notes with concern the dispersal of responsibilities between various federal offices where it comes to responses to violence against women facing intersectional discrimination and the shortcomings arising from this, and about the fact that an intersectional approach is not systematically included in policies to combat violence against women.[30]

27. Lastly, as already mentioned in GREVIO's baseline evaluation report, there is no centralised system in Switzerland to independently monitor and evaluate the implementation of the convention. The evaluation of policies and measures implemented is still carried out, by virtue of Switzerland's unique system for the distribution of responsibilities and powers, on the basis of exchanges concerning good practices and studies commissioned from research institutes. GREVIO welcomes the publication since 2022, under FOGE auspices, of many independent studies assessing the effectiveness of various legislative provisions and measures. It considers, however, that it would be good to have a system providing for the systematic and independent review of the impact of policies implemented, covering the entire country and drawing on reliable data. The adoption of a new national strategy could help to foster the development of such a systematic evaluation mechanism, based on predetermined indicators. In addition, the new Swiss Human Rights Institution, founded in 2023, could make a useful contribution to the independent evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of policies and measures to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

28. **GREVIO welcomes the adoption by the Swiss authorities of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and strongly encourages them to keep up their efforts to devise comprehensive, long-term strategies to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, involving all the levels of authority concerned and covering the entire country. For this purpose, the Swiss authorities should, in particular:**

- **a. ensure that the co-ordinating body for policies to prevent and combat violence against women is afforded sufficient human and financial resources;**
- **b. step up measures to make the work carried out at various levels of authority more consistent;**
- **c. ensure that the policies set up throughout the country include a gender perspective in relation to all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, including domestic violence;**
- **d. devise comprehensive policies including specific measures for the prevention of violence against women exposed, or at risk of being exposed, to intersectional discrimination, such as women with disabilities, LBTI women, women asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, women in prostitution, elderly women and women from Yenish and Sinti/Manush communities;**

28. For example, the cantons of Vaud, Geneva and Basel.
29. Violence inflicted on persons with disabilities in Switzerland, Report of the Federal Council following up on Postulate No. 20.3886 by Franziska Roth, tabled on 19 June 2020.
30. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

e. regularly assess their policies to achieve the comprehensive, co-ordinated political approach required by the Istanbul Convention. These assessments should be based on predetermined indicators designed to evaluate their impact and ensure that reliable data are used when drawing up policies.

C. Financial resources (Article 8)

29. Article 8 of the Istanbul Convention aims to ensure the allocation of appropriate financial and human resources for activities carried out by public authorities and by relevant non-governmental and civil society organisations.[31]

30. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that it was difficult to gain an overview of the resources allocated for action to combat violence against women, particularly in the cantons. While welcoming the establishment of financial support for projects and measures to prevent violence against women at federal level, it had expressed concern about the lack of regular, long-term funding for associations providing specialist services and the major disparities between cantons, which resulted in differing levels of specialist provision.

31. At federal level, GREVIO notes that the amounts allocated for the functioning of the FOGE are the same as in 2022 for work connected with violence against women.[32] Additional resources have been allocated to it to manage financial support from the Confederation (see below), for the national campaign for the prevention of violence, and to prepare the study on the prevalence of violence to be carried out in 2027.[33] GREVIO reiterates its concerns about the limited resources assigned to the FOGE in view of the scale of the tasks it must carry out to implement the Istanbul Convention properly.[34] Since 2025, the CSVD has been granted additional human and financial resources for its task of harmonising the work of cantons, which GREVIO welcomes.[35] GREVIO also welcomes the Confederation's decision to allocate regular funding to the Network against Female Genital Cutting up to 2029,[36] and to the national centre on forced marriages (for the period from 2025 to 2028).[37] It notes, however, that the grants awarded to this network were subject to the expansion of its mandate and that the funds allocated to the centre on forced marriages were to be complemented by funding from the cantons, which are currently available only in three cantons.[38] Overall, GREVIO is concerned about the adverse impact of the austerity measures adopted at national level on funding for policies to prevent and combat violence against women.

32. Financial grants from the Confederation (distributed by the FOGE) continue to be available for projects intended to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence. The annual amount awarded rose from CHF 3 million to CHF 4 million in 2026 but will return, however, to CHF 3 million in 2027. Since 2021 these grants have made it possible to run a number of projects relating to various forms of violence against women, which GREVIO welcomes. Information brought to its attention suggests, however, that access to federal funding is complicated by administrative obstacles and the need for associations to seek co-funding. While federal grants may cover up to 50% of a specific project, they may not exceed 25% if they are used to finance associations' routine activities. These conditions make access to funding particularly problematic for small organisations. In this context, GREVIO notes with interest the information provided by the Swiss authorities indicating that the procedures for the award of grants are being revised so as to remedy the difficulties reported. It has also been reported to GREVIO that the associations receiving such funding may face some uncertainty as to whether their activities relating to coordination between

31. Explanatory Report, paragraph 66.
32. 450 000 Swiss francs (CHF) per year.
33. See Article 12: general obligations (prevention).
34. See Article 7: Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies.
35. The CSVD now has some CHF 252 000 and additional human resources (0.8 full-time equivalent).
36. CHF 1 200 000 for 2025-2028.
37. CHF 200 000 per year.
38. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

organisations and advocacy are eligible for funding, due to the sometimes broad interpretation of certain conditions for the award of FOGE funding, in particular the exclusion of political activities from funding, as these are not clearly defined.[39] GREVIO would point out that advocacy concerning laws and policies on violence against women forms an integral part of the tasks of associations working with women victims of violence; their knowledge of victims' needs and their practical experience are crucial for the preparation of laws and policies geared to the realities on the ground and based on the needs of women victims of violence.

33. GREVIO is not in a position to have an overview of the funding allocated by cantons. However, it notes that while funds earmarked for combating violence against women have increased in some cantons, this is not the case with many others. Several of the persons GREVIO talked to reported that cantons required budget neutrality where it came to measures relating to violence against women, particularly in the area of prevention.[40] GREVIO considers this a particular cause for concern in a context of increasing demands for support and protection connected with the policies and measures adopted in recent years. Information brought to its attention by organisations providing key services to women victims of violence and working in the area of prevention, including those running programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence, suggests that this approach of budgetary austerity threatens the very existence of some of these services. Another consequence is increased insecurity for the professionals concerned and a loss of skills.[41] Furthermore, in some cantons, not having a cantonal law on domestic violence or violence against women results in practice in major shortages in the financial resources available to implement and assess policies and measures in this sphere. Some cantonal authorities do not have the resources to be able to collect data on violence against women so as to better assess the impact of the measures in place and devise new policies based on actual needs.[42] In addition, in several cantons, a lack of sufficient funding makes it more difficult to develop policies and measures relating to forms of violence against women other than domestic violence.[43]

34. Lastly, it appears that the procedures for civil society organisations to access cantonal funding are not always transparent and that grants awarded to associations often do not last. The principle of the subsidiarity of public aid in relation to private finance which prevails in Switzerland can place civil society organisations in complicated circumstances because, while they have a duty to complement public funds using private finances, when they do receive private funding, public grants can be reduced correspondingly.[44] Similarly cantonal grants can be reduced or withdrawn if federal funding is awarded. GREVIO regrets the fact that because of this situation, the funding available to organisations working with women victims of violence at cantonal level is often still inadequate and it is difficult for them to make long-term plans.[45]

35. Financial constraints can also make it more difficult for women's rights associations to take part in consultation processes with the various levels of authority. In this connection, GREVIO welcomes the fact that the FOGE pays expenses to the associations involved in the consultations it holds. This is an unusual practice, however, and it is difficult for these associations to muster the resources to take part in the participatory processes at the many levels of authority in Switzerland.[46]

36. GREVIO also notes with grave concern that the difficulties it highlighted in its baseline evaluation with regard to the funding of specialist services such as shelters endure, particularly as funding in most cantons depends on rates of occupation. As a result, it is difficult for the organisations providing these services to offer regular support and counselling services and meet the specific needs of certain groups of women such as migrant women, women with disabilities and LBTI women.

39. Ibid.. The directives on the award of funding state that funds will not be provided for "measures whose main purpose is political activities in the strictest sense (intended to influence political processes or leaders)".
40. Ibid. See also www.act.campax.org/petitions/fr-stop-talking-start-funding.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, pp. 60-62.
46. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

Major disparities in the way these services are funded from one canton to another contribute to the uneven implementation of the Istanbul Convention across the country.[47]

37. Lastly, GREVIO regrets that the principle of gender budgeting is not applied in Switzerland.

38. **Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take measures to ensure adequate financing, at federal, cantonal and local level, of policies and programmes to prevent and combat all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention. They should also ensure that associations providing essential services for women victims of violence and those implementing measures to prevent violence against women have sufficient, stable resources corresponding to increased needs to allow them to carry out their tasks.**

39. **GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to ensure that funding rules do not restrict the capacity of these associations to contribute to discussions concerning laws and policies on violence against women.**

40. **GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to consider implementing gender budgeting principles.**

D. Data collection (Article 11)

41. Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence requires evidence-based policy making. The collection of systematic and comparable data from all relevant administrative sources is crucial in this regard, as is information on the prevalence of all forms of violence against women.

1. Law-enforcement agencies and the justice sector

42. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that while police crime statistics provided data on offences registered by the police broken down by sex, age and relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, this had not been the case with statistics relating to criminal and civil court proceedings. It had noted with concern that these gaps made it impossible to assess conviction, attrition and recidivism rates or any shortcomings in the criminal law response.

43. GREVIO regrets that these gaps have not been filled since its baseline evaluation report, as statistics on judicial proceedings provide information only on the defendants and are still not integrated with those collected by the police. It is still impossible therefore to follow the path of victims through judicial proceedings and to access data on the judicial response to domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of violence against women constituting criminal offences. While taking note of the fear expressed by the Swiss authorities that the collection of judicial data on violence against women could lead to problems with regard to personal data protection, GREVIO points out that it is essential to have such data so as to be able to track cases from the lodging of the complaint through to the decision of the court, making for a better assessment of the criminal law response to such violence and providing an overview of the situation. It would also stress that such data can be collected in compliance with data protection standards, as provided for in the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data.[48]

44. With regard to police crime statistics, GREVIO welcomes the measures taken in 2023 to provide a regular detailed analysis of data collected by the police on sexual violence. It is also pleased to note the efforts made since 2024 to present police statistics on domestic violence in a more accessible manner. It also welcomes the continued work by the FOGE to make the statistics

47. See Article 22: Specialist support services.
48. Ratified by Switzerland in 2023.

that are available on the various forms of violence against women accessible, particularly those of the Federal Statistical Office and those published by victim support organisations.[49] It also welcomes the publication of a study, carried out under the auspices of the statistical office, on homicides in Switzerland between 2019 and 2023, drawing on an analysis of homicides committed within couples, families and outside to identify signs of homicide risk factors. This initiative is an invaluable tool for work on the prevention of gender-based killing of women.[50] GREVIO is also following with great interest the discussions currently under way on setting up a system to collect data on gender-based killing of women (femicides) following the methodology devised by the United Nations. Lastly, GREVIO notes with interest that from 2027 on, data on child protection measures issued by child and adult protection authorities will indicate if the measures are a response to a situation of domestic violence.

45. Some cantons collect and publish data on domestic violence including police and court data and those collected by victim support organisations, health services and women's shelters, thus providing a more comprehensive overview of the domestic violence situation at cantonal level.[51] Several cantons also have data on protection and eviction orders issued by the police. GREVIO notes with interest that other cantons are planning to set up systems for the collection and publication of data on domestic violence. While welcoming these initiatives, it regrets that the indicators and methodology used differ, making it difficult to compile all the data collected by cantons to gain an overview of the situation at national level.

46. GREVIO also regrets that administrative data on forms of violence against women other than domestic violence and sexual violence are still very piecemeal. On violence committed in the digital sphere in particular, it notes that the data collected are not broken down, making it impossible to determine the prevalence of violence against women.

47. Lastly, GREVIO welcomes the fact that in the wake of the amendment in 2025 of the Law on foreigners and integration allowing a residence permit to be issued after a marriage or a family breaks up as a result of domestic violence, it is now possible to collect data on the number of residence permits issued in this context.

2. Health sector

48. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had regretted that, save in a few hospital departments, no data were collected on the number of women consulting health services who had been subjected to violence. GREVIO regrets that there has been hardly any change in the situation since 2022: while the growing number of hospitals providing specialist services for women victims of violence do collect and analyse such data,[52] there is no systematic, centralised mechanism for the collection of health data, as this is the responsibility of each canton.

3. Social services

49. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that social services did not collect any data on the number of women victims of violence making use of their services. GREVIO regrets that there has been no change in this situation since 2022. Victim support centres do collect data on persons using their services, but this is not the case with the social services.

50. **Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take measures to:**

a. promote data collection by the judicial services on victims of all forms of violence against women, broken down by the sex and age of the victim and the perpetrator,

49. See Article 20: General support services.
50. See: Emerging trends and Article 51: Risk assessment and risk management.
51. This is the case in the cantons of Zurich, Basel-City, Vaud, Valais and Geneva.
52. For example at Bern hospital and at the Violence Medicine Units of Lausanne and Fribourg.

the type of violence, location and the nature of the relationship between victim and perpetrator, according to harmonised indicators for the entire country; make it possible to track cases of violence against women throughout the criminal justice chain, from the lodging of the complaint to the decision of the court, so as to be able to determine the rates of attrition and penalties imposed;

b. set up a system for the collection of data on protection orders called for and issued, breaches of these orders and penalties imposed for breaches, so as to be able to assess the extent to which such measures are applied.

51. **GREVIO also strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to take legislative and other measures to collect data, broken down at least by type of violence, sex, age of the victim and the presumed perpetrator and the relationship between them, on the number of women victims of all forms of violence who request help from the health services, whether public or private.**

III. Analysis on the implementation of selected provisions in priority areas in the fields of prevention, protection and prosecution

A. Prevention

52. Chapter III of the Istanbul Convention contains a number of general and more specific obligations in the area of prevention. This section analyses progress made, since the baseline evaluation monitoring procedure, towards the implementation of early preventive measures. It also covers progress made towards the implementation of the more specific preventive measures provided under this chapter in the areas of education, training of all relevant professionals and perpetrator programmes. Ensuring the effective prevention of all forms of violence against women and domestic violence is an important step in rendering it unacceptable and reducing levels of perpetration.[53] In turn, effective prevention empowers women and girls to speak out about their experiences and seek support and protection.

1. General obligations (Article 12)

53. Article 12 sets out a number of general preventive measures which represent the overarching principles of the parties' duty to prevent violence against women. These include the requirement to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of women and men, with a view to eradicating prejudices, customs, traditions and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped roles for women and men. A positive contribution to achieving such change can be made by men and boys acting as role models and advocates for equality between women and men and mutual respect, including by speaking out against violence, engaging other men in ending violence against women, or actively taking on caring responsibilities. Moreover, flowing from the premise that violence against women is a cause as much as a consequence of gender inequality, Article 12 further requires that parties adopt specific measures to empower women in order to enable them to recognise and reject discrimination, unequal power relations and, ultimately, reduce women's vulnerability to violence and achieve greater gender equality.

54. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that there were few large-scale awareness-raising or primary prevention measures relating to violence against women and had encouraged the Swiss authorities to make prevention a priority in future action plans and measures. Accordingly, it welcomes the particular attention paid by the federal authorities since 2022 to developing prevention and awareness-raising measures with regard to the various forms of violence against women. Firstly, it is pleased to note that public information and awareness raising about violence is one of the three priorities of the NAP IC.[54] In this context, a number of measures have been introduced or are being devised, such as an information campaign on victim support, a campaign for the elderly on domestic violence, prevention measures against portrayals of masculinity fostering violence and the publication of a series of studies on the latter subject.[55] Again in the context of the implementation of the NAP IC, a campaign against sexual violence was due to be launched at national level in 2025. In May 2025, a first executive-level meeting on equality was held between the Confederation and the cantons, and one of its central themes was the prevention of gender-based violence.[56]

55. GREVIO also welcomes the launch, in November 2025, under FOGE auspices, of a long-term national campaign (2025-2029) on action against domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. The main emphasis of the first stage of the campaign is "equality against violence". It also focuses on the assistance that can be provided for victims and the establishment of a new national helpline. Later on it will also cover friends, family and witnesses and the perpetrators of violence. It

53. The importance of this endeavour has been reiterated and strengthened through the Dublin Declaration on the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, adopted in Dublin, Ireland, on 30 September 2022, by 38 member states of the Council of Europe.
54. www.ebg.admin.ch/fr/publication?id=w57ia0s5VTtX.
55. www.egalite2030.ch/fr/pan-ci-12.
56. www.ebg.admin.ch/fr/newnsb/WUQJCRZcDsaYNKFezNHRU.

views unequal power dynamics as the root of violence and while it does not focus solely on violence against women, it points out that the latter accounts for most cases of violence.[57] Its aim is also to increase awareness about acts intended to intimidate, control and threaten victims, which form part of the continuum of violence against women. This development is rendered all the more significant by the fact that psychological violence is not a criminal offence in Switzerland. GREVIO also notes that the campaign website, which contains all the information on the assistance and support available to victims of violence within couples or of sexual violence, is accessible in easy-to-read format.

56. Financial grants from the Confederation also give priority to support for awareness-raising and primary prevention projects. In this context, support has been given to projects to prevent various forms of violence, including violence against women committed in the digital sphere, and to research and awareness-raising projects targeting specific groups of women, such as LBTI women.[58]

57. GREVIO also notes with interest the results of a study conducted within the Swiss Army in 2024 as part of the Equality 2030 strategy, which revealed persisting discrimination and gender-based violence.[59] It welcomes the measures taken by the Swiss Army following this study, which were intended to raise awareness among all new recruits about discrimination and sexual violence and establish rules of conduct in this respect. It is also pleased to note that in 2022 an internal abuse reporting service was set up, alongside an independent mediation service, to which abuse and violence may also be reported.

58. Lastly, GREVIO welcomes the fact that a national study is being prepared on the prevalence of gender-based violence, and that this should be repeated every five years. The initial results will be published in 2028. This study will provide a regularly updated picture of the situation as regards violence against women and thus help to better assess the violence suffered by all women, including those facing intersectional discrimination. It will also contribute to the establishment of primary prevention policies based on up-to-date data.

59. GREVIO also notes with satisfaction that in some Swiss cantons and cities, prevention programmes and measures have been set up, relating among other things to violence committed in the digital sphere, sexism in public spaces and street harassment,[60] or to preventing sexual violence in entertainment venues.[61] It particularly welcomes the existence of programmes which are specifically intended to question certain models of masculinity, including ones directed at young men and boys, and of youth awareness-raising programmes on intimate partner violence.[62] Some cities and cantons have also run programmes to prevent violence against migrant women, LBTI women, women in prostitution and women with disabilities.[63] Victim support centres (LAVI centres) also run information and awareness-raising campaigns, for example on violence in the digital sphere.

60. GREVIO regrets that despite these major advances at federal and cantonal level, several cantons still fail to place any emphasis on primary prevention. Information brought to its attention shows a recurring lack of funding for prevention and awareness-raising activities, which the authorities sometimes attempt to justify by claiming that prevention programmes are not cost-effective.[64] Outside the activities run during the 16 days of activism surrounding the international day for the elimination of violence against women (25 November), the existence of systematic and regular primary prevention measures varies greatly from canton to canton. Nor do measures

57. www.sans-violence.ch/articles/contexte-de-la-campagne.
58. www.projektsammlung.ch/fr/aides-financieres-pour-la-prevention-de-la-violence/projektdatenbank/.
59. www.vtg.admin.ch/fr/etude-de-recherche-discrimination-et-violence.
60. For example, the cities of Lausanne and Geneva and the Cantons of Saint Gallen, Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Valais. See state report, pp. 29 and 30.
61. Zurich's "Nightlife" programme, for example.
62. See, for example: www.maenner.ch/fr/ for measures covering portrayals of masculinity and the programmes "Sortir ensemble et se respecter" ("Going out and respecting one another"), "As de cœur" ("Ace of hearts") and "Herzsprung" ("My heart leaps"), which raised young people's awareness about intimate partner violence: www.radix.ch/fr/ecoles-en-sante/offres/as-de-coeur/.
63. For example, the cantons of Basel-City, Basel-Country, Saint Gallen, Vaud and Zurich – see state report, pp. 27 and 28.
64. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

designed to prevent violence among groups particularly exposed to discrimination, such as women asylum seekers and migrants, seem adequate throughout the country to meet the needs of these women and foster their empowerment, as required by Article 12 of the convention. GREVIO would point out that prevention is one of the central pillars of the fight against violence against women and if it is carried out effectively, on a regular, long-term basis, it can considerably reduce the costs arising from the need to set up protection and support measures for victims of violence and judicial and health costs, among others. To ensure that prevention measures are effective, it is essential to ensure that evaluation of measures forms an integral part of prevention and awareness-raising programmes. As a result, measures can be based on tried and tested practice which has shown that it can change behaviour and adjusted where appropriate, and unwanted effects can be prevented.[65] In this context, GREVIO notes with satisfaction that it is planned to conduct a regular review of the impact of the national information campaign on violence.

61. With regard to the prevention of violence against women in the workplace, information brought to GREVIO's attention shows a persistent lack of awareness raising in businesses on sexual harassment at work, despite the requirement for employers to include this type of measure in their procedures to protect employees' health.[66] In its view, this deficiency must be part of the reason why so few cases of sexual harassment are brought before the courts despite the persistence of this problem in the workplace.[67] In this context, it welcomes the material published by the FOGE and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) to inform and advise both employers and employees on the matter and stresses how important it is to continue raising awareness in this area. It would point out that it is essential to set up continuous, long-term primary prevention measures enabling the underlying causes of sexual harassment in the workplace to be addressed.

62. Lastly, GREVIO notes with satisfaction that measures have been taken, also in the context of the NAP IC, to prevent violence in sport, by means of awareness-raising tools covering subjects including the prevention of physical, psychological and sexual violence and through the adoption in 2023 of ethical principles, including the prevention of violence.[68]

63. **GREVIO welcomes the efforts made by the Swiss authorities to strengthen measures to raise awareness about and prevent violence against women and encourages them to:**

- **a. continue and step up campaigns for the primary prevention of all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention, throughout the country, while ensuring that sufficient funding is available for these campaigns;**
- **b. step up prevention work focusing specifically on violence against women and girls exposed to intersectional discrimination;**
- **c. carry out regular reviews of the impact of awareness-raising campaigns and primary prevention measures and use these reviews to identify and remedy any unwanted effects of awareness-raising campaigns.**

2. Education (Article 14)

64. The drafters of the convention recognised the important role which formal and informal educational settings play in addressing the root causes of violence against women and girls. Article 14 therefore requires the design of teaching material that promotes equality between women and men, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships and the right to personal integrity and informs learners of the different forms of gender-based violence against women, adapted to the age and capacity of learners and

65. See European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE): The costs of gender-based violence in the EU, 2021. See also 7th GREVIO activity report, published on 15 September 2026.
66. See FOGE: Harcèlement sexuel sur le lieu de travail (Sexual harassment in the workplace), 2024.
67. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. The Leg.ch website has recorded only 60 court judgments on sexual harassment since 1999.
68. See for example Federal Office of Sport and Swiss Olympic: 'Ethical Behaviour in Swiss Sport: The Foundations of a Common Understanding', 2023, and the Amended Ordinance on the Promotion of Sport and Physical Activity, 2023.

where parties deem appropriate. The obligation to promote these principles extends to informal educational facilities as well as any sports, cultural and leisure facilities. In this context, GREVIO underlines the importance of informing parents on the content and objectives of related courses, the qualifications of the persons providing the courses; and to whom any questions can be directed.

65. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had welcomed the incorporation into the Swiss education system of themes of gender equality and prevention of violence against women and work on prejudices and gender stereotypes, although this was addressed differently from canton to canton. It had encouraged the Swiss authorities to ensure that all pupils were equipped with knowledge and skills in relation to the topics covered by Article 14 of the Istanbul Convention.

66. GREVIO reiterates its concerns about the differing approaches, highlighted in its 2022 report, to the implementation of programmes offering an education on the topics listed in Article 14 of the Istanbul Convention. Schemes such as the "school of equality" programme continue to provide material in several French-speaking cantons for teachers to give lessons on equality at various levels of education.[69] In Ticino as well, GREVIO welcomes the authorities' commitment to promoting gender equality in the school system and highlighting the effects of gender inequalities through awareness-raising campaigns on domestic and sexual violence.[70] Other cantons have set up awareness-raising programmes on gender stereotypes and inequalities and violence against women.[71] However, the information brought to GREVIO's attention shows that the content taught differs considerably, with some cantons favouring a holistic approach and others dealing only with issues such as preventing violence.

67. GREVIO also welcomes the emphasis placed by the authorities on strengthening primary prevention of violence against women in school in the implementation of the NAP IC between 2024 and 2026, through its continued support for existing programmes such as "Sortir ensemble et se respecter" ("Going out and respecting one another [Ace of Hearts]"), "Fair lieben" ("Loving fairly"), "Liberati del silencio" ("Freed from silence") or a programme focusing on consent, "Ja, nein, vielleicht" ("Yes, no, maybe").

68. As it already pointed out in 2022, GREVIO notes with satisfaction that, in accordance with World Health Organisation standards, sexuality education has been introduced into the compulsory curricula in the three language regions.[72] In this context as well, however, there are still differences in the application, teaching approaches and resources allocated to this education at cantonal level.[73] In non-compulsory education, the educational framework is less clear. As a result, the implementation of sexuality education programmes depends, in some cantons, on individual schools or even teachers. Pupils with disabilities also have less access to sexuality education whereas their risk of being exposed to gender-based violence is high. In this context, GREVIO welcomes the publication in 2024, under the auspices of the federal authorities, of a study providing an overview of the implementation of sexuality education programmes, together with targeted recommendations for improved harmonisation of education provided across the country, bearing in mind that compulsory education falls within the remit of the cantons.[74]

69. Teachers receive mandatory initial training on sexuality instruction in compulsory education, which is taught in the context of various subject areas. Concerning in-service training, a compulsory online training programme started in Ticino in 2026. Outside compulsory education, teacher training in this sphere is largely optional. The education materials available also vary significantly.[75] In this

69. This programme is run by the cantonal equality offices.
70. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
71. Between the cantons of Basel-City and Zurich, see state report pp. 33-36.
72. *Lehrplan 21* for German-speaking Switzerland, the reference framework for sexuality education in French-speaking Switzerland and *Piano di studio* in Ticino. The compulsory curriculum covers primary school and lower secondary school.
73. State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation: Sex Education Switzerland (SES) – Study on the implementation of sexuality education in Switzerland, 2024.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid.

context, GREVIO welcomes the publication by the FOGE of minimum standards for initial and in-service training of school and other educational staff on gender-related violence and sexual and domestic violence, which may help to harmonise the education intended to prevent violence against women throughout the country.[76]

70. Information brought to GREVIO's attention shows a worrying increase in violent opposition to sexuality education over recent years. It is seriously concerned about incidents reported to it involving assault, threats and virulent attacks targeting teachers, trainers and politicians working to promote sexuality education. In this context, GREVIO points out that education programmes in emotions, relationships and sexuality which are validated during school are acknowledged to be one of the most powerful means of primary prevention of violence against women and girls. GREVIO considers that setting up such programmes is one of the keys to meeting the challenge of a growing multitude of narratives opposing gender equality and denying the existence of violence against women and girls. It makes it possible to teach pupils about the concept of free consent to sexual relations, the harmful effects of violent pornography and the potential impact of sharing intimate images of oneself or others. The aim is also to strengthen young people's commitment to key principles such as gender equality, mutual respect and non-violent conflict resolution. GREVIO considers it essential, in this context, to run information campaigns on the content and aims of such programmes so as to keep all the stakeholders, particularly parents, informed – a practice which has already been adopted in some Swiss regions. The aim of these campaigns should be to refute the misinformation and mistaken beliefs which are disseminated about the goals of sexuality education, fuelling movements liable to undermine the establishment of these programmes. Similarly, it is essential to inform parents about the training given to staff tasked with such education and the bodies that they can address if they have questions.

71. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to take additional steps to ensure that the topics covered in Article 14 of the Istanbul Convention, such as gender equality, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships, the right to personal integrity, the importance of freely given consent, including in sexual relations, and the harmful effects of violent pornography, are taught throughout the country. They should also continue to take measures to assess the implementation of this teaching throughout the country.**

3. Training of professionals (Article 15)

72. Building society's trust by delivering support, protection and justice to women and girls with experiences of gender-based violence requires well-trained professionals across a wide spectrum of fields. The standard set by the Istanbul Convention in its Article 15 is that of systematic initial and in-service training of all those who deal with victims or perpetrators of all acts of violence. The training that is required must cover the prevention and detection of such violence, equality between women and men, the needs and rights of victims, and the prevention of secondary victimisation.

73. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that while a diverse and substantial range of training on violence against women was provided for professionals at cantonal level, the absence of guidelines at national level had resulted in large disparities in the content taught to each professional category. This great diversity of programmes, combined with the fact that most training was optional, made it impossible to be sure that all professionals involved in preventing and combating violence against women had access to training meeting the requirements of Article 15 of the convention.

74. GREVIO regrets that most professional training courses are still optional and that there is still very little compulsory initial or in-service training. Most training provision, particularly in-service training, is optional and in competition with the multitude of courses on offer on other topics, making it impossible to ensure that professionals who are regularly in contact with women victims of violence

76. www.ebg.admin.ch/fr/publication?id=lfpKEP2ULJWV. See also Article 15: Training of professionals.

actually have the skills and the level of awareness required to provide appropriate care, which takes account of the trauma women experience.

75. GREVIO welcomes the publication by the FOGE, since 2024 in the context of the NAP IC, of minimum standards for the training of various professional categories, with a view to improving and harmonising their training and ensuring that they work on the basis of common concepts and a shared understanding of violence against women. These standards apply to professionals working for the judiciary and the police, in the area of migration, social workers, health and care professionals, education professionals, journalists and volunteers.[77] They provide a framework for the implementation of training providing basic knowledge about the prevalence of various forms of violence, including domestic violence, sexual violence, violence committed in the digital sphere and the impact of violence on children who are exposed to it. Although they do not target violence against women exclusively, they highlight the fact that violence has differing effects on the men, women and children who are exposed to it, and focus on some of the structural causes of violence such as patriarchal attitudes and myths surrounding rape. They also draw attention to the consequences of violence for victims, the principles to be followed when caring for victims and tips concerning victim referral. They refer explicitly to the principles of the Istanbul Convention and aim to make the convention better known among the professionals concerned, which GREVIO welcomes.

76. These minimum standards can be used for initial and in-service training, by professional branches or training institutes or directly by employers. GREVIO also notes that an assessment of the implementation and impact of these standards is planned. However, the task of promoting their use lies with the cantons and/or professional branches concerned as it is not compulsory for them to be implemented because powers in the area of vocational training lie with the cantons. In this context, GREVIO notes with satisfaction that several cantons are currently disseminating these standards among the professionals concerned. For instance, cantonal police colleges have incorporated them into initial training for police officers. However, for the use of this tool to become more widespread, amendments will have to be made to the orders governing the professional branches and it will have to be incorporated into the relevant university courses. GREVIO stresses how important it is, particularly in the context of a federal country like Switzerland, for there to be standardised, mandatory tools designed to establish a common core of training for all professionals in contact with victims and perpetrators of violence against women.

77. Information brought to GREVIO's attention also highlights an increased provision of training on violence against women, in several contexts. As is pointed out in the baseline evaluation, it is difficult to gain an overview of all the training available throughout the country. GREVIO notes with satisfaction, however, that some cantons have set up special police squads to deal with violence against women, particularly sexual violence, for which specific training is given.[78] Furthermore, in several cantons, awareness-raising programmes have been set up for professionals liable to be involved in the detection and referral of women victims of violence such as beauticians, pharmacists and hairdressers.[79] GREVIO also welcomes the work carried out by the CSVD, in co-operation with the Swiss umbrella organisation for the prevention of violence, SOLVIO, to set up initial and in-service training for staff working with perpetrators of violence with a view to developing a shared understanding and common working standards in this area.

78. As to health professionals, GREVIO welcomes the fact that specialist units in violence medicine, which have been set up in several cantonal hospitals, also provide in-service training on violence against women for other hospital staff, including staff working on emergency and gynaecology wards and nursing staff.[80] These training courses are not compulsory, however. Measures have also been taken to improve the detection of victims of violence through existing protocols.[81] However, enduring shortcomings were also reported to GREVIO, particularly as regards

77. www.ebg.admin.ch/fr/standards-minimaux-formation.
78. Geneva and Zurich in particular.
79. These have been set up for pharmacists in Ticino and in Fribourg.
80. This is the case for example with the violence medicine units of the cantons of Fribourg and Vaud.
81. The DOTIP protocol for example (in the canton of Vaud).

training for general practitioners, to whom women often turn nonetheless when they have suffered violence. A persistent lack of training and standardised protocols regarding female genital mutilation was also reported to GREVIO by various people it talked to who work with victims of this form of violence, despite the training provided by the Network against Female Genital Cutting and the fact that there are minimum standards which cover this form of violence. In general, GREVIO notes that women's rights organisations, particularly those providing specialist services, could be more involved in the training of other professional categories and more use could be made of their specific skill and experience.

79. Despite new training courses and the publication of minimum standards, GREVIO reiterates the concern it expressed in its 2022 report regarding the disparities in cantonal policies on training and the content taught in different cantons and the ensuing differences in the levels of training on violence against women. While recognising that deciding on training policies at cantonal level can make it easier to gear what is on offer to the needs of professionals on the ground, it also points to the risk that depending on their place of residence, women victims of violence may be faced with professionals possessing highly differing levels of awareness, training and detection, counselling and care capacities, which will not always meet the requirements of Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention.

80. In addition, the information provided by various persons working with women victims of violence shows a recurring lack of training on the specific needs of groups of women exposed to intersectional discrimination.[82] In particular, women asylum seekers, refugees and migrants often still seem to be seen through the prism of their migration status and not as victims of violence by the various professionals with whom they come into contact.[83] GREVIO also notes that there are gaps in the training on the identification of the digital aspect of violence against women and the support to be given to victims in such cases, particularly among professionals providing specialist services for women victims of violence.[84] The same applies to forced marriages, on which training for professionals is still highly variable.[85]

81. Lastly, GREVIO notes with regret that the level of training of judges on matters relating to violence against women, including sexual violence and secondary victimisation, is still variable. Lawyers and civil society representatives reported to GREVIO that prejudice and gender-based stereotypes endured. Training for civil law judges on domestic violence and on the frequent use by perpetrators of joint parenting to maintain their control and domination over mothers and children is also still limited.[86] GREVIO regrets that neither initial nor in-service training on this subject is yet compulsory. In this context, it is interested to note the public law opinion published in 2025 on compulsory initial and in-service training for the police, public prosecutor's offices and the courts.[87] It points out that it is still essential to strengthen initial and in-service training for judges and other justice professionals on the relevant criminal and civil law and on harassment in the workplace in order to provide a judicial response and effective protection for women victims of violence across the country.[88]

82. While GREVIO reaffirms its full respect for the essential principle of independence of the judiciary and judicial autonomy in the organisation of training, it notes, at the same time, the unique and essential role the judiciary plays in applying the Istanbul Convention and its principles incorporated into national legislation. By virtue of this essential role, their decisions may directly incur

82. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network.
83. See also Article 50: Immediate response, prevention and protection.
84. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report, pp. 130-133.
85. Shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 147.
86. See Article 31: Custody, visitation rights and safety.
87. FOGE: Compulsory initial and in-service training for the police, public prosecutor's offices and the courts, Legal opinion and Response by the Federal Council giving rise to Postulate No. 21.4215 by Rielle Fehlmann, 5 December 2025.
88. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

states' responsibility.[89] When it comes to the training of judges, the growing corpus of GREVIO's baseline and thematic evaluation reports has consistently pointed to shortcomings at the level of the courts, in particular due to insufficient knowledge about the nature and dynamics of violence against women among many judges, and, as a result, low conviction rates for all forms of violence against women. It is therefore of paramount importance that, when ruling on cases in criminal and civil law pertaining to violence against women, such decisions are informed and based on appropriate, specialist knowledge, addressing, inter alia, gender stereotyping. This clearly requires expertise on very complex phenomena – such as trauma-induced victim behaviour; the freeze, flop and befriend reactions of victims of rape; and the long-term harm and consequences of witnessing domestic violence on children, along with in-depth knowledge of the standards of the Istanbul Convention. Such training needs cannot be sufficiently addressed by ad hoc, optional courses, but require mandatory and in-depth training of judges on relevant issues. It is encouraging that this is increasingly being recognised by judicial service colleges and that they are moving towards mandatory training on violence against women to address the complex nature of these offences. This is supported by the information collected by the Council of Europe European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) in 2020 showing that 24 member states of the Council of Europe require some form of compulsory in-service training for judges, and the complex nature of violence against women would merit inclusion of these topics.[90] Ways must be found therefore to ensure that members of the judiciary are equipped with the necessary knowledge to respond to women victims of violence and their children in a manner that instils their trust in the judiciary and makes them feel that justice has been done. This is of acute relevance not only in the context of criminal proceedings but also in relation to family law cases, where judicial decisions on custody and visitation often do not give sufficient consideration to the safety concerns and needs of women and children leaving abusive relationships, frequently ignoring allegations of domestic violence and/or accepting agreements despite a history of domestic violence.[91]

83. **GREVIO welcomes the measures taken to disseminate minimum standards for the training of various categories of professional and strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue their efforts and extend measures to ensure that all professionals who come into contact with victims and perpetrators of violence against women, including judges, receive systematic and mandatory initial and in-service training on all forms of violence against women. In so doing, they should:**

- **a. ensure that such training covers the prevention and detection of all acts of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, gender equality, stereotypes and perceptions of violence against women, the needs and rights of victims, trauma-induced victim behaviour and prevention of secondary victimisation;**
- **b. ensure that such training also addresses the specific needs of women exposed to intersectional discrimination;**
- **c. ensure that training is supported by standardised protocols for identifying victims, providing victim support and referring them to specialist services;**
- **d. ensure that the expertise of specialist associations is drawn on when devising and implementing training;**
- **e. carry out assessments of such training courses.**

84. **Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to ensure that judges presiding over cases involving custody and visitation rights receive mandatory training on:**

89. In many cases relating to violence against women, the courts have taken decisions incurring the liability of the state under the European Convention on Human Rights and resulting in a finding of a violation of the Convention: *Vuckovic v. Croatia* (Application No. 15798/20, 12 December 2023), *J.L. v. Italy* (Application No. 5671/16, 27 May 2021), and *Carvalho Pinto de Sousa Morais v. Portugal* (Application No. 17484/15, 25 July 2017).
90. Council of Europe European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), Qualitative Data on European Judicial Systems, 2020, available at: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/cepej/viz/QualitativeDataEN/QualitativeData.
91. See Article 31, Custody, visitation rights and safety.

a. the harmful effects that witnessing violence against women has on children and the importance of taking such offences into account when reaching decisions and/or agreeing to or promoting mediation in such cases;
b. the nature and dynamics of domestic violence, including the unequal power relations between the parties, as opposed to a mere conflictual relationship between spouses.

4. Preventive intervention and treatment programmes (Article 16)

85. Perpetrator programmes are important elements of an integrated and comprehensive approach to preventing and combating violence against women. Under Article 16 of the convention, parties are required to set up or support programmes that prevent perpetrators of domestic violence and of sexual violence from re-offending and support them in adopting non-violent behavioural strategies. Making the safety of, the support for, and the human rights of, victims a primary concern, these programmes are key elements in ensuring women's safety from known perpetrators. The convention requires their close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims.

a. Programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence

86. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that while there were a number of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence in Switzerland, the provision of services was still inadequate. It had also regretted the large disparities in the programmes on offer and the fact that in some cantons there was no co-operation between perpetrator programmes and specialist victim support facilities. Among other things, it had encouraged the Swiss authorities to adopt common minimum standards and increase the number of programmes available.

87. Since the baseline evaluation, the number of programmes for perpetrators of violence (violence prevention programmes) has slightly increased.[92] Current provision takes several forms: consultation after the imposition of an occupation order, court-mandated attendance, or voluntary participation. As to participation, in 2024, 3 347 people accessed perpetrator programme services, compared to 3 669 in 2023, 3 542 in 2022 and 2 416 in 2021.[93] The information received by GREVIO shows, however, that there is an ongoing shortfall in the capacity to handle perpetrators, whether for the interviews which perpetrators barred from their homes are ordered to attend[94] or for the specialist programmes for domestic violence perpetrators provided for under Article 55a of the Criminal Code, under which it is possible to suspend criminal proceedings in cases of domestic violence for up to six months.[95] While the number of decisions requiring perpetrators to take part in a prevention programme while proceedings are suspended seems to be on the increase, there are still major differences in the practice of criminal prosecution authorities. Whereas some cantonal prosecution offices have issued guidelines on participation in this type of programme, thus raising awareness of the issues among prosecutors and judges, this is not the case throughout the country.[96] GREVIO also notes with concern information it has received according to which many of the perpetrators who enrol on these programmes do not complete them.[97]

88. GREVIO notes with concern that financial restrictions considerably limit the capacity to establish or to preserve specialist services for perpetrators in a number of cantons whereas demand is rising. These limitations are particularly problematic for civil society organisations, including those offering voluntary programmes, which account for nearly half of the schemes available.[98] GREVIO points to the major role that prevention programmes can play, for perpetrators of violence against

92. Perpetrator programmes are provided by specialist cantonal services, cantonal prison or probation services and associations (which provide about half of the programmes available).
93. Source: annual reports by the Swiss umbrella organisation for the prevention of violence, SOLVIO, from 2021 to 2024.
94. See, in particular, Audit Office of the Republic and Canton of Geneva: report on the treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence, No. 194, 12 December 2024.
95. See Article 48: Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing.
96. Cantonal guidelines have been issued in cantons including Aargau, Basel-Countryside and Zurich.
97. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
98. See Article 8: Financial resources.

women who have not been reported to law enforcement agencies or whose case has not led to a conviction, in preventing violence from escalating and, ultimately, limiting the risks of gender-based killings.

89. As already pointed out in the baseline evaluation, the content of programmes and assessment practices differ greatly from canton to canton. Major differences also persist in the approach adopted and, in particular, co-operation with victim support services, including specialist services for women victims of violence such as shelters. Some programmes which GREVIO has been informed about are run in close co-operation with these services with a view to providing comprehensive security for women, which GREVIO welcomes.[99] However, it is clear that such co-operation has not been established in all cantons.

90. In this context, GREVIO welcomes the publication, in 2026, of minimum quality standards for measures to prevent reoffending by persons who have engaged in violence in a domestic context, prepared by SOLVIO. These standards, which relate to various programmes available in Switzerland, are based on preventing reoffending and the need to ensure that victim safety is the priority in all action taken.[100] Their aim is to make perpetrators take responsibility for their acts and to establish non-violent strategies for them to follow. They are explicitly based on Article 16 of the Istanbul Convention. GREVIO also notes with interest the work carried out under the auspices of the Federal Office of Justice to analyse existing good practices concerning perpetrator programmes, the co-operation between such programmes and LAVI centres and funding arrangements. In this regard, it draws the attention of the Swiss authorities to the recently published European standards for perpetrator programmes, which fully align with the Istanbul Convention's requirements and could serve as a reference point in the work of developing programmes for perpetrators of violence.[101]

91. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to take additional measures to:**

- **a. ensure that a sufficient number of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence with adequate resources are available throughout the country, and that there are clear referral routes to these programmes, whether participation is mandatory or voluntary;**
- **b. continue efforts to disseminate minimum standards for programmes for perpetrators of violence in line with European standards of best practice and drawing on existing good practices in Switzerland; ensure that such standards are implemented consistently throughout the country;**
- **c. ensure that programmes take an approach centred on victim safety and support and are implemented in close co-operation with victim support services;**
- **d. regularly assess the implementation and impact of the programmes.**

b. Programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence

92. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that there were programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence, but in insufficient numbers. Accordingly, it welcomes the fact that, in the wake of the reform of the Criminal Code with regard to sexual offences, perpetrators of sexual violence and sexual harassment may be compelled to attend a prevention programme. It is also pleased to note that, working in co-operation with four cantons, the CSVD and SOLVIO have drawn up a set of "minimum standards for sexual violence prevention programmes".[102] As a result, three cantons have set up programmes for perpetrators of sexual offences.[103] The establishment of these

99. This is the case, in particular, in Fribourg.
100. www.solvio.ch/fr/telechargements.
101. www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/european-standards-for-perpetrator-programmes.
102. www.solvio.ch/upload/downloads/Normes_minimales_pour_un_programme_de_pre_vention_contre_la_violence_sexuelle_f.pdf.
103. Zurich, Basel-City and Basel-Countryside.

new tools is crucial for measures to handle perpetrators of sexual violence to be strengthened and for better prevention of reoffending. GREVIO also stresses how important it is to regularly assess existing programmes to check that they are effective.

93. **GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to continue their efforts to ensure that programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence are available throughout the country and to regularly assess the impact of existing programmes.**

B. Protection and support

94. Chapter IV of the Istanbul Convention requires a multifaceted, professional and victim-oriented support structure for any woman or girl who has experienced any of the forms of violence covered by the convention. General and specialist support services that are victim-oriented, accessible to all and adequate in numbers greatly facilitate recovery by offering support, protection and assistance to overcome the multiple consequences of such violence. As such, they play a key role in offering a comprehensive and adequate response to the different forms of violence covered by the convention.

1. General obligations (Article 18)

95. Article 18 of the Istanbul Convention sets out a number of general principles to be respected in the provision of both general and specialist protective and supportive services for women victims of violence. One of these principles is the need for services to act in a concerted and co-ordinated manner, with the involvement of all the agencies concerned. More specifically, Article 18, paragraph 2, of the convention requires parties to put in place appropriate co-ordination mechanisms that can ensure effective co-operation among, *inter alia*, the judiciary, public prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, local and regional authorities, NGOs and other relevant entities and organisations. In this regard, women's rights NGOs and specialist women's support services play an important role in guaranteeing that the rights of victims are safeguarded in multi-agency co-operation. Other general principles established under this article include the need for measures of protection and support to be based on a gendered understanding of violence against women, and to focus on women's safety and human rights, taking into account the relationship between victims, perpetrators, children and their wider environment, and addressing their needs holistically. Specialist support services must aim at the empowerment and economic independence of women victims of violence and avoid their secondary victimisation. This provision equally stresses the importance of ensuring that access to services is not subject to the victim's willingness to press charges or testify against the perpetrator.

96. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that in many cantons, there were co-operation mechanisms on domestic violence involving differing stakeholders in differing cantons. It had pointed out though that there were no guidelines on multi-agency co-operation which applied across the country and that the rules on data protection and confidentiality that had been introduced did not always make it possible for the institutional stakeholders involved in co-operation to be properly informed. There had also been shortcomings in the co-operation between cantons where it came to case management.

97. GREVIO notes with satisfaction that since 2022, the number of intra-cantonal co-ordinating bodies has increased and some include specific working groups on migration, threat management or youth protection.[104] Promising practices exist, as in Fribourg, where a co-operation protocol for troubling cases of domestic violence was adopted in 2025.[105] However, bodies of this type do not yet exist in all cantons and the information received by GREVIO shows that in most cases, co-operation work is not based on standard co-operation protocols, depending instead on the

104. For example in Basel-Countryside, Fribourg and Zurich.
105. The "Marche à suivre" guide of 9 December 2025. See also Article 51: Risk assessment and risk management.

initiative and the availability of the persons directly involved.[106] There are still no national guidelines for multi-agency co-operation on violence against women. The composition of the bodies and organisations involved also varies considerably from canton to canton. In some cases, civil society organisations and specialist services – or the child protection authorities – are involved in co-operation, which GREVIO welcomes.[107] As already noted and welcomed in GREVIO's 2022 report, the relevant health services, particularly violence medicine units and other bodies specialising in the response to victims of violence, are included in cantonal co-operation mechanisms where they exist and may even help to strengthen such co-operation. In other cases, however, the number of stakeholders involved in co-operation is more limited, and specialist support services such as shelters are not always included.[108]

98. GREVIO notes with satisfaction that some cantonal co-operation networks deal with forms of violence other than domestic violence, particularly sexual violence.[109] In some cantons, points of contact on forced marriage and female genital mutilation are also incorporated into institutional co-operation, although this is not a systematic practice. With regard to forced marriages, GREVIO welcomes the fact that since 2024, a co-ordination group involving various federal authorities and the department that deals with forced marriages has met regularly to discuss specific cases and work to standardise the response to this form of violence. While welcoming these developments, GREVIO regrets that most cantonal co-operation mechanisms still focus on domestic violence.

99. GREVIO reiterates its appreciation for the major work carried out by various intercantonal conferences to enable information and good practices to be pooled and exchanged and to promote measures and standards, including those of the Istanbul Convention. It points in particular to the importance of the work of the CSVD and of the Conference of Cantonal Justice and Police Directors (CCDJP) and the Conference of Social Affairs Directors (CDAS), whose activities include efforts to overcome certain obstacles to co-operation between cantons and to seek regional threat management solutions where several cantons are involved, or with regard to shelters.[110] It is still concerned, however, about the enduring problems reported by several of the people it talked to which can mean that women victims of violence are not protected when their situation entails the involvement or co-operation of several cantons.[111]

100. In addition, obstacles to information-sharing deriving from various confidentiality requirements highlighted in GREVIO's baseline evaluation are still present and may limit the effectiveness of co-operation between the professionals concerned, both between cantons and within individual cantons. In this context, GREVIO notes with interest that in the model law on preventing and combating domestic violence and gender-based violence, which is currently being drawn up, it is planned both to include guidance on intracantonal co-operation and to address the data protection obligations which apply to the various professional categories involved in a way that will limit obstacles to co-operation. This framework may help to entrench and regulate co-operation mechanisms at cantonal level and hence substantially improve collaborative work intended to provide better protection for women victims of violence. GREVIO emphasises how important it is to establish clear rules for communication between the relevant bodies making it possible both to exchange information on ways of protecting women victims more effectively and ensuring that the confidentiality of victims' and perpetrators' personal data is respected.

101. As it already highlighted in its baseline evaluation, GREVIO notes that it is not a practice in Switzerland for services for women victims of violence all to be provided in one and the same place (through "one-stop shops"). It notes that some specialist services for victims, such as women's shelters (particularly those which also act as LAVI centres),[112] and several specialist hospital facilities

106. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
107. This is particularly the case in Fribourg, through its "Marche à suivre" scheme.
108. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
109. In Zurich, for example.
110. See Article 51: Risk assessment and risk management and Article 22: Specialist support services.
111. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also Article 51: Risk assessment and risk management.
112. For example, in Fribourg.

make it possible to provide more comprehensive care for women victims and hence to reduce secondary victimisation. GREVIO considers that existing practices could serve as a basis for the Swiss authorities to develop comprehensive care approaches for women victims of violence more systematically.

102. **Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to:**

- **a. ensure that intracantonal co-ordinating bodies are set up throughout the country and that they bring together all relevant bodies, including specialist support services for women victims of violence;**
- **b. continue efforts to adopt standardised guidelines for multi-agency co-operation and co-operation between cantons, providing clear guidance on information sharing between the professionals concerned; conduct regular reviews of the activities of co-ordinating bodies;**
- **c. ensure that co-operation mechanisms cover all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention including rape and sexual violence, digital manifestations of violence against women, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, drawing on the existing examples of promising practices adopted at national level;**
- **d. promote the establishment of facilities designed to offer support for women victims of violence on the basis of one-stop shops involving all the relevant bodies.**

2. General support services (Article 20)

103. General support services, such as social services, health services as well as housing or employment services must be equipped to offer support and protection to women victims of gender-based violence of all ages and backgrounds. Article 20 of the Istanbul Convention requires state parties to ensure that these services are adequately resourced and that the staff are adequately trained on the different forms of violence against women, and able to respond to victims in a supportive manner, in particular those that women and girls turn to first (i.e. health and social services).[113] Their interventions are often decisive for victims' onward journey towards a life free from violence and thus a core element of a trust-based system of protection and support.

a. Social services

104. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had welcomed the availability of general support services for victims provided by LAVI centres,[114] which fell within the remit of each canton, forming a first phase in the provision of advice and support for women victims of violence. However, it had also highlighted a number of problem issues relating to the care of victims, namely forms of violence against women which did not amount to criminal offences, barriers to access to services for women subject to violence abroad and, lastly, the difficulties encountered by some women facing intersectional discrimination when they turn to LAVI centres. GREVIO had also expressed concern about the disparities in the services offered throughout the country and had strongly encouraged the Swiss authorities to work to harmonise measures so as to ensure that all women victims of violence are properly supported and cared for whatever their place of residence.

105. GREVIO notes with interest that since its baseline evaluation, work has begun to revise the law on victim support with the aim of guaranteeing victims access to forensic support and services and to places in shelters.[115] This reform, which began in 2025, also intends to assign the cantons the task of raising awareness about victim support provision. Furthermore, now that the offence of stalking has been incorporated into the Criminal Code,[116] women victims of this form of violence can

113. Explanatory Report, paragraph 127.
114. Victim support centres set up pursuant to the Law on Support for Victims of Crime (the LAVI law) of 1993.
115. See Article 20.b: health services and Article 22: Specialist support services.
116. Article 181b of the Criminal Code, which came into force on 1 January 2026.

more easily access assistance from LAVI centres, even though, in practice, not all professionals have training in how to deal with it.[117] GREVIO also notes with interest that a parliamentary initiative has been tabled for the law on victim support to be amended so that victims of offences committed abroad can also access support services, which would enable women migrants or refugees who have been subject to gender-based violence outside Switzerland, such as victims of female genital mutilation, forced marriage and sexual violence, to benefit from the assistance and support, including medical care, provided for by the victim support law.

106. In general, GREVIO welcomes the fact that LAVI centres have now made it possible for women victims of violence to make use of counselling and psychological support services and receive assistance with legal proceedings without having to press charges. Measures have also been taken in some parts of the country to improve access to support for victims: in 2023, 12 cantons set up a joint online counselling service for victims of violence.[118] The information brought to GREVIO's attention shows, however, that some of its findings in 2022 still apply, particularly the difficulty of having psychological violence recognised as a form of violence for which advice or support may be provided under the law on victim support, despite the Federal Court judgment of 2022, which ruled that this should be the case.[119] GREVIO also notes with concern that in some cantons, victims are not systematically referred by LAVI centres to specialist support services, particularly shelters.[120] Problems with the accessibility of certain centres also continue to be reported; GREVIO therefore welcomes the work being carried out under the auspices of the Federal Office for Equality of Persons with Disabilities to help LAVI centres to improve their accessibility.[121] Overall, the persistence of major disparities in the services offered by LAVI centres in different cantons continues to mean in practice that the support and the level of protection afforded to women victims of violence depend on their place of residence.

107. Lastly, although victim support centres and welfare centres can provide housing support, this does not generally help to offset the difficulties in accessing housing in Switzerland, which also affect women victims of violence who need accommodation. GREVIO reiterates some of the concerns it expressed in its baseline evaluation, in particular with regard to the transition from support under the LAVI Act to welfare services. It is also still concerned about the fact that migrant women who have used welfare services following domestic violence may subsequently be refused renewal of their residence permit.[122] Lastly, it is concerned to note that in some cantons, payments for non-pecuniary damage are taken into account when calculating entitlement to social assistance, which can prevent women victims of violence who have been awarded such compensation for domestic violence from accessing social welfare.[123]

108. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up the work of harmonising the services provided by general support services so that all women victims of violence can access proper support and protection measures regardless of their place of residence. The authorities should also take additional measures to ensure that women who are victims of violence abroad benefit from accessible services under the law on victim support.**

117. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
118. www.onlineopferberatung.ch/.
119. Judgment ATF 150 II 465 - TF 1C_653/2022 (d), 3 June 2024, of the Federal Court relating among other things to repeated threats of suicide by a perpetrator of violence on a spouse who wished to leave him.
120. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
121. See Article 7: Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies.
122. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 200.
123. This has been the case since 2025 in the Canton of Geneva and to a certain extent, in the Canton of Bern. For the Canton of Geneva, see: Article 34(2)(d) of the Geneva Act of 23 June 2023 on Social Assistance and Combating Precariousness (LASLP/GE; RS/GE J 4 04) and Article 3(4) of the Geneva Regulations of 17 April 2024 implementing the Act on Social Assistance and Combating Precariousness (RASLP/GE; RS/GE J 4 04.01).

b. Health services

109. With regard to health services, in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that despite some promising practices in some cantons' hospitals, there were no standard country-wide protocols to facilitate specific care for women victims of violence and their referral to specialist services or the collection of forensic data.

110. Since the baseline evaluation, a reform of the law on victim support has been undertaken, as mentioned above.[124] One of its aims is to establish a right for all victims of violence to specific medical care and to secure free access to forensic evidence gathering without having to press charges, which is currently not possible in several cantons. Once this revision has been adopted, the cantons will be required to set up accessible services enabling the collection of forensic evidence. GREVIO welcomes this reform, which could help to remedy some of the shortcomings it noted during its baseline evaluation and improve the implementation of Chapter IV of the Istanbul Convention (protection and support).

111. GREVIO also notes with satisfaction that there has been an increase, since 2022, in the number of medical units providing specific care for victims of violence based on standardised protocols, such as violence medicine units drawing on the model of the unit initially set up in Lausanne,[125] as well as forensic consultations for adult victims of violence at the University Hospital of Geneva. The Zurich University Institute of Forensic Medicine and the Bern University Gynaecology Clinic also continue to apply specific protocols for the care of victims of sexual violence and the collection of forensic evidence, which GREVIO welcomes.[126] In the canton of Basel-City, victims have free-of-charge access to the collection and preservation of forensic evidence, even when they have not filed a legal complaint.[127] In Ticino too, a protocol is in place for the emergency services at the cantonal hospital to ensure that victims of domestic and sexual violence receive appropriate care, regardless of whether they intend to file a complaint. Lastly, the forensic medicine unit of the Cantonal Hospital of Saint Gallen offers 24-hour emergency forensic services to victims of domestic and sexual violence.

112. GREVIO welcomes the fact that two cantons, Zurich and Graubünden, have set up pilot projects for free forensic nursing consultations so as to facilitate access for victims of violence to the collection of forensic evidence without having to press charges. It considers this practice to be promising, especially for women victims of violence living in rural, mountainous or geographically isolated regions, for whom access to forensic medicine in the event of violence is more difficult. It is essential to ensure that all the bodies involved in protecting women victims of violence are duly informed of the existence of such services so that victims can be referred to them.

113. Apart from these examples of promising practices, there are no common protocols for the care of women victims of the various forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention covering all health professionals. Although the recommendations intended to raise awareness among health professionals about female genital mutilation were updated in 2023,[128] these are not guidelines which apply throughout the country, meaning that they do not enable health services to systematically care for and refer victims or potential victims of this particular form of violence.

114. GREVIO was also alerted to the lack of interpreters often substantially limits access to care for migrant and refugee women, including in cases of female genital mutilation.[129] Lastly, as already mentioned above, women victims of violence committed abroad still do not have access to

124. See paragraph 105.
125. Violence medicine units have now been set up in Lausanne, Yverdon-les-Bains, Nyon, Rennaz, for the canton of Vaud, Sierre in the canton of Valais, Fribourg (January 2026) and Neuchâtel (2024).
126. Translating into the "Sexual assault kit" at Zurich hospital and a sexual violence victim care protocol at the Bern Inselspital.
127. Costs are covered under the Law on Victim Support.
128. www.excision.ch/reseau/actualite/article/les-nouvelles-recommandations-relatives-aux-mgfe-pour-les-professionnelles-de-sante-sont-arrivees.
129. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

the support services and facilities offered by LAVI centres. In this context, GREVIO regrets the abolition in 2025 of the equal opportunities and health section of the Federal Office of Public Health, whose activities included measures to facilitate access to health services for women migrants and refugees. In addition, women with disabilities who are victims of violence still find it difficult to access support services, particularly if they live in institutions, because of a lack of accessible information about these services and their poor accessibility.[130]

115. With regard to forced sterilisation, GREVIO notes with great interest the position taken in 2024 by the National Advisory Commission on Ethics in Human Medicine on the sterilisation of persons permanently incapable of judgment, recommending upholding the principle of a ban on the sterilisation of such persons without consent,[131] and a survey of sterilisations conducted over the last ten years on the basis of an exception foreseen by the law under certain exceptional circumstances to find out how many had been carried out and for what reasons.[132] The report also recommends the introduction of a parenting support scheme and measures "to protect persons with intellectual disabilities from sexual abuse and forced contraception and termination of pregnancy". While welcoming the publication of this report and the recommendation to uphold the ban on sterilisation without consent on these persons and to better understand sterilisation practices under the exception foreseen by the law, GREVIO notes the proposal by the National Advisory Commission on Ethics to maintain an exception to the law and as well as the ongoing debate concerning its application in cases where the person shows signs of resistance.

116. Lastly, GREVIO notes with concern the lack of access to psychological care and support because they are often unavailable.[133] Although the possibility of accessing this type of support under the law on victim support was extended in 2023, which GREVIO welcomes, the difficulty of actually making an appointment with a specialised professional limits the impact of this change.

117. **GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up measures to:**

- **a. set up standardised healthcare guidelines throughout the country, drawing on promising existing practices and based on common protocols, so as to provide proper care for all women victims of violence;**
- **b. ensure that all women victims of violence, throughout the country, have access to forensic examination and the possibility of preserving evidence, even if they have not pressed charges;**
- **c. prevent and combat violence against women with disabilities, including those in institutions, in particular by improving information about and the accessibility of existing services;**
- **d. ensure that interpreters are available so as to facilitate access to care for women migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who have been victims of violence.**

130. Ibid. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, pp. 174-177 and Federal Council, "Violences subies par des personnes en situation de handicap en Suisse" ("Violence suffered by persons with disabilities in Switzerland"), 2023, op. cit.
131. Section 7 of the Sterilisation Act 2004 provides that: sterilisation "is authorised in exceptional circumstances subject to the following conditions: a. it is carried out, having regard to all the circumstances, in the best interests of the person concerned; b. the conception and birth of a child cannot be prevented by other appropriate methods of contraception or by the voluntary sterilisation of the partner who is of sound mind; c. the conception and birth of a child are to be expected; d. separation from the child after birth is inevitable because parental responsibilities cannot be exercised or because a pregnancy would seriously endanger the woman's health; e. the person concerned has no prospect of acquiring the capacity to discern; f. the chosen surgical procedure is the one with the highest probability of reversibility; g. the adult protection authority has given its authorisation in accordance with Article 8."
132. Sterilisation of persons permanently incapable of discernment, ethical views on Article 7 of the Law on Sterilisation of 2024.
133. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

3. Specialist support services (Article 22)

118. Specialist support services ensure the complex task of empowering victims through optimal support and assistance catered to their specific needs and are an equally important cornerstone of a trust-based system of protection and support. Much of this is best ensured by women's organisations and by support services provided, for example, by local authorities with specialist and experienced staff with in-depth knowledge of gender-based violence against women. They need to be able to address the different types of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention and to provide support to all groups of victims, including hard-to-reach groups.

119. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that there was a varied range of specialist services for women victims of violence. However, it had regretted the lack of places in shelters for such women ("women's homes"), mainly because of a lack of funding or of agreements between cantons to enable victims of violence to access shelters outside their home canton. It had also welcomed the Swiss authorities' decision to set up a single national helpline.

120. Since the baseline evaluation, the CDAS has published a report on the provision of shelters and emergency accommodation for victims of violence, in 2024. GREVIO notes with concern that this report and other information brought to its attention during its visit show that there is still a shortage of places in shelters throughout the country. There are currently 22 women's homes, offering 427 beds (231 family places).[134] This figure amounts to an increase in the number of places since GREVIO's baseline evaluation.[135] However, it is still below the requirements of the Istanbul Convention of one family place per 10 000 inhabitants. It is still difficult to gain access to a place in a shelter, and many victims of violence are rejected or placed on a waiting list. According to the umbrella organisation for women's shelters (the DAO), over 72% of persons seeking protection in a shelter in 2024 had to be pointed towards another solution.[136] It is still common for women victims of violence to be accommodated in hotels or in other facilities unsuited to their needs. Some of the rejections stem from the inability of shelters to cater for specific needs such as those of women with disabilities,[137] minors or persons with complex needs including language needs. In addition, information brought to GREVIO's attention by civil society representatives indicate that transgender women face particular obstacles where it comes to accessing shelters.[138]

121. GREVIO regrets that, as it already pointed out in its baseline evaluation, the main causes of these difficulties are still a lack of stable financing for shelters, differing tariffs according to occupancy rates and the fact that there is no harmonised funding system throughout the country. Most shelters lack the resources they need to provide support services, including for children, and most are not in a position to assist women victims of violence in the digital sphere.[139] Furthermore, intercantonal accommodation arrangements are still unusual, and some cantons still do not have any shelters at all. The difficulty of finding a place in another canton than one's place of residence is exacerbated for women refugees by the fact that they can only transfer their address from one canton to another in very strictly limited circumstances. Lastly, the CDAS report highlighted a lack of places in emergency accommodation and in transitional accommodation following residence in a shelter.

122. GREVIO notes with interest that, following the report commissioned by the CDAS, the authorities have begun efforts to improve accommodation provision for victims of violence. One of these improvements stems from the establishment of regional bodies to make it easier for women to be accommodated outside their home canton and hence to pool resources. The work to reform the law on victim support is also seeking to increase cantons' capacities for accommodation in shelters, emergency accommodation and transitional accommodation. Lastly, GREVIO notes that the committee to monitor implementation of the Istanbul Convention, which met in 2025 to discuss

134. State report, p. 73.
135. In 2019, there were 144 rooms (with 318 beds) in the 19 existing women's homes.
136. DAO, Annual Report 2024, p. 12.
137. Only one shelter is currently accessible to persons with physical disabilities (Saint Gallen).
138. Shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 109.
139. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

measures to prevent gender-based killings (femicides), made it a priority to increase the number of places in shelters. GREVIO also welcomes the fact that the length of accommodation for which costs are covered under the law on victim support has increased to over 60 days in some cantons.[140] However, it reiterates its finding of 2022 that it is essential for all women victims of violence and their children, wherever they live, to have access to enough accessible accommodation, offering specialist support, to help them to escape situations of violence and achieve autonomy.

123. With regard to female genital mutilation (FGM), GREVIO welcomes the fact that a number of new specialist contact points have been set up, for example at Ticino cantonal hospital, in the canton of Solothurn since 2023 and in Zurich since 2024.[141] However, despite the work carried out by the Swiss Network against Female Genital Cutting,[142] not all cantons have FGM contact points yet, because there is no dedicated funding for this. There are also contact points at regional level, which may help to offset the shortfall at cantonal level.[143] Access to care and treatment for women victims of this form of violence is, however, still very unevenly spread across the country.

124. As to the provision of other specialist services such as legal support and advice for victims, GREVIO points out again with satisfaction that a wide range of specialist providers exist in this area in addition to the core body of assistance provided by LAVI centres. It notes, however, that these services are concentrated in urban areas and far more difficult to access for women living in rural areas. Access to specialist support services is also still problematic for certain categories of women, such as women migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, who encounter language difficulties. It would seem in particular that women asylum seekers housed in Federal Asylum Centres (CFAs) do not always have access to safe, confidential and specialised advice and reporting centres.[144] Women in prostitution who are subject to violence also face obstacles when attempting to access support and advice services.[145] Lastly, there is a shortage of specialist referral services to meet the needs of women victims of violence in the digital sphere.[146]

125. GREVIO welcomes the setting up, on 1 May 2026, of a centralised national helpline for victims of violence (number 142), which is free of charge, multilingual and accessible 24/7. Calls are automatically transferred to counsellors at cantonal level. During the day, they are dealt with by LAVI centres whereas at night and the weekend, some cantons have opted for specialist advice services provided by associations specialising in support for women victims of violence,[147] whereas others have chosen more generalist services.[148] GREVIO stresses how important it is, assuming the aim of this service is to be in a position to offer effective support geared to the needs of women who call it, for the people tasked with answering calls to be specialised. It is especially vital that they have the skills to respond appropriately to the types of trauma which women suffer and that they know how to avoid secondary victimisation of callers and meet the particular needs of women exposed to intersectional discrimination. For this purpose, it is important to draw on existing specialist skills, particularly within women's rights associations. GREVIO would also like to draw attention to the fact that setting up a national helpline often gives rise to an increased demand for support and protection from second-line services, such as shelters, advice centres and legal aid. It is important therefore to ensure that these services have the capacity to cope with an increase in requests once the national helpline starts operating.

140. As opposed to 35 days on average at the time of GREVIO's baseline evaluation.
141. www.fgmhelp.ch/en/women-and-girls-who-are-affected-and-their-families/.
142. Since 2015, the Network against Female Genital Cutting Switzerland has offered advice and support for women at risk or women victims of female genital mutilation, carried out awareness-raising and prevention work and been responsible for facilitating the establishment of cantonal contact points (www.excision.ch/reseau/activites). It is awarded federal funding. See GREVIO's baseline evaluation report, paragraph 133.
143. See Federal Office of Public Health: *Weibliche Genitalverstümmelung: Einschätzung der Massnahmen des Netzwerks gegen Mädchenbeschneidung Schweiz, Analyse der Situation in den Kantonen und Verbesserung der Datenlage*, 2023.
144. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report of the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 208-212.
145. See the shadow report of the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 115.
146. Ibid, pp. 130-132.
147. In French-speaking Switzerland, the service is provided by the association Solidarité Femmes.
148. Ambulance services in Ticino and the general helpline la Main Tendue in several other cantons.

126. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take additional measures to guarantee that there are enough places in specialist shelters for all women victims of violence, throughout the country. The Swiss authorities should also ensure that specialist support is available in shelters, meeting the needs of all women victims of violence and their children, including those exposed to intersectional discrimination.**

127. **While welcoming the establishment of a national helpline for victims of violence, GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to ensure that, throughout the country, the professionals answering calls have the specific experience and expertise required to properly meet the needs of women victims of the various forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention.**

4. Support for victims of sexual violence (Article 25)

128. Under Article 25 of the convention, parties are required to provide a set of holistic services to victims of sexual violence, including immediate medical care and trauma support, combined with forensic examinations, as well as short- and long-term psychological counselling and therapy to ensure the victim's recovery. Such services should be provided by trained and specialised staff in an appropriate manner to respond to the victims' needs, preferably within rape crisis or sexual violence referral centres established in sufficient number through the country to ensure their easy access. The recommendation is to set up one of the above-mentioned centres per every 200 000 inhabitants.[149]

129. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that despite a number of promising practices at cantonal level, there were not enough specialist resources in the area of sexual violence to meet the needs of women victims of this type of violence.

130. As already stated above in relation to Article 20, GREVIO notes with satisfaction that since 2022, an increasing number of hospital services provide victims of sexual violence with specialist support and care, including the collection and preservation of forensic evidence without the need to press charges. The specific protocols for the care of victims of sexual violence and the collection of forensic evidence applied in Basel and Zurich are also practices that comply with the requirements of Article 25 of the convention. In addition, as already stated in the baseline evaluation report, GREVIO welcomes the fact that the bodies providing this type of service generally work with other key partners such as the police, LAVI centres and women's shelters, which makes it possible to refer victims to other services according to their needs. It is also pleased that in some cantons, support is provided for victims of both recent and non-recent rape.

131. Despite these promising practices, not all women victims of sexual violence have access to this type of service, and GREVIO regrets that in several cantons, it is still necessary for a complaint to be filed before forensic evidence can be collected and stored. In this context, it takes note of the revisions that are currently being made to the law on victim support to guarantee victims of sexual offences free access, without first having to press charges, to the collection and storage of forensic evidence, through specialist services. It stresses how important it is for this reform to be put into practice to improve the implementation of Article 25 of the Istanbul Convention throughout the country. The information brought to its attention suggests, however, that the implementation of the law will require adjustments to be made to the obligations of the professionals concerned with regard to the reporting of offences, which are within the cantons' competency.[150] GREVIO points out that it is also essential for co-operation protocols between specialist services and hospitals, on-call medical and surgical services, pharmacies and law enforcement agencies to be drawn up so that they immediately refer women victims of sexual violence to the emergency assistance centres set up to deal with them. Lastly, it also stresses the importance of ensuring that these services have the

149. Explanatory Report, paragraph 142.
150. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, pp. 87 and 88.

resources and capacities needed to provide adequate support for women exposed to intersectional discrimination, particularly women with physical or intellectual disabilities, women migrants and refugees or women in prostitution, who are extremely vulnerable to sexual violence.

132. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue taking measures throughout the country to provide victims of sexual violence with:**

- **a. trauma-informed medical care and support, provided by qualified professionals who carry out examinations with due regard for victims' needs;**
- **b. forensic examinations;**
- **c. immediate psychological support;**
- **d. referral to specialist services offering short- and long-term counselling and psychological support, whether or not they have pressed charges.**

C. Substantive law

133. Chapter V of the Istanbul Convention covers a range of provisions related to substantive law, in the area of both civil and criminal law, which aim to create the necessary legislative framework to prevent women and girls' further victimisation and to ensure robust intervention and prosecution by law-enforcement agencies. This section focuses on progress made with respect to selected provisions of the convention in the area of substantive law, notably, Article 31 on custody, visitation rights and safety and Article 48 on the prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing in cases of violence against women.

1. Custody, visitation rights and safety (Article 31)

134. Custody and visitation decisions in relation to families with a history of abuse require a careful balancing of the different interests at stake. Article 31 of the Istanbul Convention seeks to ensure that incidents of violence covered by the convention, in particular domestic violence, are taken into account in decisions on custody and visitation rights, to ensure that the exercise of these rights does not harm the rights and safety of the victim or children. This provision contributes directly towards their trust in the authorities because it offers essential protection from post-separation abuse.[151]

135. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that, in contexts of domestic violence, the possibility of awarding sole custody to victim parents was only very rarely deployed by courts and child protection authorities despite the risks run by victims and their children. It had also regretted that the difficulties faced by some women because they were subject to violence could result in a transfer of the child's residence to the perpetrator's home or in placement with the child protection services. GREVIO had also noted that it was rare for the visitation rights of fathers who had engaged in violence to be suspended. Lastly, it had regretted the continuing use of the concept of parental alienation in family law cases and the lack of specific training for professionals involved in such cases on domestic violence and its harmful effects on children who are exposed to it.

136. GREVIO regrets that, since its baseline evaluation report, there does not seem to have been any change in the legislation and practices with regard to custody and visitation rights in contexts of

151. It is noteworthy that in the case of *Bîzdîga v. the Republic of Moldova* (no. 15646/18, 17 October 2023), the European Court of Human Rights held that in proceedings concerning the custody and visitation rights regarding children in a domestic violence context, the primary focus must be on the best interests of the child, and an assessment of any risks of violence or other forms of ill-treatment therefore has to form an integral part of such proceedings. For this reason, it found that an alleged history of domestic violence was a relevant and even mandatory factor to be weighed in the assessment of domestic authorities when deciding on contact rights (§ 62). In the recent case of *Luca v. the Republic of Moldova* (no. 55351/17, 17 October 2023), the Court found a violation of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) on account of the failure of the Moldovan authorities to take into account incidents of domestic violence in the determination of child contact rights.

domestic violence. Parental authority is still only rarely suspended in such cases even though violence is one of the potential grounds for withdrawal under the Civil Code.[152] For child custody decisions, the most common practice is still the joint exercise of parental authority, in the form of alternating custody, even where domestic violence has occurred. GREVIO notes with concern that this practice, which is not prescribed by law, is considered by various professionals in contact with women victims of violence to derive from the prevalence of the rule of joint parental authority over children, which has applied since 2014. GREVIO also notes with serious concern the fact that the need to respect gender equality is sometimes used to justify decisions to maintain custody or visiting rights in situations of domestic violence.[153] Likewise, its attention was drawn to the fact that some women reporting domestic violence had had their custody rights withdrawn because it was considered that their allegations were intended to limit the father's role in the exercise of parental authority.[154] It also seems that the concept of parental alienation syndrome is still used during judicial proceedings to discredit mothers and obscure domestic violence. GREVIO considers that this type of message and practice will inevitably undermine the trust of women victims of violence in institutions and prompt them not to report the violence of which they are victims. It is also concerned by information brought to its attention by lawyers indicating that when decisions on custody are carried out in the course of rapid procedures known as "superprovisional measures", no guarantee seems to be in place to ensure that allegations of domestic violence by the mother are duly examined and taken into account, as foreseen by Article 31.[155] Lastly, as it already stated in its baseline evaluation, it is highly concerned about two bills which have been tabled, one to make interference with visitation rights a criminal offence[156] and the other to add a stipulation to the law that the objection of one of the parents can no longer prevent shared custody arrangements from being set up.[157] It considers that if they were adopted without simultaneously setting up a system to detect situations of violence or to conduct systematic investigations in the event of allegations of violence, these bills could make domestic violence even more invisible in cases of separation, undermine victims of such violence and increase the risks to the safety, health and well-being of children exposed to it.

137. GREVIO also notes with concern information it received that in some cases, custody was awarded to a violent parent on the ground that the mother who was the victim of violence was living in a shelter and could not therefore look after her child or children properly.[158] Furthermore, it is sometimes impossible for women accommodated in shelters with their children to enrol their children at a nearer school or to sign them up for psychological support without the consent of the perpetrator of violence.[159] Lastly, it has been reported to GREVIO that more often than not, foreign women's parental authority is withdrawn in favour of a Swiss spouse, as already highlighted in its 2022 report.[160]

138. In this context, GREVIO regrets that there is still no legal obligation for judges to actively seek histories of domestic violence before taking family law decisions and that in practice, most judges seem often not to do so. It takes note of a study of 2024 indicating that only 31% of judges questioned in this context agreed with the statement that, in cases of separation, it is systematically considered or asked whether there have been cases of violence between the parents. 52% of the members of the APEA answered yes to this question.[161] It also seems that communication of information between courts and with the professionals concerned is still very limited, which prevents judges ruling on

152. Article 311, paragraph 1, ch.1 of the Civil Code.
153. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
154. Ibid. See also ECHR: *N.P. v. Switzerland*, Application No. 52031/21, judgment of 30 April 2026. This judgment related to a case in which custody was withdrawn from a mother on the ground that the latter was undermining her child's well-being by adopting a conflictual attitude towards the child's father.
155. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
156. Motion No. 193597 (Nantermod).
157. Parliamentary initiative No. 21.449 (Kamerzin).
158. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
159. Ibid.
160. Ibid.
161. FOGE and CSVD: Offres de soutien et mesures de protection pour les enfants exposé·e·s à la violence dans le couple parental (Support and protection measures for children exposed to violence between parents), Final Report, April 2024.

custody and visiting rights from being duly informed of any current criminal proceedings or protection measures.[162] Training of civil law judges on domestic violence and the frequent use of joint parenting by perpetrators to maintain their control and domination over mothers of children is still limited. It would also seem that they are not made sufficiently aware of the difference between violence and parental conflict.[163] Consequently, various forms of parental conciliation are still proposed in situations of domestic violence and hearings attended by both parents are frequent in civil law proceedings, often resulting in the secondary victimisation of women victims of violence.[164]

139. Violence against women within couples is still not regarded by the professionals concerned as a threat to children. Only serious physical violence or violence directed against a child constitute a reason to suspend the right to custody.[165] While children are entitled to be represented by a lawyer or a guardian during civil proceedings in a context of domestic violence and before child protection authorities, civil society representatives and lawyers have reported to GREVIO that not enough attention is paid to their testimony in such circumstances, as respect for the principle of joint parental authority seems often to take precedence over potential threats to the safety, health and well-being of children. GREVIO points out that exposing children to violence and physical, sexual or psychological abuse against a parent has a serious impact on their health, well-being and development. Various professionals reported to GREVIO that, in practice, maintaining contacts between children and both parents often takes precedence over the need to protect children from exposure to domestic violence.[166] This trend is reflected in the fact that visiting rights are often awarded in situations of domestic violence, even where a protection order has been issued or where the mother and her child or children are living in a shelter.[167] GREVIO also notes that while dedicated spaces exist to host supervised visits, the professionals working at these “meeting points” do not always have sufficient training in the dynamics of domestic violence and its impact on mothers and their children, and this can result in situations which put the safety of the mother and her children at risk. In addition, the status of these professionals is often very insecure, which results in frequent replacements and limits the impact of the training they may be given.[168] Lastly, in some cantons, a lack of resources prevents safe (or “mediated”) spaces from being made available.[169]

140. GREVIO also notes with concern that so-called parental alienation syndrome and similar concepts such as that of the manipulative and possessive mother are still used in civil law proceedings, particularly those relating to child protection. Use of such concepts renders domestic violence invisible and undermines the accounts of children who allege violence or are exposed to domestic violence.[170]

141. In this context GREVIO welcomes the work of the FOGE and the CSVD to raise awareness among professionals in the justice system and child protection bodies about the risks for women victims of violence and their children during separations, and the measures which should be taken to take more account of domestic violence when taking decisions on custody and visitation rights.[171]

162. Information obtained during GREVIO’s evaluation visit.
163. Ibid.
164. See Article 48: Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing.
165. Information obtained during GREVIO’s evaluation visit.
166. Ibid. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 156.
167. Information obtained during GREVIO’s evaluation visit. See also, Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE): *Autorité parentale, garde, droit de visite et violence domestique, La réglementation de l’autorité parentale et l’aménagement en droit civil de la prise en charge des enfants lors de séparations dans des situations de violence domestique* (Parental authority, custody, visiting rights and domestic violence, Rules on parental authority and civil law arrangements for the care of children during separations in contexts of domestic violence), August 2024.
168. Information obtained during GREVIO’s evaluation visit.
169. Ibid.
170. See, in particular, the judgment of the Federal Court of 29 April 2026 (5A_293/2026), recital 6.2.1, and the considerations on the “maternal anxiety” of a mother alleging sexual violence against her child by the father.
171. FOGE: Parental authority, custody, visiting rights and domestic violence, op. cit., 2024; FOGE: questionnaire: *Soutien à l’identification des cas de violence domestique lors de séparation* (Support for the identification of cases of domestic violence during separation), 2025; Conference of Cantonal Justice and Police Directors (CCDJP): *Violence domestique : quel contact après la séparation des parents?* (Domestic violence: contact after the parents separate) Guide on the evaluation and arrangement of personal relations for child victims of domestic violence), October 2025.

It also welcomes the efforts made by the authorities to alert professionals to the threats posed to the safety of women victims of violence and their children by the use of the concept of parental alienation syndrome.[172] It considers it essential, however, in order for Article 31 of the convention to be fully implemented, for domestic violence incidents, including those witnessed by children, to be explicitly listed in the legislation among the criteria to be taken into account when deciding on custody and visitation rights.

142. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take the following priority measures with regard to custody and visitation rights in order to ensure the safety of victims and their children:**

- **a. ensure that the incidents of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, including those witnessed by children, are explicitly listed in the legislation among the criteria to be taken into account by courts when deciding on custody and visitation rights;**
- **b. take steps to introduce a procedure for the systematic examination of cases related to decisions on custody and visitation rights so as to determine whether violence was a feature of the relationship between the parents and carry out a risk assessment;**
- **c. systematically take account of the negative impact of violence against women on children and recognise that this undermines their best interests; take all appropriate measures to ensure that all the professionals concerned, including child protection professionals, judges, judicial experts, child psychologists and lawyers, have training in domestic violence and understand the harmful effects and the unfounded nature of so-called parental alienation syndrome and similar concepts which portray women victims of violence as alienating, hostile or unco-operative;**
- **d. consider allegations of domestic violence made in the context of separation procedures and take measures to identify and assess safety concerns expressed by women victims of domestic violence; refrain from describing women as manipulative or unco-operative rather than assessing such allegations;**
- **e. ensure that children are not removed from the custody of non-violent parents as a result, in particular, of the application of such concepts;**
- **f. strengthen measures to ensure that when domestic violence is detected, information is exchanged between civil and criminal law courts and victims are not required or placed under pressure to attend joint meetings with perpetrators in order to reach an agreement;**
- **g. set up safe facilities where supervised visits can take place, taking steps to guarantee the safety of children and victims, and appoint a sufficient number of professionals with training in domestic violence, particularly violence committed after separation, to supervise such visits.**

2. Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing (Article 48)

143. Article 48, paragraph 1, of the Istanbul Convention requires parties to prohibit the mandatory participation in any alternative dispute resolution processes, including mediation and conciliation, in relation to cases of all forms of violence against women covered by the convention. This provision stems from the principle that violence against women is a manifestation of unequal power relations and that victims of such violence can never enter the alternative dispute resolution processes on an equal footing with the perpetrator. To avoid the re-privatisation of such violence and to enable the victim to seek justice, it is the responsibility of the state to provide access to adversarial court proceedings on the basis of robust criminal and civil law provisions.

172. The Swiss authorities have also announced their intention to take domestic violence more fully into account in family law proceedings: *Unis contre la violence domestique : des progrès grâce à la feuille de route, d'autres mesures en préparation*.

144. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that the professionals tasked with managing civil law conciliation procedures did not always have sufficient training in violence against women and women victims of violence could be urged to take part in mediation processes concerning the fate of their children and, during criminal law proceedings, to take part in conciliation hearings intended to arrive at a friendly settlement in the case of offences prosecuted only upon complaint.

145. Conciliation prior to divorce or separation is not mandatory under Swiss civil law. GREVIO notes however that since its baseline evaluation report, projects to de-escalate conflicts have been implemented in various cantons to promote friendly settlement during separation and divorce proceedings, particularly on matters relating to children.[173] Since there is no formal prohibition of conciliation where domestic violence has occurred in civil law, GREVIO stresses how important it is to set up mechanisms to detect situations of domestic violence so as to prevent conciliations from being carried out in this context. It notes that in some of these projects, it is stated that conciliation is not appropriate in such situations. In the canton of Fribourg for instance, GREVIO noted with interest that a project for parental consensus in the event of separation or divorce provided that where there is a suspicion of domestic violence, a task force made up of specialists in various fields, including associations providing specialist services to women victims of violence and organising programmes for perpetrators, must examine the case in order to detect any possible context of domestic violence and rule out conciliation if it finds any.[174] In the canton of Bern, a project whose aim is to set up a consultation process in family law proceedings in disputes relating to questions concerning children rules out conciliation where there are signs of serious domestic violence.[175] However, there do not seem to be any benchmarks against which it would be possible to determine how serious the level of violence is. GREVIO points out in this connection that even acts which may be considered to be less serious can be evidence of a situation of domestic violence and coercive control, thus forming an obstacle to conciliation or mediation between victim and perpetrator, as this means that the two parties will not be on an equal footing.

146. GREVIO also notes, based on the information that it has received, that professionals running conciliation or mediation sessions do not always have sufficient training to distinguish conflict from violence, to understand the mechanisms of domestic violence and to ensure that victims' interests are protected. It would also seem that parents are strongly encouraged by the different stakeholders operating in the field of family law to show that they are co-operative. It can be difficult therefore for women victims of violence to refuse conciliation or mediation, particularly when APEAs press for it. GREVIO also notes that joint hearings of parents are often held in such contexts, which can expose women victims of violence to secondary victimisation.[176] Lawyers and other professionals working with women victims of violence have reported to GREVIO that many agreements negotiated in such circumstances are detrimental to women and that civil law judges often do not check under what conditions agreements have been reached and whether there may have been a situation of domestic violence. GREVIO considers therefore that it is essential to have mechanisms which enable judges and professionals in charge of conciliation to ensure that the latter does not take place where there is evidence of domestic violence, to ensure that victims give their free and informed consent to alternative dispute settlement procedures, to strengthen the safeguards which apply when conciliation or any other form of friendly settlement is offered or accepted, and to ensure that victims are not placed under direct or indirect pressure. Consequently, practices whose aim is to detect situations of domestic violence should be evaluated and, where appropriate, disseminated in other cantons to ensure that domestic violence is systematically detected in the context of separation proceedings.[177] More generally, GREVIO considers that as part of the current process of family law

173. Particularly in the cantons of Fribourg, Geneva, Bern, Basel-City, Valais and Vaud. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the Federal Council report, *Juridiction et procédure en droit de la famille: état des lieux et propositions de réforme* (Family law jurisdiction and procedure: review and reform proposals), June 2025.
174. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
175. Federal Council report: Family law jurisdiction and procedure, op. cit., 2025.
176. See also Article 31, Custody, visitation rights and safety and Article 56: Protection measures.
177. Like the mechanism set up in the context of the parental consensus project in the canton of Fribourg.

reform, whose aim includes increased use of friendly settlement, it is essential to ensure that the rules and mechanisms which are set up do not have the effect of inciting women victims of violence to engage in this type of procedure, thus resulting in quasi-mandatory conciliation or mediation. In this connection, GREVIO points out that a decision not to take part in a friendly settlement process should not have any impact on the family law procedures which follow.

147. As to criminal law, as already stated in the baseline evaluation, optional alternative dispute settlement methods may be used for cases concerning offences prosecuted only on complaint. The public prosecutor may summon the parties to a hearing for this purpose. As already noted by GREVIO in 2022, if the complainant does not attend this hearing, the complaint is deemed to have been withdrawn. In some cantons, the practice of dismissing complaints when complainants notify the authorities that they will not be participating in a joint hearing seems to be continuing.[178]

148. Lastly, under labour law, it is possible to decide unilaterally not to participate in conciliation in cases of sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination.[179] Nonetheless, despite the wishes of the persons concerned, it is reported that it is the practice of some judges to question the parties at the beginning of hearings to determine whether it may be possible to reach an agreement.[180] This practice, which was reported to GREVIO by lawyers and other professionals working with women victims of violence, may result in women being prompted to accept a conciliation proposal although they are in an unequal power relationship.

149. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to ensure that parental conciliation and mediation procedures organised in the context of family law do not amount to a quasi-mandatory conciliation process in the event of histories of violence. For this purpose, the Swiss authorities should, in particular:**

- **a. establish mechanisms to ensure that judges and mediators systematically detect histories of violence during family law proceedings, particularly in the context of conciliation and advance parental consensus procedures;**
- **b. put in place adequate safeguards to ensure that free and informed consent is given by women victims of violence throughout voluntary conciliation or mediation procedures and that such procedures fully respect the rights, needs and safety of victims.**

150. **GREVIO also urges the Swiss authorities to set up adequate safeguards to ensure that free and informed consent is given by women victims of violence in the optional conciliation procedures provided for by criminal law and to ensure that refusal to participate in conciliation does not harm victims.**

D. Investigation, prosecution, procedural law and protective measures

151. Full accountability for all acts of violence against women requires an adequate response from law-enforcement agencies and the criminal justice sector. Chapter VI of the Istanbul Convention establishes a set of measures to ensure criminal investigations, prosecutions and convictions in a manner that validates women's and girls' experiences of violence, that avoids their secondary victimisation and that offers protection throughout the different stages of proceedings. The provisions covered in this section are fundamental to the delivery of protection and justice for all women and girls at risk of or who have experienced gender-based violence.

178. See civil society submission, p. 94.
179. See Article 199, para. 2 c of the Code of Civil Procedure.
180. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

1. General obligations (Article 49) and immediate response, prevention and protection (Article 50)

152. A key principle of an adequate response to violence against women is that of swift and effective investigations and judicial proceedings that are based on a gendered understanding of these types of offences and that take into consideration the rights of the victim during all stages. Law enforcement or judicial actors often do not prioritise incidents of violence against women and domestic violence, thereby contributing to the impunity of perpetrators and reinforcing the misconception that this type of violence is "acceptable" in society.[181] A consequence of assigning low priority to incidents of violence against women and domestic violence is delays in initiating investigations and judicial processes, which in turn may lead to the loss of vital evidence and to an increased risk for the victim of repeated violence. For these reasons, Article 49 of the convention requires parties to ensure that investigations and judicial proceedings are conducted without undue delay, while at the same time respecting the rights of victims during each stage of these processes. Article 50 further reinforces these obligations by requiring that law enforcement agencies react promptly and appropriately in cases of violence against women, including by offering victims immediate protection, and by engaging in the prevention of violence. GREVIO reports focus on the application of Article 50 at key stages of the criminal justice process, notably, reporting, investigation, prosecution and conviction, all of which are key contributors to victims' sense of support, protection and justice.

a. Reporting to, immediate response and investigations by law-enforcement agencies

153. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that it was difficult to gain an overview of police practices throughout the country as operating protocols were specific to each canton. It had welcomed the fact that some cantons had specialised police units and that the cantonal police had the power to evict perpetrators of violence from their homes. However, it had also expressed concern about the difficulties faced by women exposed to intersectional discrimination when they wished to report violence and the difficulty of lodging complaints about psychological violence.

154. GREVIO notes with satisfaction that since the baseline evaluation report, police specialisation in violence against women has increased further in some cantons, including on themes such as victim trauma.[182] It also welcomes the establishment of new means of filing complaints, online or by video,[183] or on premises other than police stations, where victims are dealt with by officers not wearing uniforms.[184] With regard to sexual violence, GREVIO welcomes the appointment in 2026, within the Conference of Cantonal Police Commanders, of a working group on sexual offences, tasked with facilitating the implementation of the new provisions of the Criminal Code on sexual offences and improving the care and treatment of victims of sexual violence. GREVIO also notes that the number of complaints for sexual offences in Switzerland has continued to grow, which may indicate an increase in the number of cases or could reflect an increased propensity among the population to report this type of violence, as the result of increased awareness in society and the debates which took place when the relevant criminal law amendments were adopted in 2023.[185] The same applies to the number of domestic violence offences reported to the police, which increased from 19 978 in 2022 to 21 127 in 2024 and 22 066 in 2025.[186]

155. Information received by GREVIO highlights, however, the enduring obstacles faced by women who wish to report violence, which can be particularly sizeable for women migrants and refugees and those in prostitution. GREVIO notes with grave concern information brought to its

181. Explanatory Report, paragraph 255.
182. In Geneva, for example.
183. In Zurich.
184. In Lausanne.
185. The number of rapes recorded in violence statistics collected by the police rose from 867 in 2022 to 1 086 in 2024 (state report, p. 156).
186. Police crime statistics: www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home.gnpdetail.2026-0089.html.

attention indicating shortfalls in the availability of interpreters for persons filing complaints and the fact that the uncertain migratory status of some women may be considered more important than the fact that they are victims of violence. There have been cases of women in an irregular administrative situation wishing to file a complaint for violence being prosecuted because of their migration status.[187] Police training on forced marriage also seems to vary from canton to canton.[188] In addition, it would seem that a large number of police officers do not have sufficient training in the hearing of women with disabilities.[189] In general, GREVIO notes with concern the fact that the police response to women victims of violence wishing to press charges still varies according to the location and the level of training of the officer concerned. The arbitrary nature of the way in which women victims of violence are received is not liable to encourage them to file complaints or to engender trust in the judicial system. Furthermore, the risk of exposure to prosecution for migrant women in an irregular situation inevitably deters them from reporting violence.

156. In addition, as it already pointed out in its report of 2022, GREVIO notes with concern that it is still difficult to file a complaint for psychological violence or for violence committed in the digital sphere. This is related, in particular, to the fact that psychological violence is not a criminal offence in Switzerland and that the level of seriousness and intensity required in order for psychological violence to be considered under the offences of serious threat and coercion is still very high.[190] Additionally, GREVIO considers that the introduction of the offence of stalking into the Criminal Code could ultimately help to increase awareness among the law enforcement agencies about certain forms of violence committed in the digital sphere which have a major psychological impact on victims. It reiterates how important it is for police officers to be trained in how to detect and deal with psychological abuse, which very often forms a key part of the continuum of domestic violence and can be a major warning sign of risks that the victim will be physically abused.

157. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue taking measures to ensure that all law enforcement agencies are in a position to respond rapidly and appropriately to all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention. For this purpose, they should identify and remove all obstacles preventing women and girls from reporting violence they have suffered to the police, focusing in particular on the experience of women migrants and refugees, women with disabilities or women in prostitution.**

b. Effective investigation and prosecution

158. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had regretted the lack of data on criminal procedure, which made it difficult to assess the criminal justice response to the various forms of violence against women. It had also expressed concern about the high number of dismissed cases, particularly those relating to sexual violence.

159. GREVIO welcomes the adoption, in 2025, by the Swiss Conference of Public Prosecutors, of guidelines for hearings of victims of sexual violence, based on promising practices identified at cantonal level.[191] It considers that this type of guidance can help considerably to prevent secondary victimisation during judicial proceedings and engender more trust in institutions among women victims of violence. It is also pleased to note that in some cantons, directives have been issued to

187. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also Le Temps, "*Arrêter, poursuivre ou renvoyer les personnes sans papiers qui exercent un droit fondamental est contraire au droit supérieur*" ("Arresting, prosecuting or deporting undocumented migrants exercising a fundamental right is a breach of superior law"), collective contribution of 25 February 2026.
188. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
189. Ibid.
190. Ibid.
191. "Bonnes pratiques dans le cadre de l'audition des victimes de violences sexuelles" : www.ssk-cmp.ch/fr/dienstleistungen/empfehlungen-der-ssk/kategorie/327.

prosecutors with regard to domestic violence cases, relating among other things to the need for such cases to be processed rapidly, particularly where children are involved.[192]

160. As already mentioned above, information received by GREVIO indicates that the threshold for proceedings to be initiated in relation to some forms of violence against women, particularly psychological violence and violence committed in the digital sphere, is still high.[193] As things stand it is difficult to assess practice with regard to proceedings under the new law which makes stalking a criminal offence. As to violence in the digital sphere, GREVIO notes with concern that Swiss prosecutors only rarely require internet service providers to withdraw content amounting to forms of violence against women.[194]

161. Furthermore, the lack of data on prosecution and conviction rates still means that it is not always possible to assess attrition rates in cases of violence against women. As with stalking, it is difficult to assess yet to what extent the amendments to the Criminal Code concerning sexual offences have been implemented. GREVIO stresses, however, how important it is to alert the prosecuting authorities to the impact of these changes on how sexual violence should be viewed, particularly when examining the circumstances surrounding cases; the focus now should be on the question of the woman's free will and the capacity of the perpetrator to take this into account, rather than evidence of the presence of other components of the offence, such as threats or coercion, as was required by the law up until the changes adopted in 2023.

162. GREVIO also notes that the Criminal Code limits *ex officio* prosecution of offences of physical violence typical of domestic violence (common assault and acts of aggression) to violence committed during marriage or registered partnerships or within a year following their dissolution. For violence in non-married couples to be prosecuted *ex officio*, the Criminal Code provides that the couple must be or have been cohabiting for an indefinite period and that the violence must have been committed during this period or within a year following separation.[195] Physical violence within other types of couples may therefore not be prosecuted *ex officio,* in which case victims are then forced to take action themselves within three months of the occurrence of the facts.

163. Lastly, GREVIO reiterates the concerns it expressed in its baseline evaluation concerning the possibility for prosecutors to suspend domestic violence proceedings for six months in order to "stabilise or improve the victim's situation".[196] After six months, the prosecutor may request that the criminal proceedings resume if he or she considers that the suspension has not helped to stabilise the relationship. If they believe it has, however, the proceedings may be discontinued. In its baseline evaluation, GREVIO argued that the limited duration of the suspension was not necessarily conducive to a proper assessment of whether the perpetrator had had the lasting change of attitude needed and questioned the appropriateness of using such suspensions to "stabilise or improve the victim's situation" in contexts of domestic violence. Information brought to its attention suggests that in some cantons, suspension of proceedings is proposed very frequently, particularly in cases where a complaint is also filed by the presumed perpetrator of violence, which can mean that women victims of violence feel under great pressure to agree to such procedures. It also happens, particularly where the victim does not have a lawyer, that prosecutors send the form to request suspension of proceedings by post to the complainant's official address. If the victim still lives with the accused, the accused may intercept the form, with the result that the victim's free and informed consent to suspension will be seriously compromised. The practice of suspension of proceedings may therefore help to conceal the real scope of domestic violence and undermine the measures taken to increase domestic violence reporting rates and improve the effectiveness of the judicial response in this area.

192. This is the case for example in Fribourg: Directive No. 2.7 of the Principal State Prosecutor of 8 July 2020 on domestic violence, updated on 27 March 2026.
193. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
194. Ibid.
195. Articles 123 and 126 of the Criminal Code.
196. Procedure provided for in Article 55a of the Criminal Code.

164. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue their work to improve the effectiveness of investigations and prosecutions concerning all forms of violence against women, including those in the digital sphere.**

c. Conviction rates

165. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that despite the lack of data on conviction and attrition rates, the available information suggested a high rate of attrition, particularly in cases of sexual violence.

166. As mentioned above, it is difficult to assess the impact on convictions of the amendments made to the Criminal Code concerning sexual offences so soon after their entry into force. According to information provided by civil society representatives and lawyers, rates of conviction for sexual violence are still low and prejudices with regard to rape victims endure, even among the judiciary.[197] GREVIO notes with interest that the federal authorities are currently preparing a survey of the implementation of the new criminal law provisions, which may help to improve the assessment of the impact of these amendments and identify any shortcomings in their implementation.

167. GREVIO reiterates its concern that in the absence of data on rates of prosecution and conviction, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the criminal law response to the various forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention and make any improvements that are needed for these to be punished more effectively. It points out that in many States Parties to the convention, violence against women is a major source of litigation, including in terms of volume, and that it is essential to be able to gauge and improve the effectiveness of the judicial response.

168. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take additional measures throughout the criminal law process to enhance the judicial response to sexual violence. They should, in particular, analyse the reasons for the attrition of rape cases, with a view to higher prosecution and conviction rates for these crimes and assess the impact of the legislative changes concerning sexual offences.**

2. Risk assessment and risk management (Article 51)

169. Many perpetrators of domestic violence, rape, stalking, sexual harassment, forced marriage and other forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention threaten their victims with serious violence, including death, and have subjected their victims to serious violence in the past, including non-fatal strangulation. The growing digital dimension to such violence further exacerbates women's and girls' sense of fear. Article 51 thus places concern for their safety at the heart of any intervention in such cases by requiring the establishment of a multi-agency network of professionals to protect high-risk victims without aggravating the harm experienced. It sets out the obligation to ensure that all relevant authorities, not just law-enforcement authorities, effectively assess and devise a plan to manage the safety risks a victim faces, on a case-by-case basis, according to standardised procedures and in co-operation with each other.

170. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that several cantons had a risk assessment tool but there was no harmonisation of practices or common criteria. There were also gaps in the intercantonal co-operation for the management of situations involving several cantons. Lastly, it had strongly encouraged the authorities to extend measures for the retrospective assessment of gender-based killings of women to the entire country.

171. Since the baseline evaluation report, standardised common norms for the cantonal management of threats have been adopted (introduced in 2022 and updated in 2026), which GREVIO welcomes. These norms recommend the establishment of specialist bodies for the

197. According to a report by the association Brava in June 2024, only 4% of rapists are convicted: "Von 100 nur 4", 2 June 2024.

management of threats in each canton, based on multi-agency co-operation, to detect dangerous developments and prevent violence or repeat offending. Although the norms do not relate specifically to violence against women, domestic violence is one of the situations considered to require a systematic risk assessment system. GREVIO notes with satisfaction that the emphasis has been placed on the need to place risk assessment on an institutional footing and to base it on a system for co-operation and information pooling between the relevant bodies.

172. In practice, according to information provided by partners on the ground, co-operation has increased since 2022, both between cantons, through the work, for example, of the intercantonal working group on threat management, and between police authorities and specialist services, including those managed by women's rights organisations, such as shelters.[198] GREVIO welcomes this development, and the fact that a growing number of cantons use risk management tools.[199] However, GREVIO notes that despite these promising practices and efforts to harmonise threat management, the risk assessment tools used still differ considerably and some relate specifically to violence against women while others do not. It notes that the diversity of the tools used complicates intercantonal co-operation because it is impossible for cantons to base their work on a common risk assessment framework in cases involving more than one of them. Shortfalls in the exchange of information between cantons can also mean that reoffending is not taken into account as a risk factor.[200] Civil society representatives have also informed GREVIO that the diverse range of tools used and differences in the training provided for the staff responsible for assessing risks mean that some key risk factors, such as separation, are not always duly taken into account. Professionals working with women victims of violence have reported that the risks to which children of victims may be exposed are not always sufficiently assessed or taken into account when setting up protection measures.[201] It would also seem that risk assessment tools are not used in the context of any forms of violence other than domestic violence.

173. Lastly, as already mentioned above and in its baseline evaluation report,[202] GREVIO notes that personal data protection issues can still hinder the exchange of information needed for a proper risk assessment to be carried out and victims to be fully protected. It also takes due note of the plan for the draft model law to cover threat management and clarify the rules where it comes to lifting professional confidentiality to facilitate the timely exchange of key information to ensure victim safety.[203] In this context, GREVIO would point to the principle, reiterated by the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *N.D. v. Switzerland,* that "in cases of violence against women, the perpetrator's rights cannot supersede victims' rights to life and to bodily and psychological integrity".[204] In this judgment, the Court emphasised the importance of sufficient communication and co-ordination between the persons concerned in order to be able to properly assess the threat to the victim's life and take operational measures to protect her.

174. As pointed out at the beginning of this report, Switzerland has seen an increase in the number of gender-based killings of women in recent years.[205] GREVIO welcomes the fact that the Swiss authorities have understood the scale of this problem and taken a number of measures to prevent these killings. The FOGE's study on homicides in Switzerland between 2019 and 2013 in particular provides key data on the risk factors of homicide in the domestic sphere. A second study highlights the disproportionate number of homicides by firearm in the domestic sphere, showing a possible

198. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
199. 20 of the 26 cantons. The canton of Ticino, for example, uses a specific domestic violence tool called the "domestic violence first responder pyramid", which may be used by all frontline operators. Risk assessment is shared with other bodies. In the canton of Fribourg, the threat management unit works in co-operation with all stakeholders, and professional confidentiality can be lifted to facilitate information exchange, particularly in cases of high risk, the release of a perpetrator or the context of a separation. Risk analysis is repeated and regularly updated. Co-operation follows a predetermined protocol called "la marche à suivre", see Article 18: General obligations.
200. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, pp. 98 and 99.
201. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
202. Article 18: General obligations.
203. Article 3: Definitions
204. ECHR: *N.D. v. Switzerland*, Application No. 56114/2018, judgment of 3 April 2025.
205. See "Emerging trends in the areas of violence against women and domestic violence".

correlation with the possession of arms at home in connection with military service.[206] The findings of this study highlight the importance of sequestering or confiscating firearms if there are warning signs, which civil society representatives reported is not always the case in practice.[207]

175. GREVIO also welcomes the authorities' decision in 2025 to set up systematic feedback on each case of gender-based killing so as to be able to identify their underlying causes and take measures to prevent them. It stresses how important it is for mechanisms for the retrospective analysis of murders and attempted murders to cover all the bodies and persons concerned, including the victim's social circle, so as to arrive at the most relevant possible analysis and recommendations of the causes and also to be able to investigate the social impact of these killings.[208] At the same time, it was decided to increase the number of places in shelters and raise more awareness among professionals about the risks engendered by separation and divorce.[209]

176. **GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up measures for a standardised, gender-sensitive risk assessment procedure to be applied throughout the country, in all the cases of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention. It should, in particular, take measures to remove obstacles to multi-agency co-operation and co-operation between cantons when assessing risks and setting up safety-management measures.**

177. **GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up measures to prevent and combat gender-based killing, including measures relating to the use of firearms.**

3. Emergency barring orders (Article 52)

178. Under Article 52 of the Convention, in situations of immediate danger, the authorities are granted the power to issue an emergency barring order, ordering the perpetrator to leave the residence of the victim or person at risk for a specific period of time, and to prohibit the perpetrator from entering the residence or contacting the victim or person at risk. Emergency barring orders are tools intended to prevent a crime and to put safety first.[210] They should therefore be time-bound and incident-based, with the possibility of renewal in the case of continued danger. Longer-term protection should, however, be granted by a court by means of a protection order, upon application by the victim. An emergency barring order should in principle extend to children in need of protection and should have immediate effect.

179. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had welcomed the fact that cantonal police forces were empowered to introduce measures to ban perpetrators from their homes for a period of 10 to 30 days and the growing use that was made of this measure. Family home exclusions are governed by cantonal police laws. GREVIO notes that the length of such orders varies greatly from canton to canton.[211] It is particularly concerned about information it received about a tendency to limit bans to a few days, sometimes only one or two, in some cantons.[212] These very short periods may not be long enough to ensure that the victim is protected and given appropriate support, and for the perpetrator to be made to attend a specific programme. GREVIO also notes with concern that the very short duration of some barring orders results in gaps in victim protection between the end of the emergency measure and the establishment of a protection order by the civil courts.

180. GREVIO welcomes the growing use of emergency barring orders to protect women with disabilities. Major obstacles remain, however, where the perpetrator and the victim live in community housing or institutions.[213]

206. FOGE: Homicides by firearm in the domestic sphere, 2025.
207. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.
208. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: *Background paper on femicide review committees*, May 2023.
209. www.tpf.admin.ch/fr/newnsb/rN-yGtnBa_SkjJ8KTAXw4
210. See GREVIO's baseline evaluation report on Denmark, paragraph 207 and Malta, paragraph 218.
211. For example, 10 days in Ticino and 20 in Fribourg.
212. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 101.
213. See the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 101.

181. GREVIO takes note of the Swiss authorities' intention to harmonise practices regarding emergency barring orders, which could be carried out by means of a model law. In this context it is crucial that the exchange of information between cantons concerning these orders is regulated so that the safety of victims is secured wherever they are in the country.

182. Although the legislation provides for the possibility of filing a complaint for a breach of an emergency barring order or even for the perpetrator to be detained, in practice the penalties applied are mostly fines. However, this type of penalty can often be to the detriment of victims because fines are often paid out of the common household budget, and this does not encourage victims to seek emergency barring orders.

183. Lastly, since 2022, it has been possible, in the context of a home exclusion measure, to order the electronic monitoring of perpetrators. Although this is not a real-time surveillance system, there are currently some pilot projects and discussions about setting one up.[214]

184. **GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue making efforts to harmonise practices with regard to emergency barring orders throughout the country and to ensure that the measures taken mean that women victims of violence and their children can be properly protected in their homes. The authorities should also ensure proper follow-up and application of the penalties applied for breaches of all types of emergency barring order.**

4. Restraining or protection orders (Article 53)

185. Restraining and protection orders are conceived to prolong the protection afforded to the victim and her children by emergency barring orders and may be considered complementary to the protection offered by emergency barring orders. Under Article 53 of the Istanbul Convention, victims of all forms of violence against women should be able to obtain a protection order available for immediate protection - without undue financial or administrative burden placed on the victim and irrespective of whether or not they choose to set in motion any other legal proceedings.

186. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that there were different types of protection orders throughout the country. It had, however, regretted that these measures did not always sufficiently cover the children of women victims of violence as well as the difficulties that arose when the perpetrator and the victim lived in different cantons. Lastly, it had highlighted a lack of follow-up on the implementation of these measures, particularly in the event of non-compliance.

187. The fact that no data is collected on protection orders (occupation orders, contact bans, no-go areas, etc.) or on their implementation makes it difficult for GREVIO to assess the changes made since its 2022 report. The information brought to its attention continues, however, to show shortcomings in the way in which children of women victims are covered by these measures. It seems that a desire to give precedence to maintaining contacts with both parents can mean that the children of women covered by a protection order are not systematically included in such orders themselves.[215] In addition, women housed in shelters may be refused a protection order because they are considered to be safe.[216] Access for women asylum seekers to protection orders is also complicated by the lack of information on such measures and the fact that they may only transfer their address to another canton under certain strict circumstances. Lastly, these orders are applied mostly in cases of domestic violence and are not used in cases of other forms of violence against women such as forced marriages or female genital mutilation.

214. www.parlament.ch/fr/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaeft?AffairId=20220409. See also: Electronic monitoring: www.kkjpd.ch/fr/actualites/communique-de-presse-de-lassociation-electronic-monitoring-199, press release of 18 September 2025.
215. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit. See also the shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 101.
216. Information obtained during GREVIO's evaluation visit.

188. There are also still problems with co-ordination between cantons for the implementation of protection orders owing to the strict limits on the exchange of data on such orders between the cantons.

189. Regarding the follow-up of the implementation of protection orders and penalties in the event of infringements, fines are imposed in most cases, as with breaches of emergency barring orders. GREVIO reiterates its concern about the negative impact that financial penalties can have on victims of violence. It also stresses how important it is to set up dissuasive sanctions.

190. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to:**

- **a. continue to take steps for the increased harmonisation of legislation and practice at national level to make women victims of violence safe throughout the country;**
- **b. set up a system for proper co-ordination between the cantons when applying protection orders to make women victims of violence safe throughout the country whatever their place of residence;**
- **c. ensure that protection orders are available to victims of all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention;**
- **d. ensure that the children of women victims of violence are covered, where necessary, by the protection afforded by protection orders.**

5. Measures of protection (Article 56)

191. Article 56 of the convention is a key provision in building trust at the level of judicial proceedings for women and girls who have experienced or who are witness to any of the forms of violence covered by the convention. It sets forth a non-exhaustive list of procedures designed to protect victims of violence from intimidation, retaliation and secondary victimisation at all stages of proceedings, during investigations and at trial. The drafters intended this list to be indicative, and parties may adopt additional protection measures that are more favourable than those provided in the convention. Moreover, intimidation and secondary victimisation can occur not only at the hands of perpetrators but also when investigations and judicial proceedings are not based on a gendered understanding of violence against women, which is why the practical application of measures of protection should be firmly anchored in such understanding.

192. In its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO had observed that measures to protect victims during judicial proceedings were applied in different ways from canton to canton. It was particularly concerned about the requirement for perpetrators to be notified of any request for information from victims in the event of changes in the execution of their sentence.

193. GREVIO notes that the differences in practices for the protection of women victims of violence remain, making it difficult to gain an overview of the protection measures actually implemented across the country. It welcomes the fact that there are procedural safeguards, including the possibility, in cases of sexual violence, to request that interpretation, if required, be provided by a person of the same gender; under the Code of Criminal Procedure, victims may also be accompanied by a trusted person. In practice, this support is often provided by victim support centres. Article 152, paragraph 3, of the Code of Criminal Procedure also provides for the possibility of avoiding contact with the perpetrators of violence. This means that hearings may be held via videoconference. However, according to the information GREVIO received, in practice, a frequent lack of resources limits the use of audiovisual media. Victims and perpetrators are often just separated by a screen. Nor are there enough of the special hearing rooms specially equipped to meet victims' needs known as "LAVI rooms". Furthermore, all of these measures apply only in criminal law; the Code of Civil Procedure does not provide for any protection measures which may be applied to victims of violence engaged in civil proceedings and, in particular, makes no provision for victims to avoid perpetrators. Against this background, GREVIO takes note of the announcement

by the Swiss authorities of measures to improve the protection of victims of violence in civil proceedings.[217]

194. As to the requirement for convicted perpetrators to be notified of requests by victims for information if there have been changes in the execution of their sentences or they have escaped,[218] GREVIO takes note of the fact that according to the Swiss authorities, it is not necessary for victims' personal data to be disclosed in such cases and the authorities are allowed simply to pass on the name of the person requesting the information. It is pleased that in practice, several cantons do indeed seem to give precedence to victims' needs by limiting the information passed on to convicted perpetrators.[219] Reports from civil society representatives suggest, however, that this practice is not systematic and that information on the victim's address is still sometimes shared with perpetrators of violence.[220] GREVIO reiterates that it is essential to ensure that victims' safety needs take precedence over any other considerations so as to limit the risks of reprisals and revictimisation.[221] It would also point out how crucial it is, for the prevention of gender-based killing of women, for victims in this type of situation to be properly protected.

195. **Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to take further steps to ensure that measures to protect women victims of violence and their children from the risks of reprisals, intimidation and secondary victimisation are properly implemented.**

217. « Unis contre la violence domestique : des progrès grâce à la feuille de route, d'autres mesures en préparation ».
218. Article 92a of the Criminal Code.
219. For example, Bern, Zurich and Schaffhausen.
220. Shadow report by the Istanbul Convention Network, p. 103.
221. See also ECHR, *N.D. v. Switzerland,* cited in relation to Article 51: Risk assessment and risk management.

Appendix I
List of proposals and suggestions by GREVIO

II. Changes in definitions, comprehensive and co ordinated policies, funding and data collection in the areas of violence against women and domestic violence

A. Definitions (Article 3)

1. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to continue their efforts to devise standardised definitions of all forms of violence against women in line with those of the Istanbul Convention, which can be used by all stakeholders. (paragraph 16)

B. Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies (Article 7)

2. GREVIO welcomes the adoption by the Swiss authorities of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and strongly encourages them to keep up their efforts to devise comprehensive, long-term strategies to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, involving all the levels of authority concerned and covering the entire country. For this purpose, the Swiss authorities should, in particular:

a. ensure that the co-ordinating body for policies to prevent and combat violence against women is afforded sufficient human and financial resources;
b. step up measures to make the work carried out at various levels of authority more consistent;
c. ensure that the policies set up throughout the country include a gender perspective in relation to all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, including domestic violence;
d. devise comprehensive policies including specific measures for the prevention of violence against women exposed, or at risk of being exposed, to intersectional discrimination, such as women with disabilities, LBTI women, women asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, women in prostitution, elderly women and women from Yenish and Sinti/Manush communities;
e. regularly assess their policies to achieve the comprehensive, co-ordinated political approach required by the Istanbul Convention. These assessments should be based on predetermined indicators designed to evaluate their impact and ensure that reliable data are used when drawing up policies. (paragraph 28)

C. Financial resources (Article 8)

3. Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take measures to ensure adequate financing, at federal, cantonal and local level, of policies and programmes to prevent and combat all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention. They should also ensure that associations providing essential services for women victims of violence and those implementing measures to prevent violence against women have sufficient, stable resources corresponding to increased needs to allow them to carry out their tasks. (paragraph 38)

4. GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to ensure that funding rules do not restrict the capacity of these associations to contribute to discussions concerning laws and policies on violence against women. (paragraph 39)

5. GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to consider implementing gender budgeting principles. (paragraph 40)

D. Data collection (Article 11)

3. Social services

6. Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take measures to:

a. promote data collection by the judicial services on victims of all forms of violence against women, broken down by the sex and age of the victim and the perpetrator, the type of violence, location and the nature of the relationship between victim and perpetrator, according to harmonised indicators for the entire country; make it possible to track cases of violence against women throughout the criminal justice chain, from the lodging of the complaint to the decision of the court, so as to be able to determine the rates of attrition and penalties imposed;
b. set up a system for the collection of data on protection orders called for and issued, breaches of these orders and penalties imposed for breaches, so as to be able to assess the extent to which such measures are applied. (paragraph 50)

7. GREVIO also strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to take legislative and other measures to collect data, broken down at least by type of violence, sex, age of the victim and the presumed perpetrator and the relationship between them, on the number of women victims of all forms of violence who request help from the health services, whether public or private. (paragraph 51)

III. Analysis on the implementation of selected provisions in priority areas in the fields of prevention, protection and prosecution

A. Prevention

1. General obligations (Article 12)

8. GREVIO welcomes the efforts made by the Swiss authorities to strengthen measures to raise awareness about and prevent violence against women and encourages them to:

a. continue and step up campaigns for the primary prevention of all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention, throughout the country, while ensuring that sufficient funding is available for these campaigns;
b. step up prevention work focusing specifically on violence against women and girls exposed to intersectional discrimination;
c. carry out regular reviews of the impact of awareness-raising campaigns and primary prevention measures and use these reviews to identify and remedy any unwanted effects of awareness-raising campaigns. (paragraph 63)

2. Education (Article 14)

9. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to take additional steps to ensure that the topics covered in Article 14 of the Istanbul Convention, such as gender equality, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships, the right to personal integrity, the importance of freely given consent, including in sexual relations, and the harmful effects of violent pornography, are taught throughout the country. They should also continue to take measures to assess the implementation of this teaching throughout the country. (paragraph 71)

3. Training of professionals (Article 15)

10. GREVIO welcomes the measures taken to disseminate minimum standards for the training of various categories of professional and strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue their efforts and extend measures to ensure that all professionals who come into contact with victims and perpetrators of violence against women, including judges, receive systematic and mandatory initial and in-service training on all forms of violence against women. In so doing, they should:

a. ensure that such training covers the prevention and detection of all acts of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, gender equality, stereotypes and perceptions of violence against women, the needs and rights of victims, trauma-induced victim behaviour and prevention of secondary victimisation;
b. ensure that such training also addresses the specific needs of women exposed to intersectional discrimination;
c. ensure that training is supported by standardised protocols for identifying victims, providing victim support and referring them to specialist services;
d. ensure that the expertise of specialist associations is drawn on when devising and implementing training;
e. carry out assessments of such training courses. (paragraph 83)

11. Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to ensure that judges presiding over cases involving custody and visitation rights receive mandatory training on:

a. the harmful effects that witnessing violence against women has on children and the importance of taking such offences into account when reaching decisions and/or agreeing to or promoting mediation in such cases;
b. the nature and dynamics of domestic violence, including the unequal power relations between the parties, as opposed to a mere conflictual relationship between spouses. (paragraph 84)

4. Preventive intervention and treatment programmes (Article 16)

a. Programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence

12. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to take additional measures to:

a. ensure that a sufficient number of programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence with adequate resources are available throughout the country, and that there are clear referral routes to these programmes, whether participation is mandatory or voluntary;
b. continue efforts to disseminate minimum standards for programmes for perpetrators of violence in line with European standards of best practice and drawing on existing good practices in Switzerland; ensure that such standards are implemented consistently throughout the country;
c. ensure that programmes take an approach centred on victim safety and support and are implemented in close co-operation with victim support services;
d. regularly assess the implementation and impact of the programmes. (paragraph 91)

b. Programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence

13. GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to continue their efforts to ensure that programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence are available throughout the country and to regularly assess the impact of existing programmes. (paragraph 93)

B. Protection and support

1. General obligations (Article 18)

14. Recalling the findings of its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to:

a. ensure that intracantonal co-ordinating bodies are set up throughout the country and that they bring together all relevant bodies, including specialist support services for women victims of violence;
b. continue efforts to adopt standardised guidelines for multi-agency co-operation and co-operation between cantons, providing clear guidance on information sharing between the professionals concerned; conduct regular reviews of the activities of co-ordinating bodies;
c. ensure that co-operation mechanisms cover all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention including rape and sexual violence, digital manifestations of violence against women, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, drawing on the existing examples of promising practices adopted at national level;
d. promote the establishment of facilities designed to offer support for women victims of violence on the basis of one-stop shops involving all the relevant bodies. (paragraph 102)

2. General support services (Article 20)

a. Social services

15. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up the work of harmonising the services provided by general support services so that all women victims of violence can access proper support and protection measures regardless of their place of residence. The authorities should also take additional measures to ensure that women who are victims of violence abroad benefit from accessible services under the law on victim support. (paragraph 108)

b. Health services

16. GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up measures to:

a. set up standardised healthcare guidelines throughout the country, drawing on promising existing practices and based on common protocols, so as to provide proper care for all women victims of violence;
b. ensure that all women victims of violence, throughout the country, have access to forensic examination and the possibility of preserving evidence, even if they have not pressed charges;
c. prevent and combat violence against women with disabilities, including those in institutions, in particular by improving information about and the accessibility of existing services;
d. ensure that interpreters are available so as to facilitate access to care for women migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who have been victims of violence. (paragraph 117)

3. Specialist support services (Article 22)

17. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take additional measures to guarantee that there are enough places in specialist shelters for all women victims of violence, throughout the country. The Swiss authorities should also ensure that specialist support is available in shelters, meeting the needs of all women victims of violence and their children, including those exposed to intersectional discrimination. (paragraph 126)

18. While welcoming the establishment of a national helpline for victims of violence, GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to ensure that, throughout the country, the professionals answering calls have the specific experience and expertise required to properly meet the needs of women victims of the various forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention. (paragraph 127)

4. Support for victims of sexual violence (Article 25)

19. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue taking measures throughout the country to provide victims of sexual violence with:

a. trauma-informed medical care and support, provided by qualified professionals who carry out examinations with due regard for victims' needs;
b. forensic examinations;
c. immediate psychological support;
d. referral to specialist services offering short- and long-term counselling and psychological support, whether or not they have pressed charges. (paragraph 132)

C. Substantive law

1. Custody, visitation rights and safety (Article 31)

20. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take the following priority measures with regard to custody and visitation rights in order to ensure the safety of victims and their children:

a. ensure that the incidents of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, including those witnessed by children, are explicitly listed in the legislation among the criteria to be taken into account by courts when deciding on custody and visitation rights;
b. take steps to introduce a procedure for the systematic examination of cases related to decisions on custody and visitation rights so as to determine whether violence was a feature of the relationship between the parents and carry out a risk assessment;
c. systematically take account of the negative impact of violence against women on children and recognise that this undermines their best interests; take all appropriate measures to ensure that all the professionals concerned, including child protection professionals, judges, judicial experts, child psychologists and lawyers, have training in domestic violence and understand the harmful effects and the unfounded nature of so-called parental alienation syndrome and similar concepts which portray women victims of violence as alienating, hostile or unco-operative;
d. consider allegations of domestic violence made in the context of separation procedures and take measures to identify and assess safety concerns expressed by women victims of domestic violence; refrain from describing women as manipulative or unco-operative rather than assessing such allegations;
e. ensure that children are not removed from the custody of non-violent parents as a result, in particular, of the application of such concepts;
f. strengthen measures to ensure that when domestic violence is detected, information is exchanged between civil and criminal law courts and victims are not required or placed under pressure to attend joint meetings with perpetrators in order to reach an agreement;
g. set up safe facilities where supervised visits can take place, taking steps to guarantee the safety of children and victims, and appoint a sufficient number of professionals with training in domestic violence, particularly violence committed after separation, to supervise such visits. (paragraph 142)

2. Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing (Article 48)

21. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to ensure that parental conciliation and mediation procedures organised in the context of family law do not amount to a quasi-mandatory conciliation process in the event of histories of violence. For this purpose, the Swiss authorities should, in particular:

a. establish mechanisms to ensure that judges and mediators systematically detect histories of violence during family law proceedings, particularly in the context of conciliation and advance parental consensus procedures;
b. put in place adequate safeguards to ensure that free and informed consent is given by women victims of violence throughout voluntary conciliation or mediation procedures and that such procedures fully respect the rights, needs and safety of victims. (paragraph 149)

22. GREVIO also urges the Swiss authorities to set up adequate safeguards to ensure that free and informed consent is given by women victims of violence in the optional conciliation procedures provided for by criminal law and to ensure that refusal to participate in conciliation does not harm victims. (paragraph 150)

D. Investigation, prosecution, procedural law and protective measures

1. General obligations (Article 49) and immediate response, prevention and protection (Article 50)

a. Reporting to, immediate response and investigations by law-enforcement agencies

23. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue taking measures to ensure that all law enforcement agencies are in a position to respond rapidly and appropriately to all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention. For this purpose, they should identify and remove all obstacles preventing women and girls from reporting violence they have suffered to the police, focusing in particular on the experience of women migrants and refugees, women with disabilities or women in prostitution. (paragraph 157)

b. Effective investigation and prosecution

24. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue their work to improve the effectiveness of investigations and prosecutions concerning all forms of violence against women, including those in the digital sphere. (paragraph 164)

c. Conviction rates

25. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO urges the Swiss authorities to take additional measures throughout the criminal law process to enhance the judicial response to sexual violence. They should, in particular, analyse the reasons for the attrition of rape cases, with a view to higher prosecution and conviction rates for these crimes and assess the impact of the legislative changes concerning sexual offences. (paragraph 168)

2. Risk assessment and risk management (Article 51)

26. GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up measures for a standardised, gender-sensitive risk assessment procedure to be applied throughout the country, in all the cases of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention. It should, in particular, take measures

to remove obstacles to multi-agency co-operation and co-operation between cantons when assessing risks and setting up safety-management measures. (paragraph 176)

27. GREVIO encourages the Swiss authorities to continue and step up measures to prevent and combat gender-based killing, including measures relating to the use of firearms. (paragraph 177)

3. Emergency barring orders (Article 52)

28. GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to continue making efforts to harmonise practices with regard to emergency barring orders throughout the country and to ensure that the measures taken mean that women victims of violence and their children can be properly protected in their homes. The authorities should also ensure proper follow-up and application of the penalties applied for breaches of all types of emergency barring order. (paragraph 184)

4. Restraining or protection orders (Article 53)

29. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to:

a. continue to take steps for the increased harmonisation of legislation and practice at national level to make women victims of violence safe throughout the country;
b. set up a system for proper co-ordination between the cantons when applying protection orders to make women victims of violence safe throughout the country whatever their place of residence;
c. ensure that protection orders are available to victims of all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention;
d. ensure that the children of women victims of violence are covered, where necessary, by the protection afforded by protection orders. (paragraph 190)

5. Measures of protection (Article 56)

30. Recalling the findings in its baseline evaluation report, GREVIO strongly encourages the Swiss authorities to take further steps to ensure that measures to protect women victims of violence and their children from the risks of reprisals, intimidation and secondary victimisation are properly implemented. (paragraph 195)

Appendix II
List of the national authorities, other public bodies, non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations with which GREVIO held consultations

Federal authorities

Swiss Army/Specialist Women in the Army and Diversity Department

Federal Department of Home Affairs:

Federal Office for Gender Equality
Federal Office for Equality of Persons with Disabilities
Federal Social Insurance Office
Federal Office of Public Health
Federal Statistical Office

Federal Department of Justice and Police:

Federal Office of Justice
Federal Office of Police
State Secretariat for Migration

Cantonal authorities

Conference of Cantonal Police Commanders (CCPCS)
Conference of Cantonal Directors of Social Affairs (CDAS)
Conference of Cantonal Justice and Police Directors (CCDJP)
Conference for the Protection of Minors and Adults (COPMA)
Swiss Conference of Public Prosecutors (CMP)
Swiss Conference against Domestic Violence (CSVD)
Swiss Crime Prevention (SKP)
Authorities of the cantons of Fribourg and Ticino
Police and prosecution authorities of the cantons of Fribourg and Ticino
Cantonal judges of the cantons of Fribourg and Ticino

Public institutions

The Union of Swiss Cities and the Association of Swiss Municipalities
Centre for the Support to Victims of Offences, Ticino
University hospital of the canton of Fribourg (HFR), Violence Medicine Unit
Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights

Non-governmental organisations

AsylLex
Avanti Network
Brava
Child Protection Switzerland
Colettivo Io l'8 ognigiorno (women's rights organisation)
EX-pression, organisation for the support of persons who are overwhelmed by their own emotions and act violently, Fribourg
Fiera Opferberatung Winterthur (counselling centre for victims)

FIZ (Women's Information Centre, Fachstelle Frauenhandel und Frauenmigration)
Frieda – the Feminist Peace Organisation
Foundation against violence against women and children
Foundation DIAC/Les Foulards Violets
Foundation for Gender Equality
Foundation for Human Rights, Lugano
Intimate Partner Violence, what to do?
Istanbul Convention Network
ProCoRe
Protestant social centre of Vaud canton
Service against Forced Marriages
Sexual Health Switzerland
Solidarity Federation for Women in Switzerland and Liechtenstein
Swiss Lesbian Organisation
Swiss Network against Genital Cutting
Transgender Network Switzerland
Viol-Secours Genève
Women's and single parents' advice association

Lawyers

Juristes Démocrates de Suisse
Peter & Moreau law firm, Geneva

GREVIO, the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, is an independent human rights monitoring body mandated to monitor the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) by the parties.

Following the comprehensive stocktaking exercise set out in its baseline evaluation reports, GREVIO's first thematic evaluation round identifies progress made in building trust among women and girls by delivering support, protection and justice for any of the forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention. This report contains an analysis of developments in law and policy in respect of provisions of the convention relating to victim support and protection, criminal investigation and prosecution of acts of violence. It also covers developments in the determination of child custody and visitation rights in cases with a history of violence and wider preventive measures.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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