

HELP online course on Access to Justice for Women

Background

Achieving gender equality is a priority for the Council for Europe (CoE) and its member States. It is also central to achieving the organisation's mission: safeguarding human rights, upholding democracy and preserving the rule of law. Even if the legal status of women in Europe has improved during the recent decades, effective equality between women and men is far from being a reality.

The CoE and its member States have made specific commitments to improve women's access to justice and prevent and combat violence against women. The role of justice system professionals in ensuring and strengthening women's access to justice is essential in achieving substantive equality and guaranteeing equal rights to all in the society.

For this reason, the HELP course on [Access to Justice for Women](#) was developed to help legal professionals understand the legal and other barriers in accessing justice and apply a gender sensitive lens in their daily work. The course has been designed to also be useful for the court staff, law enforcement, social workers, National Human Rights Institutions (Ombudsperson Offices), civil society organisations, media and other professionals working in the field of gender equality.

The course provides a comprehensive overview of International and European women's rights and gender equality standards, case-law and good practices. It is the first HELP course to provide a single resource on gender equality and justice covering the extensive CoE standards, promising practices and other international instruments on the matter.

The topics are explored in a practical way, by using presentations, interactive screens, knowledge tests and reflective exercises.

The regional course will be facilitated by a specially trained HELP National Tutor who will guide participants in their interaction with the platform, suggest additional resources and exercises and moderate online discussions. In order to do so, a dedicated HELP page for participants will be created to allow for specific relevant information to be shared and serve as a forum for discussion between participants.



A kick-off meeting (live or online) will gather the HELP National tutors, participants and CoE staff to become familiar with the platform as well as define the learning outcomes of the course.

Upon completing the course, the participants will receive a certificate.

Course outline

The tutored course takes approximately 15-20 hours to complete over 10 weeks, and consists of the following six substantive modules:

- **Introduction to the concept of access to justice**
- **International and European legal framework**
- **Discrimination on the grounds of sex and gender**
- **Avoiding gender stereotyping**
- **Practical guidance to improve women's access to justice**
- **Gender sensitive approach to the practice of law**

Development of the course

This on-line course was developed under the [Partnership for Good Governance](#) project "[Strengthening Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence in the Six Eastern Partnership Countries](#)", jointly by the [Gender Equality Division](#) and the [HELP Programme](#) of the Council of Europe. The course is being implemented under the CoE project, [The Istanbul Convention: a tool to advance in fighting violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine](#), funded through the [Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021](#).