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HYPATIA SHADOW REPORT TO GREVIO – CYPRUS 2026

First Thematic Evaluation Round: Building Trust by Delivering Support, Protection and Justice

2026

Part I: Changes in comprehensive and co-ordinated policies, funding and data collection in the area of violence against women and domestic violence

ARTICLE 7- Comprehensive and Co-ordinated Policies

Assessment: Significant policy progress has been made, but the practical, comprehensive and co-ordinated implementation of the 2022 recommendation is only partially demonstrated.

The adoption of the National Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2028 constitutes the most important development since the baseline evaluation. It responds directly to GREVIO’s criticism that Cyprus lacked a comprehensive national framework.

The State Report nevertheless does not provide sufficient evidence to establish that the Strategy is being implemented comprehensively and effectively across all forms of violence covered by the Convention.

In particular:

- the State Report lists numerous measures but does not present a detailed implementation matrix linking each measure to objectives, responsible authorities, budgets, deadlines and measurable indicators;
- it does not clearly demonstrate that all forms of violence receive comparable attention across prevention, protection, prosecution and co-ordinated policies;
- several reported measures remain under preparation, review or legislative amendment and should not be presented as fully implemented;
- the information provided does not demonstrate adequate and geographically accessible specialist services for rape, sexual violence, FGM and other forms of violence beyond domestic violence
- insufficient evidence is provided regarding systematic independent evaluation of the Strategy and Action Plan;

- the participation of independent women's rights organisations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies is not explained in sufficient detail;
- The 2026 State Report does not provide a sufficiently detailed update on the measures adopted since 2022 for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence arising from the events of 1974, including outreach, psychosocial support, recognition procedures and access to remedies.
- territorial accessibility and the needs of migrant women, asylum-seeking women, domestic workers, women with disabilities and women in rural areas require clearer integration throughout the policy framework.

The State Report also refers to the National Co-ordinating Body but does not fully clarify whether earlier concerns regarding overlapping responsibilities between that body, the Ministry of Justice and the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Violence in the Family have been resolved.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. publish a detailed implementation framework for the National Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2028, identifying responsible authorities, budgets, deadlines, indicators and outcomes;
2. demonstrate how each form of violence covered by the Convention is addressed across all four pillars;
3. distinguish clearly between measures that are planned, initiated, operational and independently evaluated;
4. establish systematic, independent and publicly available evaluation of the Strategy;
5. ensure meaningful and regular participation of independent women's rights organisations and organisations representing women facing intersecting discrimination;
6. clarify the respective responsibilities of all co-ordinating and implementing bodies;
7. develop targeted policies and services concerning conflict-related sexual violence arising from the events of 1974;
8. address geographical disparities in access to specialist services.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the full National Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2028 and its implementation matrix;

- annual progress and evaluation reports;
- expenditure by action and responsible authority;
- information on measures adopted for each form of violence listed in Article 7;
- information on civil society participation;
- evidence concerning the geographical coverage of policies and services;
- specific information on measures concerning survivors of conflict-related sexual violence;
- clarification of the division of responsibilities among the National Coordinating Body, the Ministry of Justice and other relevant bodies.

Expected Outcome

A genuinely comprehensive, adequately funded and independently evaluated national policy framework covering all forms of violence against women, implemented consistently across the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention and throughout the territory of the Republic of Cyprus.

ARTICLE 8- Funding

Assessment: Some progress towards more predictable funding is reported, but the adequacy, transparency and sustainability of the overall funding framework cannot yet be assessed.

The introduction of a multiannual Grants Scheme represents a positive development because it potentially offers greater continuity than isolated annual grants.

However, the State Report does not provide a complete financial picture. The reference to a €60,000 allocation for 2025 is useful, but it is not sufficient to assess whether funding is appropriate in relation to:

- the scale of violence against women;
- the number of victims requiring services;
- the cost of specialist services;
- geographical coverage;
- staffing needs;
- inflation and rising operating costs;
- the implementation of all four pillars of the Convention.

The State Report does not provide:

- the total annual public expenditure on violence against women;
- expenditure disaggregated by ministry, programme, form of violence and type of service;
- the number and identity of organisations funded;

- the amounts received by each organisation;
- the duration and conditions of grants;
- evidence that specialist NGOs receive core and operational funding rather than only project-based grants;
- information on funding specifically directed to services for migrant and refugee women, women with disabilities, victims of sexual violence and women outside Nicosia;
- evidence of systematic gender-responsive budgeting;
- an assessment of whether available human resources are adequate.
- planned allocations compared with actual expenditure;
- the proportion of funding provided as core funding and as project-based funding;
- the percentage of service costs covered by the State.

The assertion that funding has become sustainable is therefore not yet fully demonstrated. A multiannual scheme is positive, but sustainability also requires adequate amounts, continuity, timely payment and funding based on independently assessed needs.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. publish a consolidated annual budget for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention;
2. provide dedicated budget lines for each major policy area and specialist service;
3. introduce multiannual core funding for specialist women's rights organisations;
4. ensure transparent funding criteria and timely grant procedures;
5. assess the actual financial and staffing needs of specialist services;
6. integrate gender-responsive budgeting into all relevant ministries and public authorities;
7. guarantee adequate funding for services supporting migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and other groups facing multiple barriers;
8. publish annual expenditure and implementation reports.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- total annual expenditure for 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026;
- expenditure by ministry, programme and form of violence;
- full details of the Grants Scheme 2023–2028;
- the list of funded organisations and amounts awarded;
- information on core versus project-based funding;

- staffing levels financed under each programme;
- information on delays or gaps in funding;
- evidence of gender-responsive budgeting and needs assessments.

Expected Outcome

A transparent and adequately funded national framework, supported by sustainable public financing and stable core funding for specialist women's rights organisations.

ARTICLE 11-Data Collection and Research

Assessment: Important preparatory steps have been taken, but the central 2022 recommendation remains largely unimplemented because the unified data system is not yet operational and comparable case-tracking data are still unavailable.

The creation of an inter-institutional working group and the development of common variables are important steps. The planned interoperable system may eventually address one of GREVIO's most serious concerns from 2022.

However, the State Report itself indicates that the system is still at the stage of:

- mapping;
- consultation;
- refinement of indicators;
- preparation of technical specifications;
- future procurement.

The unified database is therefore **not yet operational**.

The current situation does not appear to permit reliable tracking of a case from:

- initial report;
- police investigation;
- prosecution decision;
- court proceedings;
- conviction or acquittal;
- sanction imposed;
- protection and support provided.

The State Report does not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that all relevant bodies currently collect the required categories in a harmonised manner. In particular, it provides limited evidence concerning data from:

- courts;

- the Law Office;
- public healthcare;
- social welfare services;
- family courts;
- specialist services.

Moreover, The State Report does not identify a regular national programme of population-based surveys covering all forms of violence against women since the baseline evaluation. Participation in an EU-wide survey is valuable, but it should be complemented by a regular national research programme capable of examining country-specific trends, barriers and service needs.

The research on migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and the study on coercive control respond to important gaps. However, further research is still required on:

- women with disabilities;
- domestic workers;
- older women;
- women in rural areas;
- sexual violence and rape;
- children witnessing domestic violence;
- victim satisfaction and barriers to reporting;
- criminal justice attrition.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. complete and operationalise the unified data system within a defined timeframe;
2. adopt mandatory common definitions and variables for all competent authorities;
3. assign a unique anonymised case identifier to enable tracking across institutions;
4. collect data by type of violence, sex and age of victim and perpetrator, relationship, location, disability, migration status and case outcome;
5. publish annual comparable statistical reports;
6. ensure that courts, prosecution services, healthcare and social welfare contribute complete datasets;
7. establish a regular national programme of population-based surveys;
8. fund research on groups and forms of violence not yet adequately studied;
9. evaluate victim satisfaction, service accessibility and criminal justice attrition;
10. involve specialist women's organisations in the design and interpretation of data.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the timetable for completion and operation of the unified database;
- the final list of variables and indicators;
- the authorities legally required to submit data;
- information on whether cases can be tracked across institutions;
- current datasets from Police, Courts, Law Office, healthcare and Social Welfare Services;
- annual data for at least two complete years;
- the methodology and full findings of the studies already completed;
- the timetable for future population surveys;
- information on public accessibility and independent evaluation of the data system.

Expected Outcome

A fully operational, harmonised and transparent national data system, complemented by regular population surveys and targeted research capable of measuring prevalence, institutional response, attrition, service use and outcomes for victims.

Part II: Information on the implementation of selected provisions in priority areas in the field of prevention, protection and prosecution

ARTICLE 12-General Obligations – Primary Prevention

Assessment: Positive institutional developments are reported, but the effectiveness and long-term impact of primary prevention measures are not yet sufficiently demonstrated. Planned or future initiatives should not be presented as evidence of completed implementation.

The statutory establishment of the Commissioner for Gender Equality and the adoption of strategic measures addressing stereotypes constitute important developments.

However, The State Report mainly describes institutional structures, campaigns and planned activities rather than measurable outcomes. It provides limited evidence regarding whether these initiatives have produced measurable changes in:

- public attitudes towards gender roles and violence;
- acceptance of violence, coercive control and sexual harassment;

- victim-blaming and rape myths;
- media representation of women and reporting on femicide and gender-based violence;
- men's and boys' participation in prevention;
- women's participation in political and economic decision-making;
- the exposure of marginalised groups of women to violence.

The reference to targeted action for women facing intersectional discrimination is positive, but specific activities, geographical coverage, languages used, numbers reached and evaluation findings are not provided.

The Civil Society Platform is also relevant, but the report does not clarify its composition, independence, frequency of meetings or influence on decisions.

Planned or future initiatives should not be presented as evidence of completed implementation.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. adopt a long-term, adequately funded primary-prevention programme with measurable indicators;
2. conduct regular attitude surveys concerning sexism, gender roles, consent, domestic violence and victim-blaming;
3. design sustained initiatives involving men and boys, rather than relying mainly on isolated events;
4. introduce targeted and accessible prevention programmes for migrant women, women with disabilities, domestic workers, asylum-seeking women and women living outside urban centres;
5. monitor media representation of violence against women and strengthen gender-sensitive media guidance;
6. connect women's empowerment policies explicitly to the prevention of gender-based violence;
7. publish independent evaluations of campaigns and prevention programmes;
8. ensure that prevention measures are monitored through measurable indicators and periodic independent evaluation.
9. ensure meaningful participation of independent women's rights organisations.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the National Strategy for Gender Equality and its implementation indicators;
- details and evaluations of campaigns conducted since 2022;

- expenditure, duration and target audiences of each initiative;
- data concerning men's and boys' participation;
- measures directed at women exposed to intersectional discrimination;
- the composition and work of the Civil Society Platform;
- evidence of changes in attitudes or behaviour resulting from prevention measures.

Expected Outcome

A sustained and evidence-based prevention framework capable of changing discriminatory attitudes, reducing tolerance of violence and engaging the whole of society in advancing substantive gender equality.

ARTICLE 14-Education

Assessment: Progress in curriculum development is reported, but effective implementation and quality assurance remain insufficiently demonstrated

The explicit inclusion of freely given consent, digital safety and different forms of violence represents progress compared with the information available in 2022.

Nevertheless, The State Report presents important developments but provides insufficient evidence concerning:

- the exact curriculum content by educational level;
- the number of teaching hours allocated;
- whether the curriculum is compulsory in all schools;
- whether it is implemented consistently across public, private, technical and special education;
- the qualifications of those delivering sexuality and health education;
- mandatory initial and continuous training for all educators;
- student participation and learning outcomes;
- independent evaluation of teaching quality;
- procedures for reviewing textbooks and digital learning materials;
- specific education on FGM and forced marriage;
- accessibility for children with disabilities and children from migrant or refugee backgrounds.

In particular, the State Report does not explain how implementation is monitored across different educational sectors or how consistency is ensured in practice. Programmes such as competitions and individual campaigns can complement but cannot replace systematic curriculum-based education.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. ensure compulsory, age-appropriate and continuous education on gender equality, consent, healthy relationships and all forms of gender-based violence;
2. define minimum curriculum content and teaching hours across all educational settings;
3. make initial and in-service training mandatory for educators delivering the relevant subjects;
4. include specific content on FGM, forced marriage, sexual harassment, coercive control and technology-facilitated violence;
5. establish protocols enabling educators to identify and refer children at risk;
6. review all textbooks and educational materials systematically for gender stereotypes;
7. ensure accessibility for children with disabilities and children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds;
8. conduct independent evaluations of implementation and learning outcomes.
9. publish the results of those evaluations and use them to improve curricula and teacher training.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the relevant curricula and teaching materials;
- compulsory teaching hours by age and educational level;
- implementation data by school type and district;
- teacher-training requirements and participation figures;
- evaluation findings concerning Comprehensive Sexuality Education;
- materials addressing consent, FGM, forced marriage and digital violence;
- procedures for identifying and referring children at risk;
- information on adapted and accessible educational material.

Expected Outcome

Consistent, compulsory and high-quality education enabling children and young people to understand equality, consent, personal integrity, respectful relationships and the prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls.

ARTICLE 15- Training of Professionals

Assessment: Increased training activity is reported, but a systematic, mandatory and sustainable training framework has not yet been fully demonstrated.

The inclusion of detailed training tables is welcome. However, listing training activities alone does not demonstrate full compliance with Article 1

The State Report does not sufficiently establish:

- which training is mandatory and which is voluntary;
- whether it forms part of initial professional education or only continuing development;
- how frequently it is repeated;
- what proportion of each professional group has completed it;
- whether personnel must pass an assessment;
- whether training changes professional practice;
- whether senior and decision-making personnel participate;
- whether all forms of violence under the Convention are covered;
- whether training addresses intersectional discrimination and accessibility;
- whether specialist women's organisations have a substantive and funded role.

Particular concern remains regarding prosecutors and judges. Training should include:

- consent-based investigation and adjudication of rape;
- trauma and delayed disclosure;
- coercive control;
- risk assessment and femicide prevention;
- protection orders;
- custody and visitation in the context of domestic violence;
- secondary victimisation;
- victim-blaming and gender stereotypes;
- relevant European Court of Human Rights judgments concerning Cyprus, including **X v. Cyprus**.
- This is particularly important in light of the ECtHR's findings regarding investigative shortcomings, gender stereotypes and secondary victimisation in cases of sexual violence.

Attendance at occasional seminars or conferences cannot replace structured, compulsory and evaluated initial and in-service training.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. establish mandatory initial and periodic in-service training for all relevant professional groups;
2. define minimum training curricula and competencies at national level;
3. require assessment and certification, rather than recording attendance only;
4. prioritise compulsory training for judges, prosecutors and police investigators;

5. integrate consent, trauma, coercive control, risk of lethality, digital violence and secondary victimisation into all relevant programmes;
6. include the findings of GREVIO and relevant ECtHR judgments concerning Cyprus;
7. ensure substantive and adequately funded participation by specialist women's rights organisations;
8. evaluate the effect of training on decisions, professional conduct and victim experience;
9. publish annual data on coverage, completion and evaluation.
10. ensure that the effectiveness of training is assessed through changes in professional practice and victim experience, rather than attendance rates alone.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide, for every professional group:

- whether training is initial, in-service, mandatory or voluntary;
- frequency and duration;
- curriculum and learning objectives;
- numbers and percentage of professionals trained;
- assessment and certification procedures;
- budget and training provider;
- evaluation findings;
- names and precise roles of participating women's rights organisations;
- measures adopted following the ECtHR judgment in **X v. Cyprus**, particularly in police, prosecutorial and judicial training.

Expected Outcome

A compulsory, permanent and evaluated professional-training system that produces consistent, gender-sensitive, trauma-informed and victim-centred institutional responses across all sectors.

ARTICLE 16- Preventive Intervention and Treatment Programmes

Assessment: Some progress is reported, but the core concerns identified by GREVIO in 2022 are not yet shown to have been fully addressed.

The information provided does not demonstrate that perpetrator programmes currently form part of a comprehensive, adequately funded and geographically accessible national system.

The availability of a programme alone is not sufficient. Article 16 requires programmes that:

- prioritise the safety, support and human rights of victims;
- operate in close coordination with specialist women's services;
- are based on a gendered understanding of violence;
- require perpetrators to accept responsibility;
- assess risk continuously;
- are delivered by appropriately trained professionals;
- are subject to independent evaluation.

The State Report also does not clarify whether participation in a programme may be used instead of an effective criminal sanction. Perpetrator programmes should complement, and not replace, prosecution and sentencing where criminal liability has been established.

The State Report does not provide sufficient evidence that specialised treatment programmes for sex offenders are available nationwide.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. expand perpetrator programmes beyond Nicosia and ensure nationwide accessibility;
2. increase programme capacity and provide stable multiannual funding;
3. adopt binding national standards, accreditation and monitoring procedures;
4. ensure systematic cooperation with specialist women's support services;
5. conduct independent outcome evaluations, including repeat-offending data;
6. resolve legal inconsistencies concerning court referrals;
7. ensure that programme participation does not replace appropriate criminal sanctions;
8. establish evidence-based programmes for sex offenders in custodial and community settings;
9. publish annual data on referrals, participation, completion, dropout and reoffending.
10. ensure that independent evaluations assess both victim safety and long-term reductions in repeat offending.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the number and geographical location of all programmes;
- annual referrals, admissions, completions and withdrawals;

- referral source, including courts, Police and Social Welfare Services;
- programme duration and methodology;
- funding and staffing arrangements;
- risk-assessment and victim-safety procedures;
- independent evaluation findings;
- recidivism data;
- information on programmes for sex offenders;
- progress concerning programmes in custodial settings.

Expected Outcome

A nationwide, adequately funded and independently evaluated system of intervention programmes that prioritises victim safety, promotes perpetrator accountability and reduces repeat violence.

ARTICLE 18- General Obligations – Protection and Support

Assessment: Important progress has been achieved through the Women’s House, but the national protection and support system remains only partially consolidated.

The continued operation and public funding of the Women’s House represent important positive developments.

Nevertheless, The information provided indicates that two important elements remain incomplete: the Operating Procedures have not yet been formally approved;

1. the service has not yet undergone a completed formal evaluation.

The State Report does not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the one-stop-shop model is accessible throughout Cyprus. Victims from other districts may be referred to Nicosia, but referral is not equivalent to local and immediate accessibility.

Further clarification is required regarding:

- 24-hour availability of all participating services;
- referral and transport arrangements from other districts;
- interpretation in practice;
- accessibility for women with disabilities;
- services for women with insecure residence status;
- support independent of police reporting;
- protocols governing consent and information-sharing;
- cooperation with independent specialist women’s organisations;
- follow-up after the victim leaves the Women’s House;

- case numbers, waiting times and outcomes.

The unresolved interaction between Articles 18, 19 and 35 of Law 115(I)/2021 should also be clarified to ensure that victims can receive support without being compelled into police involvement, except where an overriding legal protection duty applies.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. approve and publish the Operating Procedures of the Women's House without further delay;
2. conduct and publish an independent evaluation of its accessibility, effectiveness and victim outcomes;
3. establish equivalent multidisciplinary access in every district;
4. ensure support irrespective of reporting or participation in criminal proceedings;
5. clarify consent, confidentiality and information-sharing procedures;
6. ensure free and timely interpretation and accessible communication;
7. strengthen cooperation with independent specialist women's organisations;
8. establish follow-up and long-term recovery pathways;
9. monitor waiting times, referrals, unmet needs and geographical inequalities.
10. ensure that the effectiveness of multidisciplinary cooperation is evaluated through measurable performance indicators.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the final Operating Procedures;
- the planned evaluation methodology and timetable;
- annual numbers of women and children supported;
- referrals and service use by district;
- average waiting and response times;
- interpretation and disability-accessibility arrangements;
- protocols concerning consent and police involvement;
- information on access for migrant and asylum-seeking women;
- the role of specialist NGOs;
- follow-up and outcome data.

Expected Outcome

A coordinated, victim-centred and accessible national protection system that preserves victims' autonomy, avoids secondary victimisation and provides equivalent support throughout Cyprus.

ARTICLE 20- General Support Services

Assessment: The State Report describes important support measures, but it does not yet demonstrate that the structural shortcomings identified by GREVIO in 2022 have been fully remedied.

Many of the measures described appear to build upon the general welfare arrangements already examined by GREVIO in 2022.

The State Report does not provide adequate evidence concerning:

- reduction of processing times;
- increases in staffing;
- simplified or trauma-informed application procedures;
- dedicated financial assistance for victims;
- access to permanent and affordable housing;
- priority access to social housing;
- employment, vocational training and childcare programmes specifically for survivors;
- continuity of support after emergency accommodation;
- district-level accessibility;
- numbers of applicants, approvals, refusals and waiting periods;
- the adequacy of benefit levels in relation to actual living and housing costs.

Temporary hotel accommodation for one to three months may prevent immediate homelessness, but it does not constitute a long-term housing solution. The State Report would benefit from clearer evidence demonstrating how these measures contribute to the long-term recovery and economic independence of victims.

Referral to ordinary employment services likewise does not amount to a specialised economic-empowerment programme capable of addressing trauma, childcare responsibilities, disrupted employment histories or perpetrator-imposed economic abuse.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. create expedited, trauma-informed procedures for financial support;
2. establish dedicated emergency and transitional financial assistance for victims;
3. develop long-term affordable and supported housing pathways;
4. provide priority access to housing for women and children leaving violence;
5. establish specialised employment, training and economic-empowerment programmes;

6. ensure access to childcare, healthcare and psychosocial support;
7. increase staffing and extend accessibility of Social Welfare Services;
8. provide equivalent services across all districts;
9. collect and publish data on applications, decisions, waiting times and outcomes;
10. assess whether benefit levels are sufficient to enable victims to live independently from perpetrators.
11. periodically evaluate whether support services effectively facilitate victims' long-term social and economic reintegration.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- staffing levels of Social Welfare Services by district;
- average processing times for financial support;
- annual applications, approvals and refusals;
- emergency assistance amounts and eligibility criteria;
- long-term housing programmes and available units;
- average duration of temporary accommodation;
- employment and vocational training participation;
- childcare and transport support;
- measures for migrant women, women with disabilities and women in rural areas;
- independent evaluations of victim recovery and economic independence.

Expected Outcome

A recovery system that moves beyond short-term emergency assistance and enables victims to secure income, permanent housing, healthcare, education, employment and long-term economic independence.

ARTICLE 22- Specialist Support Services

Assessment: Partial implementation is demonstrated. Specialist support appears to remain uneven and predominantly centred on domestic violence.

The continued operation of the Women's House is an important component of the national response. Nevertheless, The information provided in the 2026 State Report does not demonstrate that the central gaps identified in 2022 have been closed.

In particular, the State Report does not establish:

- the existence of specialist services in every district; Further information is therefore required regarding staffing, professional expertise, geographical coverage and long-term sustainability.
- dedicated services for FGM, forced marriage, forced abortion, forced sterilisation or stalking;
- sufficient long-term counselling for victims of sexual violence;
- a general right of direct self-referral;
- equal access for migrant women, asylum-seeking women, domestic workers and women with disabilities;
- adequate staffing and service capacity;
- systematic independent evaluation;
- the number of women turned away, referred elsewhere or unable to access services.

The existence of general counselling or referral services should not be equated with specialist, gender-sensitive services possessing expertise in the specific form of violence concerned.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. conduct and publish a national mapping and needs assessment of specialist services;
2. establish adequate short- and long-term specialist support for every form of violence covered by the Convention;
3. ensure equivalent geographical access in all districts;
4. permit direct self-referral wherever possible;
5. remove practical barriers affecting migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women;
6. ensure full accessibility for women with disabilities;
7. provide stable multiannual core funding to specialist women's organisations;
8. collect and publish data on capacity, referrals, waiting times, unmet needs and outcomes.
9. undertake periodic independent evaluations of the accessibility and quality of specialist support services.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- a complete list of specialist services by district and form of violence;
- eligibility and referral criteria;
- opening hours, staffing and capacity;

- numbers of women and children supported annually;
- numbers refused or placed on waiting lists;
- language and interpretation arrangements;
- disability-accessibility measures;
- details of funding and independent evaluation.

Expected Outcome

A nationwide network of accessible, adequately funded and specialised services providing immediate and long-term support for victims of every form of violence covered by the Convention.

ARTICLE 25-Support to Victims of Sexual Violence

Assessment: Progress is evident in the development of protocols, but the implementation of GREVIO's 2022 recommendations has not yet been fully demonstrated.

The reference to detailed health and forensic protocols represents an important development.

Nevertheless, it does not clearly demonstrate that Cyprus now has an operational rape crisis centre or sexual violence referral centre meeting Article 25 standards.

Critical questions remain unanswered:

- Is medical and forensic examination available without prior police reporting?
- Can evidence be collected and stored while the victim decides whether to report?
- How long is evidence preserved?
- Are rape kits available in all districts?
- Are trained forensic professionals available 24 hours a day?
- How long do victims wait for examination?
- Is long-term trauma counselling available regardless of when the violence occurred?
- Is the Women's House equipped to provide medical and forensic services on site?
- How many women and girls use the services annually?
- Are services equally accessible to migrant women, women with disabilities and women living outside Nicosia?

The State Report should also clarify how these services are coordinated nationally and how their quality is monitored.

This section should also refer to the need to implement the lessons arising from **X v. Cyprus**, particularly regarding trauma-informed treatment, effective investigation and avoidance of secondary victimisation.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. establish fully operational sexual violence referral and rape crisis services;
2. ensure 24-hour medical care, forensic examination and crisis intervention in every district or through an immediately accessible regional model;
3. allow forensic evidence to be collected and stored without requiring prior police reporting;
4. adopt clear national timeframes for evidence preservation;
5. ensure access to specialist trauma therapy and long-term counselling;
6. minimise repeated interviewing and retelling;
7. provide appropriately trained forensic doctors, nurses, psychologists and interpreters;
8. monitor waiting times and service outcomes;
9. incorporate GREVIO standards and the findings of **X v. Cyprus** into protocols and training.
10. establish regular independent evaluations of sexual violence services, including victim satisfaction and accessibility.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the number and location of rape crisis and referral centres;
- the exact services provided by each;
- annual numbers of victims supported;
- 24-hour staffing arrangements;
- waiting times;
- procedures for forensic evidence collection and storage;
- whether police reporting is required;
- duration of evidence preservation;
- availability of rape kits by district;
- long-term counselling arrangements;
- measures adopted following **X v. Cyprus**.

Expected Outcome

A comprehensive and accessible sexual violence support system providing immediate healthcare, independent forensic evidence collection, crisis assistance and long-term trauma support without making access dependent on police reporting.

ARTICLE 31- Custody, Visitation Rights and Safety

Assessment: Important safeguards are available in principle, but the structural concerns identified by GREVIO in 2022 remain only partially addressed.

The range of measures available to the Family Court represents an important safeguard. However, discretionary measures do not replace an explicit legal obligation to consider violence against the mother and the child in every custody and visitation decision.

The State Report's admission that inter-institutional cooperation remains ad hoc is especially significant.

Without systematic information exchange, a Family Court may not have complete information concerning:

- police reports;
- criminal proceedings;
- protection orders;
- risk assessments;
- stalking or coercive control;
- threats to kill;
- breaches of orders;
- healthcare or psychological evidence;
- concerns raised by specialist women's services.

The report also does not provide:

- the number of cases in which violence was alleged;
- the number of supervised or suspended visits;
- cases in which custody was restricted or removed;
- training requirements for judges, welfare officers and visitation supervisors;
- information on the facilities used for supervised contact;
- evidence that allegations of violence are not treated as parental conflict or alienation;
- procedures ensuring that victims are not pressured into mediation.

The acknowledged absence of structured inter-institutional information exchange indicates that implementation remains only partial.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. amend family law to require explicit consideration of all forms of violence against women in custody and visitation decisions;
2. recognise that witnessing domestic violence directly affects the child's safety and best interests;
3. establish mandatory information exchange among Family Courts, criminal courts, Police, Social Welfare Services and specialist support services;
4. require specialist risk assessment before custody or visitation decisions;
5. suspend or supervise contact where safety cannot otherwise be guaranteed;
6. ensure safe and adequately staffed supervised visitation facilities;
7. provide mandatory training for judges, lawyers, welfare officers, psychologists and visitation personnel;
8. prohibit the use of mediation where domestic violence or coercive control is present;
9. collect and publish case-level statistical information and relevant anonymised judgments.
10. periodically evaluate whether custody and visitation decisions effectively protect the safety and best interests of women and children affected by domestic violence.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the legislation requiring violence to be considered in custody and visitation decisions;
- the protocol for inter-institutional information exchange;
- annual numbers of relevant cases;
- orders for supervised, restricted or suspended contact;
- cases involving withdrawal of parental responsibility;
- details of supervised visitation facilities and personnel;
- training curricula;
- anonymised case law;
- procedures concerning coercive control, stalking and allegations of parental alienation;
- measures ensuring consistency between criminal protection orders and family court decisions.

Expected Outcome

A family justice system in which violence against the mother and children is systematically identified and given decisive weight, and custody or visitation rights are never exercised at the expense of victim or child safety.

ARTICLE 48- Prohibition of Mandatory Alternative Dispute Resolution Processes or Sentencing

Assessment: The legal framework appears largely consistent with Article 48, but its practical implementation is insufficiently documented.

The information provided is broadly consistent with GREVIO's 2022 findings regarding the legal framework. No clear legislative regression is identified.

Nevertheless, the State Report does not provide evidence concerning:

- the number of family cases screened for domestic violence before mediation;
- the number of proposed mediations that were refused or terminated because violence or coercive control was identified;
- the professional qualifications and specialised training of mediators;
- the tools used to identify non-physical violence, coercive control, stalking and intimidation;
- whether victims are ever pressured indirectly to participate in mediation;
- whether refusal to mediate affects custody, visitation or other family court decisions;
- whether perpetrator programmes or protection orders are ever treated as substitutes for criminal sanctions.

The absence of mandatory mediation does not by itself guarantee freely given consent. A victim may formally agree because of fear, financial dependency, family pressure, immigration insecurity or concern that refusal will negatively affect family proceedings.

The State Report should also distinguish more clearly between:

1. mediation in civil and family proceedings;
2. any informal reconciliation practices used by public authorities or community actors;
3. criminal justice decisions concerning prosecution and sentencing.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. introduce mandatory domestic violence and coercive-control screening before any family mediation is proposed;
2. prohibit mediation whenever violence, intimidation or a significant power imbalance is identified;
3. ensure that refusal to mediate produces no adverse consequence for the victim;

4. provide mandatory specialised training to mediators, judges, lawyers and family welfare professionals;
5. monitor the number of cases in which mediation is refused, discontinued or considered inappropriate because of violence;
6. ensure that perpetrator programmes, reconciliation or protection orders are not used as alternatives to appropriate criminal investigation, prosecution or sentencing;
7. issue clear guidance on informed consent and indirect pressure.
8. periodically evaluate mediation practice to ensure compliance with Article 48 and identify any indirect pressure on victims.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the screening procedure used before family mediation;
- the number of mediation referrals involving allegations or indications of violence;
- the number of proceedings terminated because of violence, coercion or power imbalance;
- the qualifications and training of mediators;
- information on complaints concerning pressure to participate;
- safeguards ensuring that refusal does not affect family court outcomes;
- information on whether participation in perpetrator programmes or reconciliation affects prosecution or sentencing.

Expected Outcome

A system in which no victim is compelled, directly or indirectly, to participate in mediation or reconciliation and criminal accountability is never replaced by alternative dispute resolution.

ARTICLES 49 AND 50- General Obligations and Immediate Response, Prevention and Protection

Assessment: Positive institutional and technological developments are reported, but effective implementation and improved criminal justice outcomes remain insufficiently demonstrated.

The continued operation of specialised police units and the introduction of the ELPIS application represent important developments.

However, the State Report does not provide sufficient comparative evidence to establish that the core problems identified in 2022 have been resolved.

In particular, it does not provide a complete criminal justice chain showing, for each form of violence:

- reports received;
- investigations opened;
- arrests;
- cases transmitted to the Attorney-General;
- decisions to prosecute or discontinue;
- indictments;
- convictions and acquittals;
- sentences;
- average duration of proceedings;
- reasons for attrition.

The report also does not adequately demonstrate:

- that police protocols are consistently used throughout Cyprus;
- that investigations are evidence-led rather than dependent mainly on the victim's continued participation;
- that specialist units possess expertise in rape, stalking, digital violence, sexual harassment, FGM and forced marriage;
- that complaints concerning inadequate police conduct are independently investigated;
- that response times and case quality are systematically monitored;
- that prosecutors and judges receive mandatory specialised training and operational guidance.

The State's response should also address the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning Cyprus. In particular, **X v. Cyprus** is directly relevant to the quality of investigations into rape, the treatment of victims, the use of gender stereotypes and the prevention of secondary victimisation. Independent monitoring and publicly available performance indicators would further strengthen confidence in the effectiveness of the investigative framework.

A description of legislation and protocols is not sufficient without evidence showing how they altered professional practice and case outcomes after 2022.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. establish mandatory evidence-led investigative procedures for all forms of violence against women;
2. require early collection of medical, forensic, digital, photographic, witness and emergency-call evidence;

3. extend specialised police expertise beyond domestic violence;
4. adopt binding guidance for prosecutors and judges;
5. establish strict standards and indicative timeframes for investigations and prosecutions;
6. analyse criminal justice attrition annually by form of violence;
7. establish independent monitoring of police and prosecutorial handling of cases;
8. ensure prompt investigation of complaints concerning failure to record, investigate or protect;
9. implement fully the findings of **X v. Cyprus** through protocols, training, supervision and case review;
10. publish disaggregated data linking every stage of the criminal justice process.
11. regularly evaluate institutional performance through independent audits and public reporting.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- complete criminal justice data for two full calendar years;
- response times and duration of investigations;
- the number and geographical distribution of specialised police officers;
- the offences handled by specialised units;
- protocols and guidance issued since 2022;
- information on monitoring and audits of police investigations;
- complaints and disciplinary proceedings concerning institutional failures;
- attrition analyses;
- measures adopted following **X v. Cyprus**;
- evidence that investigations continue, where appropriate, despite withdrawal or reluctance of the victim.

Expected Outcome

A prompt, effective, evidence-led and gender-sensitive criminal justice response that reduces attrition, avoids secondary victimisation and holds perpetrators accountable for every form of violence covered by the Convention.

ARTICLE 51- Risk Assessment and Risk Management

Assessment: A solid legal and procedural framework exists, but the shortcomings identified by GREVIO in 2022 remain only partially addressed.

The existing risk-assessment framework contains many of the elements required by the Convention. The central issue is whether it is systematically applied and translated into coordinated risk management.

The State Report does not clarify:

- how many risk assessments are completed annually;
- what percentage of reported cases receive an assessment;
- how many are classified as high risk;
- how often assessments are reviewed;
- which authorities can access or contribute to the assessment;
- whether courts and prosecutors routinely receive the findings;
- how breaches, separation, stalking and escalating threats trigger reassessment;
- whether the tool covers sexual violence, stalking, forced marriage, FGM and digital violence;
- how access to firearms is verified and managed;
- whether victims' own assessment of danger is recorded and given appropriate weight;
- how children's risks are integrated into safety planning;
- what happened in cases where serious or lethal violence occurred after prior contact with authorities.

Risk assessment must be dynamic. Completion of a form at the initial police contact is not sufficient where circumstances later change.

The State Report does not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate whether risk management is available equally to victims in every district or whether multidisciplinary case conferences occur mainly through the Women's House in Nicosia.

Clear national performance indicators would facilitate the evaluation of consistency across districts

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. require documented risk assessment in every relevant case;
2. develop specialised tools for all forms of violence covered by the Convention;
3. require reassessment at every significant stage and following any escalation or breach;
4. create a secure inter-agency mechanism for sharing essential risk information;
5. involve prosecutors, courts, healthcare services, social services and specialist women's organisations;
6. give appropriate weight to the victim's own perception of risk;
7. integrate children fully into risk and safety planning;
8. establish clear procedures concerning firearms and other weapons;
9. provide coordinated risk management throughout Cyprus;

10. conduct independent reviews of serious and lethal cases to identify institutional failures and lessons.
11. publish anonymised lessons learned from such reviews to improve institutional practice and prevention.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the current risk-assessment tools and protocols;
- annual numbers and percentages of completed assessments;
- high-risk classifications;
- reassessments and multidisciplinary case conferences;
- criteria triggering urgent action;
- procedures concerning firearms;
- the role of victims and specialist organisations;
- information-sharing arrangements with prosecutors and courts;
- district-level implementation data;
- independent reviews of femicides or serious repeat violence after prior institutional contact;
- evidence of evaluation of the effectiveness of risk-management measures.

Expected Outcome

A dynamic and coordinated national system that identifies escalating and lethal risk early, shares essential information safely and ensures immediate, individualised protection for women and children.

ARTICLE 52-Emergency Barring Orders

Assessment: Assessment: The availability of protective measures is recognised, but the information provided does not yet demonstrate full compliance with the specific requirements of Article 52.

The information provided appears to describe the broader framework of restraining and protection orders without clearly distinguishing emergency barring orders from ordinary judicial protection measures.

This distinction is essential. Article 52 requires a measure that:

- responds to immediate danger;
- can be activated without procedural delay;
- removes the perpetrator from the residence;
- prohibits contact where necessary;

- operates for a sufficient emergency period;
- is followed by longer-term protection and support.

The State Report does not provide enough evidence to determine whether victims must wait for normal court procedures or leave their homes and enter shelters while the perpetrator remains in the residence.

Shelter accommodation is essential, but it should not substitute for the power to remove a dangerous perpetrator where the victim wishes and is able to remain safely at home.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. establish expressly in law a distinct emergency barring-order mechanism fully aligned with Article 52;
2. authorise immediate removal of the perpetrator in situations of imminent danger;
3. ensure availability 24 hours a day throughout Cyprus;
4. apply the measure irrespective of ownership or tenancy rights;
5. ensure that the order remains in force for a sufficient period to allow longer-term protection to be secured;
6. provide immediate safety planning and specialist support to the victim and children;
7. communicate orders promptly to all relevant authorities;
8. monitor compliance and impose effective sanctions for every breach;
9. collect and publish annual data on use, duration, refusals and breaches.
10. periodically evaluate the effectiveness of emergency barring orders in preventing repeat violence.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the exact legal provisions governing emergency barring orders;
- the authority empowered to issue them;
- whether the Police may remove a perpetrator immediately;
- availability during nights, weekends and public holidays;
- the duration and procedure for extension;
- annual numbers of applications, orders and refusals;
- average issuance time;
- breaches and sanctions;
- district-level data;
- information on whether victims and children remain in the residence following removal of the perpetrator.

Expected Outcome

A genuinely immediate and continuously available mechanism that removes the perpetrator from the residence, protects women and children during periods of imminent danger and ensures strict enforcement of every breach.

ARTICLE 53-Restraining or Protection Orders

Assessment: The legal framework has continued to develop, but accessibility, coordination and effective enforcement remain insufficiently demonstrated.

Protection orders can only provide effective protection where they are:

- rapidly available;
- comprehensive in scope;
- affordable and procedurally accessible;
- clearly communicated;
- consistently enforced;
- coordinated with risk assessments and family-court decisions.

The State Report does not clarify whether victims may apply directly, whether legal representation is required, what costs may arise or how urgent applications are handled outside court hours.

It also does not establish whether orders may prohibit:

- physical proximity;
- telephone and electronic contact;
- contact through third persons;
- approach to the victim's home, workplace or children's school;
- online harassment or surveillance.

Particular concern arises where a criminal-court protection order coexists with family-court contact arrangements. Contradictory orders can expose women and children to continuing risk.

The State Report should also explain whether every breach is recorded as an indicator of escalating risk and whether it automatically triggers reassessment and further protective action.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. ensure rapid access to interim and final protection orders;
2. make orders available independently of criminal proceedings where required;
3. provide access during urgent situations outside normal court hours;
4. ensure that children and other persons at risk may be included;
5. cover physical, electronic and third-party contact;
6. coordinate orders across criminal and family jurisdictions;
7. provide victims with free legal information and legal aid where necessary;
8. treat every breach as a serious offence and a trigger for renewed risk assessment;
9. establish systematic monitoring of enforcement;
10. publish annual data on applications, decisions, duration, breaches and sanctions.
11. regularly evaluate whether protection orders effectively reduce repeat victimisation and improve victim safety.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the relevant statutory provisions;
- eligibility and application procedures;
- whether applications may be submitted without a criminal complaint;
- whether urgent applications are available outside working hours;
- annual applications, orders, refusals and processing times;
- the duration and scope of orders;
- numbers of children included;
- breaches, arrests, prosecutions and sanctions;
- legal aid arrangements;
- coordination protocols between criminal and family courts;
- information on electronic monitoring or other enforcement mechanisms.

Expected Outcome

An accessible and effectively enforced protection-order system providing comprehensive and continuous safety to women and children and ensuring immediate accountability for every breach.

ARTICLE 56- Measures of Protection During Investigations and Judicial Proceedings

Assessment: The legal framework contains important safeguards, but their consistent implementation and effectiveness in preventing secondary victimisation are not yet fully demonstrated.

The State Report describes a range of protective measures but does not establish that every victim receives an early, individual and regularly updated assessment of her protection needs.

It also does not provide sufficient evidence concerning:

- the number of victims using remote testimony;
- the availability of separate waiting areas in every court;
- whether the same professional conducts interviews where possible;
- limits on repeated questioning;
- timely notification of the perpetrator's release;
- accompaniment by a chosen specialist support person;
- interpretation and accessibility support;
- protection of addresses and other personal data;
- complaints concerning degrading or stereotypical treatment;
- monitoring of victim experience.

The judgment in **X v. Cyprus** is particularly relevant. It demonstrates the need to address gender stereotypes, disbelief, insensitive questioning, inadequate investigation and the secondary victimisation of women reporting sexual violence. Periodic evaluation of victims' experiences during criminal proceedings would provide valuable evidence regarding the practical effectiveness of these safeguards.

Implementation of the judgment should not be limited to formal legal changes. It should be reflected in:

- police and prosecutorial protocols;
- judicial and professional training;
- supervision and quality assurance;
- disciplinary accountability;
- monitoring of victim experience;
- review of sexual violence cases.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. conduct an individual protection-needs assessment at the earliest stage in every relevant case;
2. ensure timely and accessible information throughout proceedings;
3. minimise repeated interviewing and unnecessary recounting of violence;
4. prevent contact between victims and perpetrators in police and court facilities;
5. expand access to remote, recorded and otherwise protected testimony;
6. ensure specialist accompaniment and psychological support;
7. notify victims promptly of release, escape or changes affecting their safety;

8. protect personal data, location and confidentiality;
9. provide accessible procedures for migrant women, women with disabilities and child victims;
10. implement fully the findings of **X v. Cyprus** and monitor resulting changes in institutional practice;
11. establish mechanisms for receiving and independently examining complaints of secondary victimisation;
12. publish annual data on the use and effectiveness of protection measures.
13. conduct regular victim-satisfaction and victim-experience surveys to identify gaps in protection and procedural safeguards.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- the procedure and tool used for individual protection assessments;
- annual numbers of assessments completed;
- use of remote or video-recorded testimony;
- availability of separate waiting rooms by court;
- measures preventing direct contact with perpetrators;
- notification procedures concerning release or escape;
- access to specialist accompaniment;
- interpretation and disability-accessibility arrangements;
- complaints concerning secondary victimisation;
- training and protocols revised following **X v. Cyprus**;
- monitoring and evaluation findings on victims' experience of criminal proceedings.

Expected Outcome

A consistently victim-centred justice process in which women and children participate safely and with dignity, are protected from intimidation and unnecessary contact, and are not subjected to secondary victimisation by the institutions responsible for delivering justice.

PART III- Emerging Trends in Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

55(a) Emerging Trends, Including Digital Manifestations

The recognition of digital violence and coercive control is important. However, the State Report provides no statistical evidence demonstrating the prevalence, characteristics or development of these emerging trends.

It does not clarify:

- which digital forms of violence are currently recorded separately;
- how many complaints involve cyberstalking, image-based sexual abuse, online threats or digital surveillance;
- whether deepfake sexual material has been reported;
- the relationship between victims and perpetrators;
- the age groups most affected;
- how many cases resulted in investigation, prosecution or conviction;
- whether Police have specialised technological capacity to preserve and analyse digital evidence;
- what protection is available where perpetrators use location tracking, spyware, shared accounts or children's devices.

The State Report refers to improved identification by specialised police units but provides no comparative figures or evaluation evidence supporting this conclusion.

Particular attention should be paid to adolescent girls, former intimate partners, women in public life, women journalists and activists, migrant women and women whose residence or economic status increases their dependence on perpetrators.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. introduce specific recording categories for all forms of technology-facilitated violence;
2. strengthen specialist police expertise in securing and analysing digital evidence;
3. adopt protocols addressing cyberstalking, image-based sexual abuse, deepfakes, online impersonation, digital surveillance and technology-facilitated coercive control;
4. ensure rapid removal or restriction of harmful online content, subject to legal safeguards;
5. include digital risks systematically in risk assessments and protection orders;

6. provide accessible digital-safety support to victims;
7. collect and publish disaggregated data on reports, investigations, prosecutions and outcomes;
8. undertake research on digital violence affecting girls and women in Cyprus.

55(b) Emerging Trends in Domestic Case Law

HYPATIA Assessment

The State Report's assertions are not supported by references to specific judgments, case numbers, dates, legal reasoning or quantitative information.

It is therefore not possible to assess:

- whether the Istanbul Convention is cited or applied by domestic courts;
- whether courts consistently interpret rape through the absence of freely given consent;
- how coercive control and psychological violence are treated;
- whether protection orders are granted promptly;
- how breaches affect subsequent decisions;
- whether domestic violence is considered in custody and visitation proceedings;
- whether gender stereotypes or victim-blaming persist;
- what sentences are imposed;
- whether appellate case law has corrected problematic first-instance decisions.

The absence of published, anonymised case law is itself a significant limitation. General statements about improved judicial practice require documentary evidence.

The State Report should also address the impact of the European Court of Human Rights judgment in **X v. Cyprus**, including any review of investigative, prosecutorial and judicial procedures following that judgment.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. provide a structured review of relevant domestic case law since 2022;
2. publish anonymised judgments concerning violence against women;
3. identify cases in which the Istanbul Convention has been cited or applied;
4. monitor judicial treatment of consent, coercive control, risk, protection orders, custody and secondary victimisation;
5. provide mandatory training to judges and prosecutors based on actual case-law findings;

6. explain the measures adopted following **X v. Cyprus**;
7. undertake periodic independent analysis of sentencing and judicial outcomes.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- references or copies of relevant judgments since 2022;
- the courts and dates concerned;
- the form of violence addressed;
- the legal principles established;
- whether the Istanbul Convention was cited;
- information on appeals and final outcomes;
- data on protection orders and sentencing;
- judicial or prosecutorial circulars issued following **X v. Cyprus**.

55(c) Emerging Trends in Funding and Budgeting

The reported direction of funding is positive, but the State Report provides only a descriptive overview.

It does not demonstrate a clear funding trend because it lacks:

- comparable annual figures before and after 2022;
- total expenditure across all ministries;
- expenditure by form of violence;
- expenditure by prevention, protection, prosecution and co-ordinated policies;
- expenditure by district;
- staffing costs;
- amounts awarded to individual specialist organisations;
- information on core versus project funding;
- assessment of unmet financial needs.

The existence of dedicated allocations does not establish their adequacy. For example, the reported allocation of €60,000 for grants in 2025 should be assessed against the number of organisations, programmes, victims and forms of violence expected to be covered.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. publish comparable annual expenditure data from 2022 onwards;
2. establish transparent budget lines for each pillar and form of violence;

3. provide stable multiannual core funding to specialist women's organisations;
4. conduct a national cost and needs assessment;
5. introduce gender-responsive budgeting across all relevant ministries;
6. publish funding decisions, criteria, beneficiaries and implementation outcomes;
7. identify geographical and service gaps resulting from inadequate resources.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- annual expenditure for 2022–2026;
- expenditure by ministry, programme and district;
- allocations and actual spending;
- grants awarded to each organisation;
- staffing financed;
- delays or underspending;
- needs assessments and independent financial evaluations.

55(d) Innovative Approaches to Primary Prevention

Assessment: Positive diversification of methods and target groups, but innovation and impact are not sufficiently demonstrated.

The expansion of prevention activities to digital platforms and younger audiences is welcome. The inclusion of boys and young men is also consistent with the preventive objectives of the Convention.

However, the State Report does not provide sufficient information concerning:

- the specific campaigns and programmes implemented;
- their duration, geographical coverage and target population;
- the number and profile of participants reached;
- the organisations involved in their design and delivery;
- whether private-sector actors, digital platforms, media organisations or employers participated;
- whether campaigns covered all forms of violence against women or continued to focus mainly on domestic violence;
- whether content was available in accessible formats and multiple languages;
- whether any initiative was independently evaluated;
- whether measurable changes in knowledge, attitudes or behaviour were recorded.

GREVIO had already found in 2022 that awareness-raising was frequently project-based, dependent on NGOs and European funding, concentrated mainly on domestic

violence and not subject to systematic impact evaluation. It also called for targeted campaigns for migrant and asylum-seeking women and women with disabilities.

The State Report does not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that these structural concerns have been fully addressed.

Individual campaigns, conferences or competitions may be useful, but they should form part of a sustained, adequately funded and evidence-based prevention strategy.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. adopt a long-term primary-prevention programme covering all forms of violence under the Convention;
2. define measurable objectives, target groups, budgets and evaluation indicators for every initiative;
3. expand sustained work with boys and men on masculinity, consent, equality and non-violent relationships;
4. develop tailored prevention measures for migrant and asylum-seeking women, domestic workers, women with disabilities and women in rural areas;
5. establish structured partnerships with media, employers, trade unions, universities, technology companies and online platforms;
6. ensure that digital campaigns include practical information on reporting, evidence preservation and available services;
7. evaluate changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviour;
8. publish the findings of all evaluations.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- a list of prevention programmes implemented since 2022;
- target audiences, duration, geographical coverage and budget;
- organisations and private-sector partners involved;
- participation and reach data;
- languages and accessibility formats used;
- evaluation methodology and findings;
- evidence of sustained rather than one-off intervention;
- measures specifically addressing forms of violence beyond domestic violence.

Expected Outcome

A sustained and evaluated prevention framework using modern communication methods, engaging new audiences and building effective partnerships without relying on isolated or short-term activities.

55(e) Emerging Trends Relating to Access to Asylum and International Protection

Assessment: The State Report identifies improved coordination, but it does not provide sufficient evidence that the major concerns identified by GREVIO in 2022 have been remedied.

In its baseline report, GREVIO found serious problems concerning:

- the absence of statistics on gender-based asylum claims and recognition outcomes;
- extremely low recognition of refugee status on gender-related grounds;
- the tendency to grant subsidiary protection rather than refugee status in FGM cases;
- failure to recognise the continuing risk of re-infibulation or further cutting;
- lack of legal aid at first instance;
- inadequate reasoning in negative decisions;
- understaffing and delays;
- unsafe and mixed-sex reception conditions;
- barriers to specialist support;
- insufficient vulnerability screening and standard operating procedures.

The 2026 State Report does not provide comparative data showing whether these problems have improved.

In particular, it does not state:

- how many women submitted claims based on gender-related persecution;
- which forms of violence formed the basis of those claims;
- how many received refugee status or subsidiary protection;
- how many claims were rejected;
- whether women subjected to FGM are now recognised as refugees where continuing or renewed risk exists;
- whether first-instance legal aid is available;
- whether gender-sensitive standard operating procedures have been finalised and implemented;
- whether every woman is screened confidentially and separately from family members;
- whether female interviewers and interpreters are consistently available;
- how delayed disclosure and trauma are treated in credibility assessments;

- whether reception facilities now provide safe, single-sex accommodation;
- how women access specialist services in practice;
- whether removal decisions are suspended where gender-related risks are raised.

The statement that coordination and referral have improved requires supporting figures, protocols and independent evaluation.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. collect and publish data on gender-based asylum claims, grounds invoked and outcomes;
2. ensure that all forms of gender-related persecution are recognised in accordance with the Convention;
3. assess the continuing and future risk faced by women and girls subjected to FGM;
4. provide free legal assistance from the first-instance stage;
5. finalise and implement binding gender-sensitive procedures for screening, interviewing and decision-making;
6. guarantee confidential individual interviews and access to female interviewers and interpreters where requested;
7. ensure that trauma, delayed disclosure and lack of documentary evidence are assessed appropriately;
8. provide safe, single-sex and adequately supervised accommodation;
9. ensure direct access to specialist women's support organisations;
10. monitor reception conditions and asylum decisions independently;
11. ensure full respect for non-refoulement in all gender-based cases.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide:

- annual numbers of gender-based asylum claims for two complete years;
- the forms of persecution invoked;
- refugee status, subsidiary protection and rejection figures;
- appeal outcomes;
- decisions involving FGM, forced marriage, sexual violence, domestic violence, trafficking and so-called honour-based violence;
- current standard operating procedures;
- access to legal aid at first instance;
- staffing and training of asylum personnel;
- screening and referral data;
- reception conditions by facility;

- access to female interviewers and interpreters;
- information on removals or attempted removals involving gender-related claims;
- evaluation findings concerning access to specialist support.

Expected Outcome

A gender-sensitive asylum system that identifies violence promptly, recognises gender-related persecution consistently, provides safe reception and specialist support, and protects women and girls from return to serious harm.

PART IV Administrative Data and Statistics for Two Full Calendar Years

56(a) Criminal Justice Data

Assessment: The information provided is insufficient to assess criminal justice effectiveness and attrition.

The absence of harmonised and comparable data prevents a reliable assessment of what happens to a case after it is reported.

The State Report should provide separate figures for at least two complete calendar years and for each relevant form of violence, including:

- domestic violence;
- psychological violence and coercive control;
- stalking;
- physical violence;
- sexual violence and rape;
- sexual harassment, where criminal provisions apply;
- forced marriage;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced abortion and forced sterilisation;
- technology-facilitated violence.

Data should be disaggregated, where possible, by:

- sex and age of the victim and perpetrator;
- relationship between victim and perpetrator;
- district;
- citizenship or migration status;
- disability;

- whether children were involved or witnessed the violence;
- repeat offending.

The data should allow calculation of:

- investigation rates;
- prosecution rates;
- conviction rates;
- case-discontinuation rates;
- average duration of proceedings;
- attrition between each stage of the process.

Police data alone are insufficient. Comparable information is required from the Law Office and the courts.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. provide a harmonised statistical table covering two full calendar years;
2. use identical offence categories across Police, prosecution and courts;
3. introduce an anonymised case identifier enabling cases to be followed across institutions;
4. publish reasons for discontinuation or non-prosecution;
5. provide sentencing data by offence and aggravating circumstance;
6. calculate and publish criminal justice attrition rates;
7. distinguish completed cases from cases still pending;
8. ensure that statistics are publicly available and independently analysable.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide, separately for each of the two reference years:

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2
Reports recorded		
Investigations initiated		
Investigations completed		
Arrests		
Cases transmitted to the Law Office		
Prosecutions initiated		
Cases discontinued		
Convictions		

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2
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Acquittals

Custodial sentences

Suspended sentences

Fines or other sanctions

Cases pending at year-end

Average duration of proceedings

The State should also identify:

- the precise legal offence categories used;
- reasons for case discontinuation;
- whether the figures concern persons, incidents or criminal files;
- whether one case may appear under more than one category;
- limitations affecting comparability.

Expected Outcome

A complete and harmonised criminal justice dataset that allows GREVIO to assess reporting, investigation, prosecution, conviction, sentencing and attrition for every relevant form of violence against women.

56(b) Emergency Barring Orders

Information provided by the State Party

Assessment: The data do not permit an assessment of the practical use and enforcement of emergency barring orders.

A separate dataset is required to determine whether the emergency mechanism is used rapidly and effectively in situations of imminent danger.

The State Report should provide information concerning:

- applications or requests made;
- orders issued;
- requests refused;
- authority issuing the order;
- time between request and issuance;
- duration of the order;
- whether the perpetrator was removed from the residence;
- number of women and children protected;
- breaches recorded;

- arrests, prosecutions and sanctions following breaches;
- transition to longer-term protection orders.

Data should also be presented by district and should clarify whether orders are available during nights, weekends and public holidays.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. record emergency barring orders as a distinct statistical category;
2. distinguish them from other restraining and protection orders;
3. publish annual information on issuance time, duration and territorial use;
4. record every breach and the institutional response;
5. analyse reasons for refusal;
6. monitor whether victims and children were able to remain safely in the residence;
7. link the data to risk assessments and subsequent protection measures.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide, for each of the two reference years:

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2
Requests/applications submitted		
Orders issued		
Requests refused		
Orders issued outside normal court hours		
Average time to issuance		
Average duration		
Perpetrators removed from residence		
Women protected		
Children protected		
Breaches recorded		
Arrests following breach		
Prosecutions following breach		
Sanctions imposed		
Cases followed by longer-term protection orders		

The State should clarify:

- the exact statutory basis of the orders;

- the competent issuing authority;
- whether figures concern orders or persons;
- the geographical distribution;
- procedures for recording and responding to breaches.

Expected Outcome

A transparent dataset demonstrating whether emergency barring orders are rapidly available, remove perpetrators from the residence, protect women and children effectively and are strictly enforced when breached.

56(c) Restraining or Protection Orders

Assessment: The data provided are insufficient to evaluate accessibility, use and enforcement.

Protection-order statistics should show not only how many orders were issued, but also:

- how quickly protection was granted;
- whether applications were refused and why;
- whether children were included;
- what forms of contact were prohibited;
- how often perpetrators breached the orders;
- how the Police and courts responded to breaches;
- whether the orders prevented repeated violence.

Data should distinguish between:

- interim and final orders;
- criminal, civil and family-court orders;
- orders issued independently of criminal proceedings;
- orders protecting women only and orders also covering children;
- physical-contact restrictions and electronic or third-party contact restrictions.

Every breach should be recorded as a significant indicator of escalating risk and linked to renewed risk assessment and appropriate enforcement action.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. establish a unified statistical category for restraining and protection orders;
2. distinguish interim, final and emergency measures;
3. record application and issuance dates to assess processing times;

4. record the scope, duration and persons protected by each order;
5. record every breach and the resulting police, prosecutorial and judicial response;
6. provide data on repeat breaches and repeated offending;
7. link order data with risk assessments and criminal proceedings;
8. publish district-level and annual statistics.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide, for each of the two reference years:

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2
Applications submitted		
Interim orders issued		
Final orders issued		
Applications refused		
Average processing time		
Orders issued independently of criminal proceedings		
Women protected		
Children protected		
Orders prohibiting electronic contact		
Orders prohibiting third-party contact		
Breaches recorded		
Repeat breaches		
Arrests following breach		
Prosecutions following breach		
Convictions or sanctions following breach		

The State should also clarify:

- the statutory basis of each order;
- the issuing court or authority;
- whether figures refer to applications, orders, cases or persons;
- the duration of the orders;
- the consequences of breach;
- how contradictory orders across criminal and family jurisdictions are prevented.

Expected Outcome

A complete and transparent dataset demonstrating that protection orders are rapidly accessible, sufficiently comprehensive and consistently enforced.

56(d) Family-Court Decisions Concerning Custody and Visitation

Assessment: The absence of case-level statistics prevents evaluation of the practical implementation of Article 31.

The State should provide data showing:

- how many custody or visitation cases involved allegations, evidence or findings of domestic violence;
- how many cases involved existing criminal proceedings or protection orders;
- how many resulted in supervised, restricted or suspended contact;
- how many resulted in limitation or withdrawal of custody or parental responsibility;
- whether children witnessing violence were recognised as victims;
- whether risk assessments were obtained;
- whether the views of the victim and child were considered;
- whether contradictory family and criminal court decisions occurred.

The data should distinguish between:

- allegations raised by a party;
- documented police reports;
- protection orders;
- criminal convictions;
- findings made directly by the Family Court.

It is particularly important to identify whether domestic violence is treated as a central safety issue or reframed merely as parental conflict.

HYPATIA Recommendations

HYPATIA recommends that the Republic of Cyprus:

1. create a specific statistical category for family cases involving domestic violence;
2. require Family Courts to record whether violence was alleged, evidenced or judicially established;
3. record the protective measures ordered and their duration;
4. record whether risk assessments and information from criminal authorities were considered;
5. monitor cases involving supervised, restricted or suspended contact;
6. collect information on children recognised as victims of witnessing violence;
7. publish anonymised case-law and annual statistical summaries;

8. establish structured information exchange between Family Courts, Police, criminal courts, Social Welfare Services and specialist support services.

Additional Information Requested

The Republic of Cyprus is invited to provide, for each of the two reference years:

Indicator	Year 1	Year 2
Custody/visitation cases involving allegations of domestic violence		
Cases involving police reports		
Cases involving protection orders		
Cases involving criminal proceedings or convictions		
Risk assessments submitted to the Family Court		
Supervised visitation orders		
Restricted-contact orders		
Suspended-contact orders		
Custody restricted or withdrawn		
Children recognised as victims of witnessing violence		
Decisions referring expressly to the Istanbul Convention		
Appeals and outcomes		

The State should also explain:

- how domestic violence is recorded in Family Court files;
- whether coercive control and stalking are included;
- how information is exchanged with criminal justice authorities;
- whether mediation is excluded where violence is identified;
- how the safety of the victim and child is monitored after a contact order is issued;
- whether anonymised judgments are publicly accessible.

Expected Outcome

A family-justice dataset capable of demonstrating whether domestic violence is systematically identified and given decisive weight in custody and visitation decisions.