

Committee of the Parties



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

Conclusions on the implementation of recommendations in respect of Albania adopted by the Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention

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Adopted on 7 December 2021

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The Committee of the Parties to the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention”), acting under the terms of Article 68(12) of the Convention and Rule 1(2b) of the Committee of the Parties’ Rules of Procedure;

Bearing in mind the provisions of Article 66(1) of the Convention concerning the monitoring role of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter referred to as “GREVIO”);

Having regard to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of the Parties;

Having regard to the instrument of ratification deposited by Albania on 4 February 2013;

Having regard to the Baseline Evaluation Report concerning the implementation of the Convention by Albania adopted by GREVIO at its 12th meeting (9-13 October 2017), as well as the comments of the Government received on 17 November 2017;

Having regard to the recommendation on the implementation of the Convention addressed to Albania by the Committee of the Parties, published on 30 January 2018;

Bearing in mind the adoption, at its 9th meeting on 15 December 2020, of a reporting form which focuses on a maximum of ten areas of the Convention and which states are required to use to report back to the Committee of the Parties on measures taken to implement the recommendations addressed to their authorities;

Having examined the information provided by Albania on the implementation of the recommendation addressed to its authorities, through the reporting form provided for that purpose, as well as the information submitted by non-governmental organisations and civil society;

A. Welcomes the measures taken and progress achieved by Albania in the implementation of recommendations for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, noting in particular:

- the set-up of Albania’s first sexual violence referral centre in hospital premises providing emergency and short-term support services such as health care, forensic medical services, psychological support, legal assistance, as well as food and shelter to victim of sexual violence for a period of up to 72 hours on a one-stop-shop basis;
- the set-up of new institutional bodies to address and evaluate policies on violence against women (the Parliamentary Sub-committee On Gender Equality and Preventing Violence against Women) and to coordinate the institutional response in the area of protection and support to victims of domestic violence (the Office for the Coordination the Fight against Domestic Violence within the Ministry of Justice);
- that Coordinated Referral Mechanisms, a centrepiece of the country’s co-ordinated multi-agency response to violence against women, are now established in all 61 municipalities and are mandated to identify and provide support in respect of other forms of violence against women, beyond domestic violence;
- a significant increase both in the number of court judgements that explicitly refer to the Convention and in the successful prosecutions of domestic violence;
- a three-fold increase in the funds made available for gender-responsive budgeting and the use of gender mainstreaming also by local governing units’ budgets, accompanied by training on gender budgeting;
- positive steps taken by the Ministry of Justice to collect additional data on domestic violence, including by disaggregating this data by relationship between the victim and the perpetrator;
- the 2018 amendments to Law 9669/2006 on domestic violence that have introduced the obligation, in cases of domestic violence, to assess whether protection orders should be issued or ordered for the benefit of children, which may include the temporary limitation of parental rights; and that detail the nature and the modalities of enforcement of Emergency Barring Orders and Protection Orders, noting also the positive steps taken towards an effective monitoring of the implementation of such orders;

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- the new requirement to systematically carry out a risk assessment upon receipt of a report on domestic violence and prior to issuing an Emergency Barring Order; and
 - the adoption of the Law "On free legal aid provided by the state" which strengthens legal aid provision; the opening of several legal clinics, providing free legal aid; and an increase in the funding of NGOs providing free legal aid.
- B. Encourages the Government of Albania to take further measures to implement the recommendations addressed to its authorities, in particular by:
1. clearly designating or establishing one or more official bodies responsible for the coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies in the area of violence against women and conferring upon it decision-making powers as well as sufficient dedicated human and financial resources to enable this/these body/ies to exercise effectively its functions;
 2. identifying and expanding the overall human and financial resources allocated at the central level to the relevant Ministries in order to fight violence against women, as well as at the municipal level; and providing stable and sustainable funding levels for women's NGOs that support victims of violence against women;
 3. strengthening data collection and ensuring that both the law enforcement and criminal justice sector collect data on all forms of violence against women, beyond domestic violence, and systematically disaggregate such data including on the basis of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator;
 4. taking measures to ensure that fees associated with the obligatory psychological assessment required for the issue of a protection order for a child does not hinder, in practice, the issue of such protection orders, including those that entail the temporary removal of custodial/parental rights;
 5. introducing restraining or protection orders for victims of all forms of violence against women other than domestic violence; and
 6. amending the definition of rape and sexual violence to align it with the requirements of Article 36 of the Convention.
- C. Invites the Government of Albania to report back on these measures by 8 December 2023.
- D. Invites the Government of Albania to continue taking measures to implement the Istanbul Convention, particularly on the basis of the conclusions of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report.