

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 Austria adopted by the Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention

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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 Austria on 14 November 2013;

Having regard to the Baseline Evaluation Report concerning the implementation of the Convention by Austria adopted by GREVIO at its 11th meeting (26 – 29 June 2017), as well as the comments of the Government received on 1 September 2017;

Having regard to the recommendation on the implementation of the Convention addressed to Austria 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 Austria on the implementation of the recommendation addressed to its authorities, through the reporting form provided for that purpose;

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

- its Violence Protection Act of 2019 by which it strengthened existing legal measures and introduced new ones to reinforce the protection from and prosecution of acts of domestic and gender-based violence, for example by introducing mobile restraining orders of 100 metres around the person at risk; requiring perpetrators of violence to attend compulsory counselling; re-introducing multi-agency case conferences for high-risk cases; extending interim injunctions to allow for protection from derogatory publications on social networks; and creating a specific criminal offence of female genital mutilation;
- the introduction of the Federal Act to Combat Hate Crime in January 2021, by which it refined existing criminal law regulations, in particular on the right to one’s image, hate speech on the internet and cyberbullying, and introduced a new criminal offence penalising unauthorised visual recordings (“upskirting”); moreover, it extended psychosocial and legal assistance to victims of online hate speech and underage witnesses of violence in their social surroundings;
- the increase in human resources of the Austrian coordinating body under Article 10 of the Convention;
- the increase in funds for activities and measures to prevent and combat violence against women;
- its efforts in the training and sensitisation of specific professional groups, in particular by promoting the implementation of training standards on domestic and sexual violence for health care personnel, which is often the first point of contact for women affected by violence, as well as by providing initial and continuous training on various forms of violence covered by the Convention to key groups such as the police, judges, public prosecutors, persons providing psychosocial court assistance and supervised visitation; and
- the creation of specialist counselling services for victims of sexual violence in all nine provinces.

B. Encourages the Government of Austria to take further measures to implement the recommendations addressed to its authorities, in particular:

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1. by developing a long-term action plan/strategy beyond a government programme giving due importance to all forms of violence covered by the Convention and based on consistent and on-going funding to allow for sustainable and comprehensive action;
 2. by developing data categories for use by the law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice sector on the type of the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim that would allow the nature of their relationship to be more specifically documented and to ensure that these and any other data categories in use are harmonised across the various sectors;
 3. by further institutionalising the national co-ordinating body by equipping a government entity mandated and fully resourced to monitor and evaluate policies and other measures taken in implementation of the Convention; and
 4. by continuing to reduce the disparity in terms of levels of service provision for the different forms of violence covered by the Convention through the further provision of accessible support services, in adequate geographic distribution, for victims of forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and the increase in the capacity of specialist support services to accommodate victims of domestic violence with mental health issues, intellectual or physical disabilities, with a history of substance abuse and irrespective of their residence status.
- C. Invites the Government of Austria to report back on these measures by 8 December 2023.
- D. Invites the Government of Austria to continue taking measures to implement the Convention, particularly on the basis of the conclusions of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report.