

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 Portugal 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 Portugal on 5 February 2013;

Having regard to the Baseline Evaluation Report concerning the implementation of the Convention by Portugal adopted by GREVIO by written procedure in December 2018, as well as the comments of the Government received on 18 January 2019;

Having regard to the recommendation on the implementation of the Convention addressed to Portugal by the Committee of the Parties, published on 28 January 2019;

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 Portugal 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 Portugal in the implementation of recommendations for the implementation of the Convention, noting in particular:

- the efforts made to strengthen the comprehensiveness of policies to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence by adopting, in 2019, a Resolution providing for a set of new measures to reinforce existing responses to violence against women and domestic violence as well as revising and extending the duration of the current action plan. These measures include: improving data collection, by means of a new database covering all forms of violence against women - including stalking and sexual violence - and gathering data from all the relevant sectors, based on a set of expanded indicators; diversifying training models and improving primary and secondary prevention, through the implementation of an ambitious and standardised common training plan for professionals from different sectors; improving the victims’ immediate protection mechanisms by law enforcement officials based on a new handbook on action to be taken in the 72 hours following a domestic violence complaint; and developing further action to prevent and combat “harmful traditional practices”, including female genital mutilation and forced marriage;
- the increased involvement of the health sector in identifying and supporting victims of different forms of gender-based violence as part of a new national programme for the prevention of violence in the lifecycle;
- the increased availability of specialist services for victims of violence against women through the expansion and enhanced specialisation of the National Support Network for Domestic Violence Victims, including the setting up of specific residential support structures for older women victims of domestic violence, an emergency shelter for victims of early and forced marriage, of shelters for women with physical disabilities and cognitive impairments, an increased number of crisis centres for women victims of sexual violence; and the opening of three victim support services within the National Support Centres for the Integration of Migrants to support migrant women victims of domestic violence and other forms of violence against women;

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- the measures taken to improve the protection of child victims of domestic violence, including amendments to the legislation to extend victim status to children exposed to domestic violence, better assess their protection needs and make it possible to restrict parental rights accordingly; enhanced access to specialised psychological support for child victims of domestic violence; and the efforts made to improve co-ordination between the criminal and family law areas, notably by piloting two specialised sections in the prosecution services on domestic violence which join up the criminal and family and children units, and the new directives published by the Public Prosecution Office to improve the protection of children exposed to domestic violence;
 - amendments to the criminal code aimed at including economic violence in the definition of domestic violence;
 - the simplification of the system to gain access to the status of victim, and access related rights and services.
- B. Encourages the Government of Portugal to take further measures to implement the recommendations addressed to its authorities, in particular by:
1. increasing efforts to harmonise the level of support and protection for women victims of violence throughout the country and to monitor the implementation of measures taken to prevent and combat violence against women at the local level;
 2. setting up a dedicated telephone helpline for victims of all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, operated by specialised staff;
 3. amending the criminal code to fully align it with Articles 36 and 40 of the Istanbul Convention and to ensure the rules on *ex parte* and *ex officio* prosecution of offences of sexual violence and bodily injury are in line with Article 55, paragraph 1, of the Convention;
 4. taking measures to ensure the availability and effective application of restraining and protection orders in relation to all forms of violence against women, notably stalking, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- C. Invites the Government of Portugal to report back on these measures by 7 June 2024.
- D. Invites the Government of Portugal to continue taking measures to implement the Convention, particularly on the basis of the conclusions of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report.