



## **Committee of the Parties**

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

---

**Recommendation on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence by the Republic of Moldova**

IC-CP/Inf(2023)18

Adopted on 5 December 2023

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;

Having regard to the purposes of the Convention to protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence; to contribute to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and promote substantive equality between women and men, including by empowering women; to design a comprehensive framework, policies and measures for the protection of and assistance to all victims of violence against women and domestic violence; to promote international co-operation with a view to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence; and to provide support and assistance to organisations and law enforcement agencies to effectively co-operate in order to adopt an integrated approach to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence;

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 the Republic of Moldova on 31 January 2022;

Having examined the Baseline Evaluation Report concerning the implementation of the Convention by the Republic of Moldova adopted by GREVIO at its 31st meeting (23 – 26 October 2023), as well as the comments of the Government received on 10 November 2023;

Considering the overarching priorities set out in Chapter I of the Convention (purposes and scope of the Convention, definitions, equality and non-discrimination, due diligence and gender-sensitive policies);

Bearing in mind the primordial importance of the provisions set out in Chapter II of the Convention, in particular the obligations to (1) ensure a holistic response to violence against women by devising a set of comprehensive and co-ordinated policies implemented by way of effective multi-agency cooperation; (2) institutionalise and fully mandate one or more co-ordinating bodies as required by Article 10 of the Convention; (3) adequately resource policies, measures and mandates introduced to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, including government and nongovernmental specialist support services; and (4) to collect relevant statistical data disaggregated, at a minimum, by sex, age, type of violence, relationship of the perpetrator to the victim and geographic location;

Welcoming the measures taken and progress achieved by the Moldovan authorities in implementing the Convention and noting in particular:

- the adoption of the Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence in 2007 and amendments to a number of laws to increase the protection of women victims of violence and the prosecution of perpetrators by, for instance, providing free legal aid to victims of domestic and sexual violence in criminal proceedings, and enabling law-enforcement officers to issue emergency barring orders;
- the adoption of two consecutive strategic documents for preventing and combating domestic violence and violence against women, covering the periods 2018-2023 and 2023-207 respectively;
- their continuous and positive co-operation with both civil society actors and international donors working in the field of gender equality and violence against women;
- the ongoing plans to repeat the national prevalence survey on domestic violence against women, with a view to identifying the causes and assessing the prevalence of different forms of domestic

---

violence, as well as their impact and consequences on the physical and mental well-being of women victims of violence;

- the establishment of the first sexual assault centre in Ungheni, which provides immediate medical care, trauma support, forensic examinations and psychological assistance to victims of sexual violence based on a gender sensitive and trauma informed approach;
- the establishment, in 2022, of a commission for the monitoring and analysis of cases of domestic violence resulting in the victim's death or serious bodily harm with a view to preventing such incidents in the future;
- the recognition of the harmful effect of domestic violence on children who witness it, in the Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence which expressly recognises children witnessing domestic violence as victims in their own right; and the efforts of the authorities to provide support to child witnesses of domestic violence through the establishment of specialised centres based on the Barnahus model;
- the introduction of electronic monitoring of perpetrators via anklets in order to ensure compliance with protection orders; and,
- their efforts to provide support and protection to women and girls fleeing the war in Ukraine.

A. Recommends, in light of the considerations indicated in the preamble above, that the Government of the Republic of Moldova takes the following measures identified in GREVIO's baseline evaluation report<sup>1</sup> for immediate action to:

1. enhance the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in relation to all the forms of violence against women covered by the convention that are not currently addressed by policies, programmes and services, such as sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, forced abortion, forced sterilisation and stalking (paragraph 7);
2. prevent and combat violence against women who are, or may be, exposed to intersectional discrimination, including but not limited to women with disabilities, Roma women and women from rural communities by including measures on violence against women in policies, measures and programmes addressing the specific needs of groups of women facing intersectional discrimination, integrating an intersectional perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies for preventing and combating violence against women and by supporting, funding and closely co-operating with women's NGOs representing women who are, or may be, exposed to intersectional discrimination (paragraph 17);
3. ensure a state-wide effective, comprehensive and co-ordinated set of policies to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, including in their digital dimension (paragraph 25) and foster increased co-ordination at the various levels of public administration by devising measures aimed at harmonising and monitoring the work of multidisciplinary teams to prevent and combat domestic violence and violence against women and by allocating appropriate financial resources and the training of all relevant professionals (paragraph 26);
4. ensure the allocation of sustainable resources to measures and policies for preventing and combating violence against women, including in particular to women's rights NGOs that run specialist support services for women victims of all forms of violence, through long term grants based on transparent procurement procedures while also foreseeing earmarked funding to identify more effectively the sums spent on preventing and combating violence against women by all relevant national and local institutions (paragraph 33);

---

<sup>1</sup> The number of the paragraph setting out GREVIO's proposals and suggestions in the report is indicated in brackets.

5. put in place a dedicated, transparent and accountable public procedure under which all NGOs providing specialist support services to victims of all forms of violence against women and their children can apply for funding (paragraph 37);
6. ensure the co-ordination and implementation of policies and measures in relation to all forms of violence against women, including in their digital dimension, and their independent monitoring and evaluation, in order to ensure objectivity in the evaluation while also providing the co-ordinating body with sufficient and stable human and financial resources (paragraph 42);
7. collect administrative data from law-enforcement agencies, prosecution authorities and judicial bodies, based on harmonised categories, and introduce a case-management system that would enable cases of violence to be tracked throughout the criminal process, from reporting to indictment and conviction, in relation to all criminal offences covered by the Istanbul Convention, and broken down by sex, and age of both the victim and the perpetrator, type of offence, relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, and geographical location (paragraph 50);
8. ensure the collection of data by healthcare providers on their contact with women in relation to experiences of gender-based violence, disaggregated by sex and age of both the victim and the perpetrator, the relationship between them, the type of violence and geographical location (paragraph 54), as well as to expand the collection of data to reports made to, and interventions proposed by, social services in relation to all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention (paragraph 57);
9. ensure systematic and mandatory initial and in-service training on the prevention and detection of all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention, including their digital manifestations, on equality between women and men, on the needs and rights of victims and on the prevention of secondary victimisation, for all professional groups, in particular law enforcement, the healthcare sector and the judiciary, while also putting in place clear protocols and guidelines setting the standards that staff are expected to follow, and providing appropriate and sustainable funding (paragraph 92);
10. set up institutionalised structures for co-ordination and co-operation among all of the governmental and non-governmental agencies and service providers to ensure multi-agency co-operation, tailored to the specific needs of victims of all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention, in particular rape and sexual violence, forced marriage, stalking and sexual harassment (paragraph 111);
11. take steps to allocate appropriate human and financial resources for social services, including those delivered by local authorities, in support of victims of all forms of violence against women (paragraph 127), and ensure the setting up of dedicated programmes aimed at the empowerment of women victims of domestic violence, including securing their economic independence through financial assistance, education, training, assistance in finding employment, and long-term housing solutions (paragraph 128);
12. ensure the access of victims of all forms of violence against women to free quality healthcare delivered by health professionals trained in the early detection and prevention of violence against women and who provide free-of-charge documentation of forensic evidence while also reinforcing the role of the health sector in the interagency co-operation and referral system, as well as developing and/or upgrading adequate protocols and procedures and supplementing them by training efforts, to bring professionals' attitudes, skills and responses to violence against women, including sexual violence, up to the standards of the Istanbul Convention (paragraph 132);

13. provide or arrange for adequate specialist women's support services, with a gendered approach, throughout the country and for all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, including in their digital dimension, as well as for the victims' children, while paying due regard to the needs of women who are or may be exposed to intersectional discrimination, with the aim of providing immediate, medium and long-term support to women victims of violence by involving the expertise of the civil society organisations providing specialist services (paragraph 137);
14. expand the number and/or capacity of specialist shelter facilities for women victims of violence and their children, throughout the country, while monitoring their quality and financial sustainability, and ensuring equitable access to such specialist shelter services for all women victims of all the forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, especially women with disabilities, women living in rural areas, women with addiction issues, older women, Roma women and migrant women (paragraph 141);
15. ensure that, when taking any decision related to custody and visitation rights, the competent authorities consider all issues relating to violence against women and the harmful effects of witnessing domestic violence on children; incorporate screening, risk-assessment and risk-management procedures in the determination of custody and visitation rights; monitor custody and visitation schemes in place and restrict these rights when this is necessary to guarantee the safety of the mother and the child; provide appropriate training to all relevant professionals about the requirements of the Istanbul Convention on custody and visitation rights, and strengthen interinstitutional co-operation among all relevant actors; provide the necessary human and financial resources to social welfare authorities to ensure that supervised visitations can take place in a safe environment with the participation of trained professionals (paragraph 182);
16. ensure, through all available means - such as protocols, training of professionals and legislative changes - more operational clarity between the contravention and the crime of domestic violence, while also prescribing more dissuasive sanctions for the contravention of domestic violence (paragraph 195);
17. amend the sexual offences provided under the Criminal Code to fully incorporate the notion of lack of freely given consent, as required by Article 36 of the Istanbul Convention, and to define the type of non-consensual sexual acts that are criminalised, in line with Article 36, paragraphs 1a, b and c, of the convention (paragraph 201);
18. ensure that for any abortion or sterilisation procedure performed on women with intellectual disabilities, prior and informed consent is obtained on the basis of sufficient information on the procedure provided in a disability-accessible manner by professionals trained in gender and disability issues; and that in procedure authorising the sterilisation of legally incapacitated women, less invasive birth control options are considered, with due regard to the best interests and self-determination of the women (paragraph 212);
19. ensure that sentences and measures imposed in cases of domestic violence and on the different forms of violence against women are effective, proportionate and dissuasive, as required by Article 45 of the Istanbul Convention, through legislative measures and the effective training of members of the judiciary and prosecution services (paragraph 219);
20. take the necessary measures, including amending the relevant legislation, to explicitly prohibit the mandatory character of reconciliation in criminal proceedings where there is violence against women, regardless of the applicable provision of the Criminal Codes (paragraph 229); and, in the interim, incorporate a risk-assessment procedure and other safeguards to ensure the full and free consent of the victim in the context of any voluntary reconciliation procedure (paragraph 230);

21. complete swiftly the pilot work on the electronic record-keeping system for perpetrators? and ensure that it is introduced throughout the country (paragraph 271).

- B. Requests the Government of the Republic of Moldova to report to the Committee of the Parties on the measures taken to improve the implementation of the Convention in the above-mentioned areas by 5 December 2026.
- C. Recommends that the Government of the Republic of Moldova take measures to implement the further conclusions of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report.