

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

Raising awareness of the
Istanbul convention and
other gender equality
standards in Azerbaijan



Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

The Council of Europe Convention on
preventing and combating violence
against women and domestic
violence

Prepared by
Leyla Madatli
local consultant

This brochure has been produced as part of the project "Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan", co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union or the Council of Europe.

This publication has not been copy-edited by the SPDP Editorial Unit to correct typographical and grammatical errors.

The reproduction of extracts (up to 500 words) is authorised, except for commercial purposes as long as the integrity of the text is preserved, the excerpt is not used out of context, does not provide incomplete information or does not otherwise mislead the reader as to the nature, scope or content of the text. The source text must always be acknowledged as follows "© Council of Europe, year of the publication". All other requests concerning the reproduction/translation of all or part of the document, should be addressed to the Directorate of Communications, Council of Europe (F- 7075 Strasbourg Cedex or publishing@coe.int).

All other correspondence concerning this document should be addressed to the Gender Equality Division of Council of Europe, F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex, E-mail: vaw.gender.cooperation@coe.int

Cover and layout: 360 Marcom MMC

Cover photo: by Gursimrat Ganda on Unsplash

© Council of Europe, November 2022.
All rights reserved. Licensed to the European Union under conditions.

MYTHS and FACTS

about the Istanbul Convention

1

MYTH

The Istanbul Convention aims to regulate family life or family structure and leads to the destruction of the traditional Azerbaijani family



FACT

The Istanbul Convention does not define “family” and does not regulate it. It only aims to end violence against women and domestic violence. It contributes to breaking the silence about violence within families, which causes suffering for victims, including children. The killing of or the assault on a woman are not “private” matters. The real threat to families is violence itself. Azerbaijani legislation already prohibits domestic violence. The Istanbul Convention provides a stronger system to support and protect victims of violence and be a step closer to eliminating violence against women.

2

MYTH

The Istanbul Convention introduces same-sex marriage into Azerbaijani law, as well as the concepts of “sexual orientation” and “gender identity”



FACT

The Istanbul Convention does not set new standards on gender identity and sexual orientation, and it does not ask states to recognise same-sex couples. The fact that no one should be discriminated against because of their gender identity or sexual orientation is not a new provision introduced by the Istanbul Convention. It is a basic human right already set in other conventions that Azerbaijan has ratified, including the European Convention on Human Rights to which Azerbaijan is a party since 2002. The Istanbul Convention only wants to guarantee the protection and support for all victims of violence, no matter what characteristics they might have.

3

MYTH

The Istanbul Convention introduces the concept of “gender” into Azerbaijani legislation, which is not typical of Azerbaijan;



FACT

The concepts of “gender” and “gender equality” are not something new or inconsistent with Azerbaijani legislation. The Azerbaijani Law on Guarantees of Gender (Men and Women) Equality defines the concept of “gender” as the social aspect of relations between women and men in all spheres of public life. It also defines “gender equality” as the equality of rights of women and men, and the opportunities for implementation of those rights and equality of their social status in society. The definition of the term “gender” in the Istanbul Convention therefore does not bring anything new.

4

MYTH

The Istanbul Convention is a foreign document imposed on us by Europe.



FACT

Azerbaijani experts took part in the preparation of the Istanbul Convention. Its text was unanimously approved with the participation of the representatives of the Azerbaijani state authorities. Promoting gender equality is already in other conventions that Azerbaijan is a party of, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Azerbaijani legislation also establishes that the main goal of the state is to protect the human rights and freedoms of its citizens. The Istanbul Convention simply contributes to improving the protection of human rights and to eliminate violence against women.

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, aims to ensure all women can live a life free from violence. Nevertheless, many misconceptions exist on what the Istanbul Convention requires from states and what it means in practice for citizens. This brochure aims to shine light on what the Istanbul Convention really wants to achieve, and to help dispel myths and misinformation about it.

ENG

The Member States of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

<http://europa.eu>

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

www.coe.int

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe