

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF DEMOCRACY

Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance

Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department

Gender Equality Division

Capacity building and co-operation projects Unit

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Ref ► HDGE/GED/Cooperation

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Information about ongoing capacity building and co-operation projects

The Council of Europe implements targeted capacity building and co-operation projects on gender equality and combating violence against women and domestic violence to provide national authorities with information about relevant standards, as well as with the tools and the expertise necessary to comply with them. Projects support countries to implement Council of Europe standards as well as to comply with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

These projects contribute towards making gender equality a reality in both the member States and within the organisation.

Ongoing projects

Council of Europe's co-operation with the EEA and Norway Grants

Since 2011, the Council of Europe has worked in partnership with the [EEA and Norway Grants Financial Mechanism](#) under Programme Area 22 – domestic and gender-based violence.

The co-operation builds on the extensive expertise of the Council of Europe and its human rights standards on gender equality and violence against women and domestic violence, in particular, [the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#) (Istanbul Convention).

Within the current [EEA and Norway Grants cycle 2014-2021](#), the Council of Europe provides strategic advice on domestic and gender-based violence through five programmes in the following countries:

- Bulgaria
- Lithuania
- Romania
- Slovakia

The Council of Europe also takes a leading role in the EEA/Norway Grant SYNERGY Network against gender-based and domestic violence including Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The SYNERGY meetings and conferences facilitate cooperation across countries as regards violence against women and domestic violence, and has proven to be a promising space for advocacy for ratification of the Istanbul Convention, providing concrete and verifiable examples of the benefits of ratification, and

concrete examples of implementation of the Convention. Co-operation activities under EEA/Norway Grants programmes aim at bringing about substantive changes on the ground in benefit of victims and building up and strengthening the countries' capacity to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

Selection of publications:

- [Improving the effectiveness of law-enforcement and justice officers in combating violence against women and domestic violence](#)
- [Enhancing the professional capacity of the Bulgarian Police to deal with cases of domestic violence and violence against women](#)
- [Implementing Article 10 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – establishing national co-ordinating bodies](#)
- [Implementing a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach - An assessment of Poland's response to prevent and combat gender-based violence](#)
- [Training of Trainers Manual: Effective Multi-agency Co-operation for Preventing and Combatting Domestic Violence](#)
- [Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence against Women: A learning resource for training law enforcement and justice officers](#)

PGG II: Women's Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards in the Eastern Partnership countries

Member states of the Council of Europe have a legal obligation to ensure that all individuals in their jurisdiction have effective, available and efficient access to justice, that there is a system of remedies for victims and that the justice system is held accountable for any violation. Effective justice systems based on human rights standards, the rule of law and democratic values are central to enabling women to become equal partners in decision-making and development and to be informed participants in their societies.

The project, implemented under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG), a joint programme of the European Union and the Council of Europe, aims at strengthening access to justice for women, especially women victims of violence in line with the Council of Europe gender equality standards and contributing towards the Eastern Partnership countries ratification of the [Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#).

The project's objectives :

- Authorities, justice sector professionals, and civil society apply new competences on the standards on access to justice of the Istanbul Convention, in order to remove obstacles to access to justice.
- Authorities, justice sector professionals and civil society introduce measures, including on training, to ensure that the justice chain is gender responsive, particularly for women victims of violence in line with the Istanbul Convention and other European standards.

The project complements other Council of Europe projects in the region by contributing to the development of a gender sensitive justice system.

All deliverables can be found [here](#).

Selection of publications (PGG I and PGG II):

- [Interactive online tool](#) of the [Checklist on Gender Mainstreaming Law Schools' Curricula](#)
- Checklist for Gender Mainstreaming Law Schools' Curricula [ENG](#) / [ARM](#) / [AZE](#) / [GEO](#) / [ROM](#) / [RUS](#) / [UKR](#)
- Guide for developing a mentoring programme on Women's Access to Justice for legal professionals [ENG](#) / [ARM](#) / [AZE](#) / [GEO](#) / [ROM](#) / [RUS](#) / [UKR](#)
- Guidance Note - Framework for measuring access to justice including specific challenges facing women - UN Women - Council of Europe (2016) [ENG](#) / [ARM](#) / [AZE](#) / [GEO](#) / [ROM](#) / [RUS](#) / [UKR](#)
- Women's access to justice: a Guide for Legal Practitioners [ENG](#) / [FR](#) / [ARM](#) / [AZE](#) / [GEO](#) / [ROM](#) / [RUS](#) / [UKR](#)
- [Training Manual for Judges and Prosecutors on Ensuring Women's Access to Justice consists of a general part, and is accompanied by four country chapters](#)
 - Country Chapter for Armenia [ENG](#)
 - Country Chapter for Georgia [ENG](#)
 - Country Chapter for the Republic of Moldova [ENG](#)
 - Country Chapter for Ukraine [ENG](#)
- Country Studies on Barriers, Remedies and Good Practices for Women's Access to Justice in [Armenia](#), in [Azerbaijan](#), in [Georgia](#), in [Moldova](#) and [Ukraine](#)
- [Feasibility Study on Equal Access of Women to Justice](#)

The [HELP course on Access to Justice for Women](#) is now available in all six Eastern Partnership countries languages.

[More information about the project](#)

Duration: 1 January 2019 - 31 December 2021 (extension to August 2022 pending).

ARMENIA

The Path towards Armenia's Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

The Council of Europe project aims at strengthening the capacity of key stakeholders involved in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, protecting the victims and prosecuting the perpetrators of violence as well as advancing gender equality.

The project builds on the achievements of the [previous project “Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Armenia”](#). The Council of Europe focuses on providing information and knowledge about relevant European standards, in particular the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) and its implications for national policy and legal frameworks. The project gives timely support for the implementation of the recently adopted law on domestic violence in Armenia and paves the way for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in Armenia.

The project will contribute to the following specific outcomes outlined in the Council of Europe’s Action Plan for Armenia for 2019–2022:

- Armenia is better prepared for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention
- The Armenian legal and policy framework on preventing and combating domestic violence is in line with Council of Europe standards
- Women victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence, including the most disadvantaged, have better access to justice and support services

The project's long-term impact aims that women in Armenia benefit from gender equality and protection against all forms of violence against women.

The project aims to:

- Enhance the knowledge of law enforcement and legal professionals, as well as journalists and other stakeholders on the law on domestic violence and European standards, notably the Istanbul Convention, as they deal with the cases of domestic violence and violence against women
- Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, public officials and social workers to apply European standards (notably the Istanbul Convention) as they implement the law on domestic violence and provide support for women victims of violence against women
- Support gender sensitivity in education by assisting in the development of curricula, courses and materials for primary and secondary schools

Selection of publications:

- [Combating gender stereotypes and sexism in and through education](#)
- [Guideline on Gender equality and Violence against Women and for Armenian Journalists and Media Workers](#)
- [Training manual “Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia”](#) for legal professionals [EN](#)

Duration: April 2019 – April 2022

[More information about the project](#)

PGGII – AZERBAIJAN

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

The project “Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan” is a joint action under the European Union and Council of Europe’s programme [Partnership for Good Governance II](#) (PGG II).

This project aims to raise awareness on the [Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#) (Istanbul Convention) and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan, in order to strengthen domestic legislation and policies to align them with European standards. The Istanbul Convention is widely recognised as one of the main legal standards and the most comprehensive international treaty to tackle violence against women and domestic violence (VAW/DV), which is a serious violation of the human rights of women. It is implemented by the Council of Europe.

To achieve that, the project co-operates with the Azerbaijani authorities through three main fields of action: legislative and policy frameworks, awareness-raising activities and capacity-building of government officials.

The project objectives are two-fold:

To provide support to the Azerbaijani authorities in their path towards signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

To raise awareness on the content of the Istanbul Convention, provide a better understanding of its aim and provisions, and increase the capacity of national actors to align legislation and policies with European gender equality standards and deal with VAW/DV.

To achieve the objectives the project foresees the following activities:

- a gap analysis with recommendations of the current legislative and policy framework of Azerbaijan in line with Council of Europe gender equality standards, including the Istanbul Convention;
- a roundtable with relevant public officials to present the report and its recommendations, and discuss the follow-up;
- capacity-building sessions of legal professionals on VAW/DV, through the [CoE HELP Programme](#) (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals);
- development and piloting of a twinning methodology for public officials in the field of VAW/DV;
- specialised training for public officials through the twinning methodology on the topic of VAW/DV ;
- peer-exchanges for state authorities’ representatives to promote the transfer of knowledge and experience on policies to combat VAW/DV and multi-agency co-operation;
- a series of webinars on specific articles of the Istanbul Convention;
- capacity-building sessions for state authorities and CSO representatives to develop a nation-wide campaign on VAW/DV ;

- delivery of a national campaign under the umbrella of the 16 Days of Activism to stop VAW/DV, in line with the Istanbul Convention and other CoE standards;
- production of visibility materials to raise awareness on VAW/DV and gender equality standards in Azerbaijan.

The expected results are the following:

- Enhanced understanding on the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan;
- Increased capacity of national authorities to develop national legislation and policies in line with CoE standards on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, including the Istanbul Convention;
- Application of knowledge and skills on the Istanbul Convention and CoE standards on gender equality by legal professionals and civil servants when dealing with cases of violence against women and domestic violence.

Duration: 1 July 2020 – 31 December 2021 (extension to August 2022 pending)

[More information about the project](#)

GEORGIA

Promoting an Integrated Approach to End Violence against Women and Enhancing Gender Equality in Georgia

The project aims at supporting the efforts of state authorities in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, protecting the victims and prosecuting the perpetrators of violence as well as advancing gender equality.

The Council of Europe focuses on providing the latest information and knowledge about the relevant European standards, in particular [the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#) (the Istanbul Convention), and its implications for national laws, policies and practices to ensure better support, protection and access to justice for victims and survivors of violence against women.

The project will focus on capacity and knowledge building on the Istanbul Convention and will ensure that an exchange of promising practices is promoted. The project will provide support for analysing gaps in policies and practices, developing modules and materials and practical tools, such as guidebooks and awareness raising materials, as well as conducting trainings, online courses and a study visit to exchange experiences with other Council of Europe member States.

The project aims to:

- Strengthening policy and institutional framework for the effective application of European standards, notably the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards

- Reinforcing the capacities of public officials (legal professionals, social workers, etc.) to deal with cases of violence against women and domestic violence;
- Raising awareness of the general public and authorities on the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence, including gender equality.

Selection of publications:

- [Stalking and Istanbul Convention;](#)
- [Children's Rights and Istanbul Convention;](#)
- [Mapping support services for victims of violence against women in line with the Istanbul Convention. EN](#)
- [Questionnaire on legislative and other measures giving effect to the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence \(Istanbul Convention\)](#)
- Study: [the Administration of Justice on Sexual Violence crimes against Women in Georgia. EN](#)

Duration: 1 January 2020 - 31 December 2022

[More information about the project](#)

KOSOVO*

Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo* (Phase III)

The project builds on the results of the project "[Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo* \(phase II\)](#)" implemented in 2019-2021.

As of on 25 September 2020, Kosovo* has adopted an amendment to its Constitution that gives direct effect to the Istanbul Convention. In this context, supporting local authorities on implementation of the Istanbul Convention standards is of utmost importance. The Council of Europe project aims at defining a concrete roadmap for strengthening Kosovo's* legal and policy frameworks in co-operation with the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) as well as building institutional capacities to prevent and counter violence against women and domestic violence in line with the standards of the Istanbul Convention.

Expected outcomes

- Access to Justice for victims of VAW and DV is enhanced;
- Kosovo* authorities design legal and policy frameworks in line with international and CoE requirements in the area of VAW and DV;

* All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

- Victims of VAW and DV receive quality support by trained staff and an increased number of perpetrators are held accountable and rehabilitated;
- Legal professionals dealing with cases have a better understanding of victim-centered gender-sensitive approaches to VAW and DV and enhanced skills to deal with these cases;
- An inclusive expert evaluation and participatory process is implemented in line with international and CoE standards;
- NGOs and other relevant stakeholders are more capable to conduct prevention campaigns dealing with VAW and DV;
- The Division on social services and welfare of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare applies quality guidelines including training for centers for social work;
- Local support services are equipped with knowledge and skills to establish and run perpetrators programmes.

Duration: July 2021- February 2023

[More information about the project](#)

CZECH REPUBLIC, LATVIA, POLAND

Multi-country programme “Ending Violence against Women 2020-2021”

The Council of Europe is supporting NGOs during 2021 to run communication and advocacy campaigns on the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). There are three awarded civil society organisations (CSOs) from the Czech Republic, Latvia and Poland:

- Czech Women’s Lobby (CWL), Czech Republic
- MARTA Centre, Latvia
- Feminoteka Foundation, Poland

A kickoff [event](#) on 26 May provided the opportunity to exchange with the selected CSOs and partners and to provide detailed information on the methodology and the toolkit for campaigning developed jointly by Council of Europe, Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) and UN Women.

For six months, the three CSOs will pilot this joint methodology to raise awareness about the objectives and benefits of the Istanbul Convention and to dispel myths and misinformation about it.

Two trainings on communication were organised (training [1](#) and [2](#)) to support CSOs in running their campaigns and to strengthen their communication capacities.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Cooperation for the implementation of the Russian Federation National Action Strategy for Women: applying best practices

The project builds on the lessons learned from the project [“Co-operation in the implementation of the Russian Federation National Action Strategy for Women \(2017-2022\)”](#) which ended in May 2020.

This project aims at further building institutional capacities to promote women’s political participation and to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence. The project’s outputs are designed to produce durable change in line with international and European human rights standards and best practices.

The methodology for delivering results rests on good practices exchanges and peer to peer events. The project outcomes are especially conceived to contribute to the practical implementation of the National Action Strategy, addressing some of its remaining gaps.

Duration: September 2021- March 2023

[More information about the project.](#)

TURKEY

Fostering women’s access to justice in Turkey (2021-2022)

The action on “Fostering women’s access to justice in Turkey”, implemented under the European Union and Council of Europe’s joint [“Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey 2019-2022”](#), aims to strengthen women’s access to justice in Turkey in line with international and European standards.

The action is contributing to enhancing accessibility and quality of legal aid and victim support services for women and supporting key stakeholders, including civil society, to facilitate women’s access to justice in Turkey.

The action will contribute to the following specific objectives:

- Improving the gender responsiveness of legal aid and victim support services to effectively respond to the needs of women.
- Enhancing legal aid access for women, including through working with legal aid lawyers and civil society.
- Increasing legal literacy and awareness among women, especially groups of women in vulnerable situation.

Expected Results

- Knowledge generated among key stakeholders on barriers for women’s access to justice and legal aid and support services in Turkey and on how to remove them.
- Enhanced quality and gender responsiveness of legal aid and judicial support services through capacity building of legal aid and judicial support professionals.

- Provision of legal aid and assistance to women in selected communities, including those from vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, by legal aid lawyers trained on gender-sensitive and victim-centred approaches.
- Increased awareness and knowledge among women on their legal rights, how to exercise them and on available legal remedies and services, including legal aid and judicial support services.
- Increased awareness and understanding among key stakeholders, including judicial and statistical authorities, on measuring women's access to justice and legal aid.

Project Activities

- A research/study on the reality of barriers of women's access to justice and legal aid in Turkey with recommendations and ways forward
- Providing legal aid to women, particularly to those from disadvantaged groups, by trained legal aid lawyers, in selected provinces
- Capacity building programmes for legal aid lawyers and judicial support officers, on women's access to justice, including training of trainers and online tutored training through Council of Europe HELP Programme (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals).
- Guidelines/checklist for lawyers providing legal aid for women.
- Seminar and publication on measuring women's access to justice and legal aid through a seminar sharing European standards and promising practices
- Targeted outreach and awareness raising workshops, seminars, materials, publications and translations.

Duration: October 2021- December 2022

[More information about the project](#)

UKKRAINE

Combatting Violence Against Women in Ukraine (COVAW)

Firmly rooted in the Istanbul Convention, the COVAW project provides technical cooperation support for reforms regarding violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine. COVAW advances the fight against violence against women and domestic violence and ratification of the Istanbul Convention, supports national legislation and policy reforms related to counteracting domestic violence, and raises the awareness of authorities and the Ukrainian public to support women's human rights.

The COVAW project focuses on two key aspects to propel Ukraine forward in its efforts to combat violence against women and domestic violence and pave the way towards its ratification of the Istanbul Convention; awareness raising and legislative frameworks.

The project builds on previous [co-operation projects](#) with Ukraine focused on advancing in the ratification process of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention and in the implementation of its standards.

The project has the following priorities

- support for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by working with the relevant Committees of the Verkhovna Rada
- increased awareness of authorities at different levels regarding the problem of violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine and the need to combat it; sharing information about the Istanbul Convention and other international standards in this area
- raising awareness of society on combating stereotypes and gender inequality, risks of domestic violence and the international standards to combat it, including the Istanbul Convention.
- strengthened capacities and increased knowledge of relevant professionals and stakeholders, including in selected amalgamated communities.
- identification of gaps hindering prevention of violence against women, protection of victims of this violence, prosecution of perpetrators or integrated policies at a central or local level
- legislative reforms and improved policy to aid victims of violence against women and domestic violence

The project will work throughout Ukraine to further an efficient system of protection of victims of violence against women and domestic violence.

Duration: 1 January 2021- 31 December 2022

Selection of Publications:

- [Guidance for the running of shelters for victims of violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine](#)
- [Guidance to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine with regard to a long-term approach to awareness-raising on violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine](#)
- [Risk Assessment Standards and Methodologies for Diverse Stakeholders in Ukraine: Next Steps in Implementing International Standards to Ensure the Safety of Victims of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#)
- [Court Considerations on Issuing Restraining or Protection Orders in Cases of Domestic Violence: International Standards and Overview of Ukrainian National Practice](#)
- [Media Guidance for the Development of Self-Regulatory Standards to Report on Cases of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, based on Council of Europe Standards](#)
- [Infographics: How will the System of Assistance to Victims Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Need to be Improved Following Ukraine's Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention?](#)
- [How Ukraine's System of Assistance to Victims of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women will Need to be Improved Following Ukraine's Ratification of the Council](#)

[of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#)

- [Infographics: 9 Facts about the Istanbul Convention](#)

- [Myths and Facts about the Istanbul Convention](#)

[More information about the project](#)