

Partnership for Good Governance



EUROPEAN UNION

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Regional Project

“Strengthening Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence in the Six Eastern Partnership Countries” - 2018

Capacity Building and Co-operation Projects Unit
Gender Equality Division

Strengthening Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence in the EaP Countries

- ❑ **Builds up on Phase I: identifying gaps/challenges/barriers for women's access to justice**
- ❑ **Added focus on the Istanbul Convention, in line with EU Priorities for 2020**
- ❑ **Implementation period: 1 February – 30 November 2018**
- ❑ **Project Objectives**
 - ❑ **Identify and support removal** of obstacles to women's access to justice in the Eastern Partnership countries
 - ❑ **Improve gender-responsiveness of the justice systems** in the Eastern Partnership countries in cases of violence against women
 - ❑ **Increase application of CoE standards among justice sector professionals**, especially the Istanbul Convention and the European Court of Human Rights,
 - ❑ **Enhanced regional dialogue and exchange** among national authorities, national training institutions and legal professionals on improving women's access to justice and the ratification of Istanbul Convention

EaP countries and the Istanbul Convention

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Armenia | Signed in December 2017 |
| 2. Azerbaijan | No signature yet |
| 3. Georgia | Ratified in May 2017 |
| 4. Republic of Moldova | Signed in February 2017 |
| 5. Ukraine | Signed in 2011 |
| 6. Belarus | No accession yet |

Total EaP:

1 of 6 ratifications
4 of 6 signatures

As compared to CoE at large:

45 of 47 signatures
29 of 47 ratifications

PROJECT'S Strategic Relevance

1. CoE Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023)

- **Objective 3: Ensure equal access of women to justice:**

- Also interlinked with:

Objective 1: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism – judicial gender stereotyping

Objective 2: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence – Istanbul Convention

Objective 5: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures – justice sector

2. CoE Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (2016)

- Fighting gender stereotypes within judiciary, gender balance, and gender mainstreaming in justice reforms

3. EU Deliverables for Eastern Partnership Countries (deliverables 2 and 10)

1. Ratification of the Istanbul Convention

2. **Gender-based violence legislation adopted in all countries with effective referral mechanisms in place**

3. Improved **access to justice** for women

4. Comprehensive and effective **training of the judiciary**

4. CoE Action Plans with all the six Eastern Partnership Countries

2018 Project Outputs

1. Online [HELP course on Women's Access to Justice](#) for legal practitioners (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, etc.)
2. [Factsheet](#) on Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence (link to Istanbul Convention standards)
3. Translation of tools for legal professionals, including CoE standards, case-law and reports dealing with women's access to justice, violence against women and domestic violence
4. [Regional Conference](#) on Women's Access to Justice and the Istanbul Convention to take place in Strasbourg on 18-19 October 2018

Building up on PGG Phase 1: 2015-2018

- ❑ **Identified the barriers** to women's access to justice in the five countries involved in the project 2015-2016 (legal, procedural, social, cultural, economic, etc.)
- ❑ Provided **analysis of protection gaps** in national legislation on violence against women and domestic violence, family law, employment law, gender-based discrimination, in order to align national legislation and practice with international standards
- ❑ **Facilitated awareness and dialogue** of the Istanbul Convention standards with legal professionals ahead of signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention
- ❑ **Improved the capacity of judges and prosecutors** to implement relevant CoE standards, including the ECHR and the CoE Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – over 500 training participants
- ❑ **Developed tools and improved the capacity** of national training institutions to implement curriculum on women's access to justice for candidate judges and prosecutors, as well as sitting judges and acting prosecutors, during basic and in-service trainings
- ❑ **Provided platforms for regional exchange** of challenges, good practices, and lessons learned among the training institution



Lessons Learned

CONTENT RELATED:

- Barriers are vast and underestimated, from legislative, institutional, socio-economic
- Significant gaps exist in all countries of the Council of Europe, not only in Eastern Partnership
- Important to address all levels of the justice chain to prevent attrition
- Understanding of the need for measures is increasing among national authorities and partners

PROJECT MANAGEMENT RELATED:

- Engagement of national partners and experts from the onset
- Regional projects provide important advantages and a genuine forum for exchange of challenges and good practices



THANK YOU!

