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
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>Signed in December 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>No signature yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Ratified in May 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Republic of Moldova</td>
<td>Signed in February 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>Signed in 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>No accession yet</td>
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</tbody>
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**Total EaP:**
- 1 of 6 ratifications
- 4 of 6 signatures

**As compared to CoE at large:**
- 45 of 47 signatures
- 29 of 47 ratifications
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

   - 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**
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
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
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!