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

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Follow up project to PGG Phase 1: 2015-2017

Added focus on the Istanbul Convention, in line with EU Priorities for 2020

Implementation period: February– November 2018

Project Objectives

- Improved gender-responsiveness of the justice systems in the Eastern Partnership countries in cases of violence against women
- Increased 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
1. **Online e-learning course on Women’s Access to Justice** for legal practitioners (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, etc.)

2. **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

3. **Regional Conference on Women’s Access to Justice and the Istanbul Convention** to take place in Strasbourg on 18-19 October 2018

4. **Factsheet on Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence**
1. Tool for the promotion of gender-sensitive justice, through the training of legal professionals
2. Using the Training Manual on Ensuring Women’s Access to Justice for Judges and Prosecutors and the Council of Europe HELP methodology
3. Three working group meetings in 2018 with experts and representatives of the Council of Europe
4. Target audience: lawyers, prosecutors, judges and members of civil society
5. Scope: CoE, EU, and UN standards
6. English version available online at the end of 2018
7. National adaptations will be developed as of 2019
The HELP course will cover the following six themes:

1. Barriers to Women’s Access to Justice
2. International and Council of Europe Legal Framework
3. Gender-based Discrimination
4. Gender Stereotyping
5. Roles and Duties of Legal Professionals
6. Practical Implications
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**
   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
Women’s Access to Justice – Synergies with the UN
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
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
Engagement of national partners and experts from the onset

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

Regional projects provide important advantages and a genuine forum for exchange of challenges and good practices

Understanding of the need for measures is increasing among national authorities and partners
PGG Phase 2 and Beyond

- Phase 2: 2019-2023
- Beyond PGG
THANK YOU!