



Capacity building and co-operation projects: making European standards on combating violence against women a reality

Technical co-operation programmes/projects implemented in 2016-2019: analysis and lessons learned



Prepared under the project "Visibility of Gender Mainstreaming and Co-operation Projects in the Area of Gender Equality"

Capacity building and co-operation projects: making European standards on combating violence against women a reality

*Technical co-operation programmes/
projects implemented in 2016-2019:
analysis and lessons learned*

Marta Pietrobelli,
Expert on Gender-based Violence,
Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche,
Rome, Italy

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE REPORT	6
3. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS	6
4. BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN <i>FORMAL</i> AND <i>SUBSTANTIVE</i> GENDER EQUALITY: CO-OPERATION PROGRAMMES/PROJECTS	7
Promoting the Istanbul Convention standards and path towards ratification	9
Improving and strengthening legal, regulatory and policy frameworks	11
Building and strengthening institutional and operational capacities, including multi-agency coordination	13
Guaranteeing women's access to justice	15
5. LESSONS LEARNED	16
Potential impact on countries and benefits for women and society	16
Added value and challenges	19
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	21
APPENDIX	23
Programmes/projects concluded, implemented or planned	23
List of training activities	24
Publications and guidebooks from different programmes/projects	25
Interviews conducted	27
Council of Europe reports analysed	27
Other reports cited	27

1. INTRODUCTION

— **Violence against women**, including **domestic violence**, is one of the most serious forms of **gender-based violations of human rights**. It deprives women of their ability to enjoy fundamental freedoms and rights and represents a serious obstacle to equality between women and men. Women are affected by male violence regardless of their age, ethnicity, class, culture, religion or other socio-cultural categories. Despite positive and significant achievements in legislation, policies and practices, violence against women in its various forms is still widespread at all levels of society, and in all Council of Europe member states.

— The Council of Europe is implementing targeted capacity building and co-operation programmes and projects on gender equality and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Grounded on the **goals and strategic objectives of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023** (specifically, objectives 2, 3 and 4¹), and on the **priorities identified in the Council of Europe country or region Action Plans**, the Council of Europe focuses on providing the most up-to-date 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 policy and legal frameworks. The purpose is “to provide national authorities with information about relevant standards, as well as with the tools and the expertise necessary to comply with them. Co-operation projects and capacity-building initiatives provide added value towards efforts of the Council of Europe member states and neighbouring countries² to implement Council of Europe standards in the area of gender equality and women’s rights, as well as case law and judgements of the European Court of Human Rights”.³ They contribute towards **making gender equality a reality in both the member states and within the Council of Europe**.

— Although the international community’s presence in the area of combating violence against women and domestic violence has increased significantly in recent decades (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations Fund for Population Activities, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, European Union, USAID, national embassies), the Council of Europe remains the only European international organisation which has developed **legally binding standards in the area of violence against women**. The Council of Europe promotes these standards through legal and policy expertise, providing technical assistance to partner organisations.

2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE REPORT

— This report was prepared at the request of the *Gender Equality Division* in *DG II – Directorate General of Democracy* as part of a self-improvement and feedback-gathering policy. The activities of the Division, including in the area of co-operation, are otherwise subject to the general audit and evaluation mechanisms applicable to Council of Europe activities, especially under the responsibility of the Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO).

— This report aims at analysing the most recent concluded, on-going and planned co-operation programmes and projects implemented by the Co-operation and Capacity Building Unit of the *Gender Equality Division*, showcasing and giving visibility to the programmes and projects implemented.⁴ Although co-operation programmes/projects have been conducted since the 1990s, for practical reasons the report refers to programmes and projects started in 2016 for multi-country projects, in 2017-2018 for bilateral projects, in 2018-2019 for programmes/projects funded under the framework of EEA and Norway Grants and in 2019 for regional programmes/projects.⁵

1. Strategic objective 2: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence; Strategic objective 3: Ensure the equal access of women to justice; Strategic objective 4: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making.
2. For example, the Council of Europe is developing programmes with South Mediterranean countries, aimed at promoting dialogue and co-operation with Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.
3. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/co-operation-projects>, accessed on 30 March 2019.
4. Especially because of the gender mainstreaming policy applied by the Council of Europe, other sectors may also address gender equality and related issues in their activities. This report focuses on the co-operation programmes/projects implemented by the *Gender Equality Division*.
5. Although the programmes funded under the framework of the EEA and Norway Grants started in 2014 (within the 2014-2021 cycle), the programmes cited in this report refer to the ones started in 2018-2019. The regional programmes/projects cited in the report mainly refer to Phase II (starting in 2019), although regional projects have been implemented since 2015.

■ The report is built on Council of Europe documents/reports on programmes and projects implemented and it is based on interviews conducted with Council of Europe staff, as well as selected stakeholders and civil society organisations (CSOs).⁶

■ Although the majority of programmes/projects are still on-going, the report aims at proposing some recommendations on lessons learned for future project design. The report also aims at analysing the potential impact on the ground of Council of Europe co-operation activities, with specific reference to:

- ▶ the consequences for the legal, regulatory or policy framework and/or institutional and operational capacities of professionals;
- ▶ the intended benefits for women victims/survivors of violence against women and domestic violence (in line with the holistic approach of the Istanbul Convention for the protection and support of women and prosecution of perpetrators) and on all women, men and children (in line with the Istanbul Convention prevention measures).

■ Although the report is not a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of these programmes/projects on women victims/survivors of violence against women and domestic violence, the analysis will try to indicate the extent to which women could potentially benefit from the implementation of such programmes/projects, with all their limitations.⁷

3. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

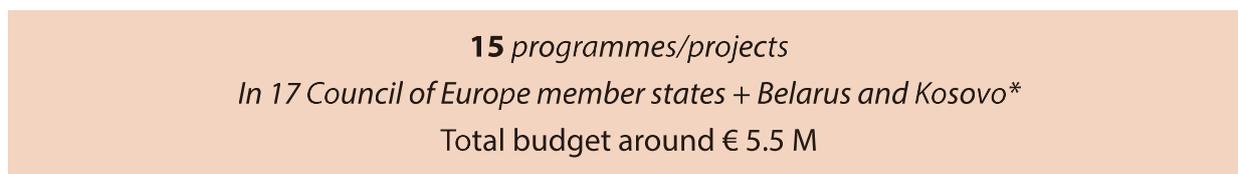
■ The programmes and projects analysed in this report are **bilateral, multi-country** and **regional**. They are funded by the voluntary contributions from the Council of Europe member-states, the European Union and through the **EEA and Norway Grants** (see section 4).

■ The report refers to 15 programmes/projects implemented since 2016 for multi-country projects, since 2017-2018 for bilateral projects, since 2018-2019 for programmes/projects funded under the framework of EEA and Norway Grants and since 2019 for regional programmes/projects.⁸

■ The programmes/projects analysed in this report involve 17 Council of Europe member states - Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine, as well as Belarus and Kosovo*⁹.

■ The total budget for the programmes and projects analysed in this report is approximately **€5, 5 million** for the three year period covered by this report.

Graph 1 – Number of programmes/projects, Council of Europe member states involved (and Belarus and Kosovo*) and total budget



6. Council of Europe reports analysed and interviews conducted are detailed in the Appendix at the end of the report.

7. In order to evaluate the impact on women and society in general, a comprehensive study on women, men and children in selected countries would need to be pursued. This would require, for instance, in-depth interviews with women who have been in contact with stakeholders involved in the programmes/projects. Therefore, the potential benefits identified in this report have been deduced from the Council of Europe reports analysed and from the interviews conducted with selected stakeholders.

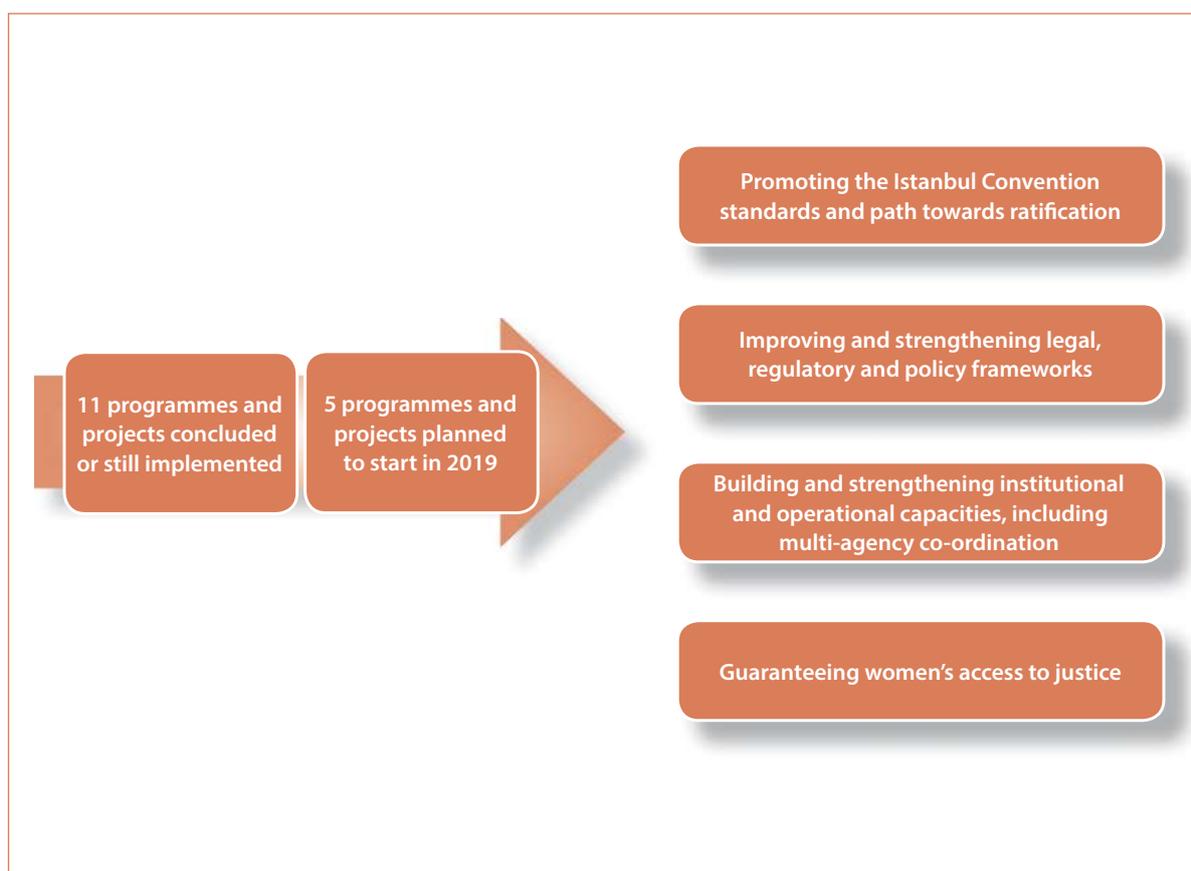
8. See the Appendix for a list of programmes/projects analysed in this report.

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

4. BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN *FORMAL* AND *SUBSTANTIVE* GENDER EQUALITY: CO-OPERATION PROGRAMMES/PROJECTS

— In order to **make European standards** on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence **a reality**, the objective of the Council of Europe work on gender equality and violence against women is that member states take appropriate measures to change their policy, legislation and practice to **bridge the gap between formal and substantive equality**.

Graph 2 – Thematic areas of programmes/projects¹⁰



The Council of Europe promotes a comprehensive approach to ending violence against women in accordance with the **four pillars of the Istanbul Convention: prevention** of violence, **protection** of the victims, **prosecution** of the perpetrators and comprehensive **policies**. The programmes/projects are based on the idea that violence against women is not an individual phenomenon, but one of the most serious and prevalent human rights violations, a form of discrimination against women and an obstacle to achieving greater gender equality.

- The programmes and projects analysed in this report focus on the following thematic areas:
- ▶ **promoting the Istanbul Convention** standards and path towards **ratification**;
 - ▶ improving and strengthening **legal, regulatory and policy frameworks**;
 - ▶ building and strengthening **institutional and operational capacities**, including **multi-agency co-ordination**;
 - ▶ guaranteeing women's **access to justice**.

10. As explained above, the data collected in this report refers to programmes/projects started in 2016 for multi-country projects, in 2017-2018 for bilateral projects, in 2018-2019 for programmes/projects funded through EEA and Norway Grants and in 2019 for regional projects.

■ The Council of Europe has been promoting co-operation programmes/projects since 2015 through the so-called **multi-country Violence against Women project**. The Council of Europe Violence against Women project provides **focused, flexible and responsive support to beneficiary countries, upon their request**, in the area of preventing and combating violence against women. This technical assistance is rooted in the Council of Europe standards, in particular the **Istanbul Convention**. It is based on the idea that this phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach including the **prevention** of violence, **protection** of victims, the **prosecution** of perpetrators, and adequate integrated **policies** to tackle domestic violence and violence against women.

■ The main focus of the Violence against Women Project is in the following areas:

- ▶ **promotion of the Istanbul Convention** and path towards **ratification**;
- ▶ support in **improving and strengthening legal, regulatory and policy frameworks**;
- ▶ assistance in **building and strengthening institutional and operational capacities**, including **domestic co-ordination**.

■ Under the multi-country project, activities referred to in this report have been mainly implemented in the following Council of Europe member states: **Albania, Armenia, Georgia, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, and Turkey**. Discussions are on-going with regard to possible future activities with other Council of Europe member states.

■ Building on lessons learned and tools from the multi-country project, the Council of Europe has developed **bilateral projects in specific areas and regions**. **Bilateral projects** have been implemented (and some are still on-going) in **Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo***, **the Russian Federation and Ukraine**. The project in **Turkey** is in the planning phase.

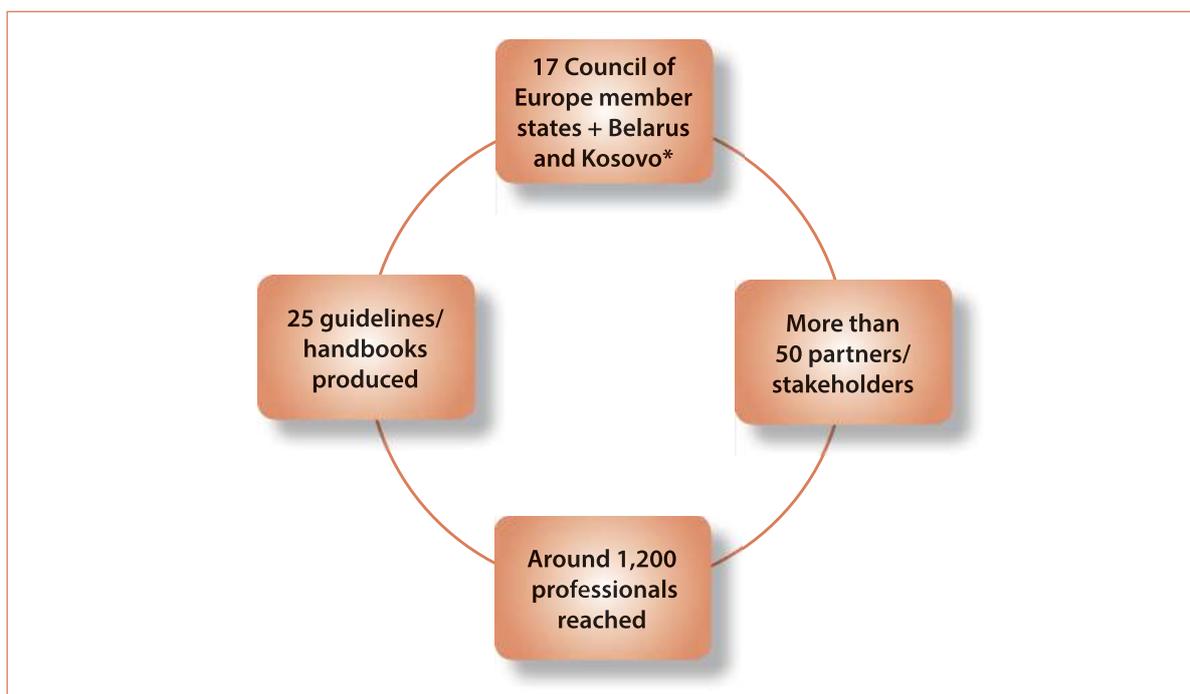
■ The on-going regional project “Women’s Access to Justice - Delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards” is implemented under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG) phase II (2019–2021), and is jointly funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe. Carried out in co-operation with national partners in the **six Eastern Partnership countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus**, the project builds on the outcomes of the preceding PGG projects “Improving women’s access to justice in the Eastern Partnership countries” (2015–2017) and “Strengthening access to justice for women victims of violence” (2018). The project envisages collaborations with national training institutions of judges and prosecutors and other legal professionals to ensure women’s equal access to legal protection and remedies. The project seeks **to increase knowledge and improve skills to apply Council of Europe standards and good practices** on gender equality, women’s rights and **access to justice** in the justice sector of the beneficiary countries.

■ The Council of Europe also works 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 and, in particular the Istanbul Convention. Within the current EEA and Norway Grants cycle 2014–2021, the Council of Europe provides strategic advice to six programmes on domestic and gender-based violence in **Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia**. Co-operation activities under this programme aim at bringing about **substantive changes on the ground to benefit victims/survivors** and **building up and strengthening the countries’ capacity** to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

■ The 15 programmes/projects analysed in this report¹¹ (planned, implemented or concluded) in 17 Council of Europe member states, in Belarus and Kosovo* involve **more than 50 partners/stakeholders**. **Almost 1,200 professionals** have been reached, through training, events, workshops, study-visits, seminars and round tables. **Approximately 25 documents/reports/handbooks and/or guidelines** have been produced, see Graph 3.

11. As explained above, the report refers to projects started in 2016 for multi-country ones, in 2017-2018 for bilateral ones, in 2018-2019 for programmes funded under the Norway Grants and in 2019 for regional projects.

Graph 3 – Partners involved, professionals reached and material produced with the programmes/ projects implementation



Promoting the Istanbul Convention standards and path towards ratification

— A substantial **added value** of Council of Europe co-operation programmes/projects is that the **Istanbul Convention represents a legally binding instrument in the area of violence against women**. Disseminating information on the Istanbul Convention is a first step to promote the path towards its ratification in those countries which have not ratified it as yet, or to promote its implementation where it has been ratified.

— At the time of writing this report, the state of signatures and ratifications of the Istanbul Convention for the Council of Europe member states involved in the programmes/projects analysed, is as presented in the following chart (situation as of 23 April 2019).

Council of Europe member states involved in the projects analysed	Situation of signature/ ratification of the Istanbul Convention
Albania	Signature: 19/12/2011; Ratification: 04/02/2013, Entry into force: 01/08/2014
Armenia	Signature: 18/01/2018
Azerbaijan	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Signature 08/03/2013; Ratification 07/11/2013; Entry into force 01/08/2014
Bulgaria	Signature: 21/04/2016
Czech Republic	Signature: 02/05/2016
Georgia	Signature 19/06/2014; Ratification 19/05/2017; Entry into force: 01/09/2017
Lithuania	Signature: 07/06/2013
Republic of Moldova	Signature: 06/02/2017
North Macedonia	Signature 08/07/2011; Ratification 23/03/2018; Entry into force 01/07/2018
Poland	Signature 18/12/2012; Ratification 27/04/2015; Entry into force 01/08/2015
Romania	Signature 27/06/2014; Ratification 23/05/2016; Entry into force 01/09/2016
Russian Federation	

Slovakia	Signature: 11/05/2011
Slovenia	Signature 08/09/2011; Ratification 05/02/2015; Entry into force 01/06/2015
Turkey	Signature 11/05/2011; Ratification 14/03/2012; Entry into force 01/08/2014
Ukraine	Signature: 07/11/2011

As the chart shows, out of the 17 Council of Europe member states involved in the programmes/projects analysed, eight have already signed and ratified the Istanbul Convention. Seven further Council of Europe member states (Armenia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia and Ukraine) have signed the Istanbul Convention, but have not yet ratified it. Two countries (Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation) have not yet signed the Istanbul Convention.

Spreading awareness of key stakeholders about the Istanbul Convention and its standards will support countries which have signed the Istanbul Convention to take an **informed decision** about the ratification and its consequences in their national policy, institutions and practices. This may happen through specific meetings, seminars, workshops and international conferences. These activities **complement Council of Europe dialogue at the political level** aimed at the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

Armenia, at the time of the first activities under the multi-country Violence against Women project, **had not signed the Istanbul Convention**. During the needs assessment conducted in the inception phase of the project, it became apparent that **the Istanbul Convention was not well known in the country**. Therefore, the need to organise an **awareness-raising seminar on the Istanbul Convention** resulted in the international seminar “Sharing European Practices - Preventing Violence against Women” on 31 January 2017. The seminar helped participants familiarise themselves with the Istanbul Convention as well as with the key findings of another activity put in place during the project implementation, which is **a gap analysis of Armenian criminal law in light of the standards established by the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**. The seminar was an opportunity both for **raising awareness on the Istanbul Convention and for sharing practices and exchange of experiences between five Council of Europe member states** (Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Germany and Slovakia). During the seminar, the **Istanbul Convention translated into Armenian** was distributed. The translation of such an important European standard into the language of interested countries allows better understanding and handling of the principles and mechanisms cited in the Istanbul Convention. Activities such as the seminar organised in Armenia, allow for knowledge on the wbackground, purpose, key principles and requirements of the Istanbul Convention to be enhanced. **Not only national authorities** will benefit from such activities, **but also CSOs and local stakeholders**, sharing the international framework within which governments, stakeholders and CSOs will enhance the collaboration and co-operation of various institutions/bodies in combating violence against women and domestic violence.



The Strategic Session on “The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 in Ukraine: State of affairs and perspectives of implementation on national, regional and local levels” on 10 December 2018

Such awareness-raising events, together with the translation of the Istanbul Convention and relevant material, may also serve as a basis for **clarifying terms such as “gender”**, which could be mistranslated or misunderstood, especially in contexts where the Istanbul Convention could be perceived as a “threat” to family values.¹² This may be true in the case of **Bulgaria**, where funds were allocated to cover the production and dissemination of Council of Europe publications and the Istanbul Convention was translated in Bulgarian following the July 2018 Bulgarian Constitutional Court ruling against ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

It would also appear that in Ukraine misconceptions surrounding the Istanbul Convention may have hampered discussions in 2017 about possible

12. Datta N. (2018), *Restoring the natural order. The religious extremists’ vision to mobilize European societies against human rights on sexuality and reproduction*, the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, Brussels, available at https://www.epfweb.org/sites/epfweb.org/files/rtno_epf_book_lores.pdf, accessed on 30 March 2019. The publication reveals that campaigners from the United States and Europe have been strategising “achievable goals” to roll back human rights in Europe since 2013.

ratification of the convention. The country did approve new Law on Domestic Violence.¹³ The Council of Europe project promoted a shared understanding and knowledge of the Council of Europe instruments and standards: the Istanbul Convention, the Gender Equality Strategy and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights. Actions under the project included a strategic debate on 10 December 2018 on progress made by Ukraine on gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence prevention, and the **translation into Ukrainian** of European Court of Human Rights case-law summaries on domestic violence, violence against women and gender equality, and dissemination of information on the implementation by Ukraine of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023.

From time to time high level officials and local self-government authorities have made declarations in defence of the protection of “family values”. In order to mitigate the risks that such declarations pose concrete obstacles in activities promoting gender equality and combating violence against women and domestic violence, **clear information on the Istanbul Convention is needed, particularly as regards the concept of “gender” in the Istanbul Convention.** The Council of Europe has produced a factsheet with questions and answers on the Istanbul Convention and has translated Council of Europe material into various languages. Such efforts **will promote trust among national stakeholders**, paving the way for isolating such misconceptions.

Awareness raising events, workshops on the Istanbul Convention and the translation of Council of Europe material into other languages were the focus of other projects, as in the case of **Georgia**. The Explanatory Report of the Istanbul Convention, three factsheets on the Istanbul Convention, a leaflet on the Istanbul Convention monitoring mechanism and one info-booklet on Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention on multi-agency co-operation were translated into Georgian. A training workshop on the Istanbul Convention and its monitoring mechanism was also organised in June 2018 for staff members of the Public Defender’s Office, other public officials and non-governmental organisations.

Providing strategic advice to adapt **changes in legislation in line with European standards** will encourage national authorities to work towards the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Furthermore, favouring a dialogue with national authorities as well as spreading information and knowledge on the Istanbul Convention will pave the way towards its ratification.

Improving and strengthening legal, regulatory and policy frameworks

Raising awareness on the European standards, with specific reference to the Istanbul Convention, represents the first step towards any improvement/change in the legal, regulatory and policy framework of each country. The programmes/projects may lead to such changes at three different levels:

- ▶ **adopting or improving national laws** on violence against women and domestic violence **in line with the Istanbul Convention** standards;



Participants attending the training workshop on the Istanbul Convention and its monitoring mechanism on 19 June 2018 in Georgia

¹³. Law of Ukraine on Prevention and counteraction to domestic violence (7 December 2017).

- ▶ **adopting or improving procedures for specific stakeholders** in combating violence against women and domestic violence;
- ▶ **improving and strengthening institutional mechanisms and multi-agency co-ordination** as required by Article 10¹⁴ of the Istanbul Convention.

As for the adoption and/or improvement of national legislation on violence against women and domestic violence in line with the Istanbul Convention, both a **gap analysis and expert support on developing draft laws** on the topic are often necessary and effective. This is the case in **Armenia**, where, as a result of the multi-country project,¹⁵ expert support was provided to the Ministry of Justice working group developing a draft law on preventing and combating domestic violence and a gap analysis of Armenian criminal law in the light of the Istanbul Convention standards was conducted. Moreover, during the implementation of the bilateral project,¹⁶ a desk review was carried out on the law that in the meanwhile was adopted,¹⁷ allowing to identify gaps in the law and providing recommendations to align it with the Istanbul Convention standards. Both the gap analysis and the desk review are necessary tools to define or modify legislation in line with the Istanbul Convention.



Project Final Conference, 13 December 2018, Armenia

Other types of guidance/tools implemented through the Council of Europe co-operation programmes/projects are beneficial to implement existing laws in combating violence against women and domestic violence, such as the “Guidance on state-of-the-art campaign models and strategies focusing on combating violence against women and gender stereotypes” developed in **Ukraine**, or the definition of “Recommendations for the development of the Slovenian national programme on preventing and combating domestic violence and violence against women - Challenges, gaps and best practices report” in **Slovenia**. The adoption and/or improvement of specific procedures for selected stakeholders (such as prosecutors, legal professionals or law enforcement professionals) may also ensure greater protection for women victims/survivors of violence. In **Armenia**, a practical handbook for police officers to deal with

cases of violence against women and domestic violence has been developed, as well as a set of guidelines for police management and tailor made guidance for competent authorities in developing their own standards for services. In **Ukraine**, a practical handbook for police officers to deal with cases of violence against women and domestic violence has been developed. These handbooks not only may improve procedures of specific stakeholders in combating violence against women, but **will also strengthen skills and capacities of such professionals** in dealing with cases of violence against women and domestic violence.

As for the **national co-ordinating mechanisms** that should be set up in line with Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention, the promotion of this goal usually comes in the format of workshops and dissemination of the study on Article 10 “Implementing Article 10 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – establishing national co-ordinating bodies”. This was the case of **Slovenia**, when the study was distributed during specific events or trainings. It was also the case of **Georgia** when, during the afore-mentioned training workshop on the Istanbul Convention and its monitoring mechanism, a specific group work activity on Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention was organised.

Article 10(1) of the Istanbul Convention establishes four functions which contracting states must carry out, such as the **co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of state measures** taken to combat violence. Article 10 provides for these functions to be performed by a single government body or by multiple government bodies.¹⁸ Knowledge of co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is essential in order to develop policies and laws that will protect women victims/survivors of violence and their children.

14. Article 10 – requires the establishment of a Co-ordinating body, and describes its functions.

15. Violence against Women – Project reference number: VC 3566.

16. Preventing and combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia.

17. Republic of Armenia law on prevention of violence within the family, protection of victims of violence within the family and restoration of peace in the family (8 December 2017).

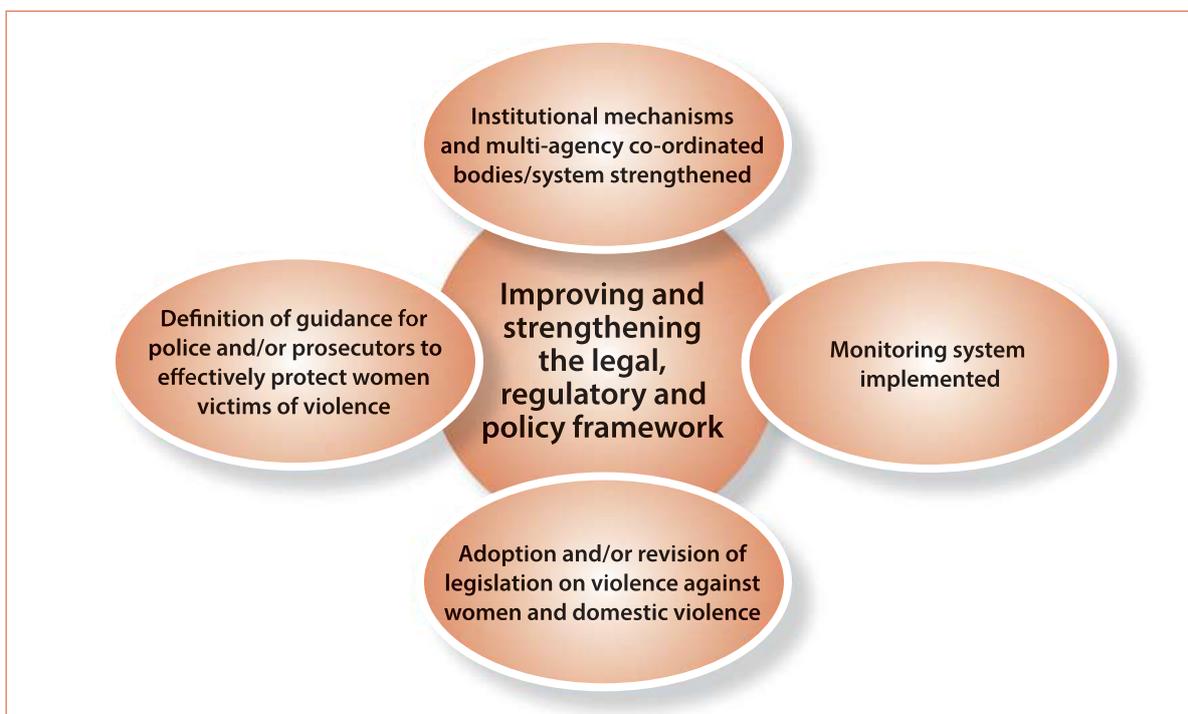
18. Rabe H. and Ünsal N. (2016), *Implementing Article 10 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – establishing national co-ordinating bodies*, Council of Europe, p. 7, available at <https://rm.coe.int/16806f0d38>, Strasbourg, accessed on 1 April 2019.



Training seminar “Mapping support services for victims of violence against women in line with the Istanbul Convention standards” in Strasbourg, 8 November 2018.

Increasing knowledge and building skills of national authorities, stakeholders and CSOs, according to the requirements of Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention, is essential to implement and strengthen policies that prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence. Since Article 10 refers also to the **monitoring mechanisms** that each state needs to implement, the Council of Europe developed a specific tool on mapping support services for victims/survivors of violence against women and domestic violence in line with the Istanbul Convention.¹⁹ A Council of Europe methodology and tools were presented at a training seminar with the participation of stakeholders involved in the implementation of programmes/projects on 8 November 2018 in Strasbourg.

Graph 4 – Improving and strengthening the legal, regulatory and policy framework: achievements



Building and strengthening institutional and operational capacities, including multi-agency coordination

In line with Articles 7²⁰, 10, 15²¹ and “Chapter IV – Protection and support” of the Istanbul Convention, **building capacities of professionals and institutions** in combating violence against women and domestic violence is crucial to better protect and support women victims/survivors of violence. **Capacity-building training** may **target specific professionals** such as legal professionals, law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges. Training courses are structured as specific activities of programmes/projects implemented or may be developed through the Council of Europe Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals Programme (**HELP online course**).

19. Kelly L. (2018), *Mapping support services for victims of violence against women in line with the Istanbul Convention standards. Methodology and tools*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, available at <https://rm.coe.int/mapping-support-services-vaw/16808ec66b>, accessed on 27 March 2019.

20. Article 7 of the Istanbul Convention: Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies.

21. Article 15 of the Istanbul Convention: Training of professionals.

Almost 300 professionals have been trained among legal professionals, prosecutors, judges and law enforcement officers.

When training courses have been organised as specific activities of a programme/project in a country, these have involved almost 300 professionals.²²

Training can also be **developed and included in the curriculum of specific courses**, such as in the case of the face-to-face training course on violence against women and domestic violence, which has been incorporated in the 2019 training curriculum of the Academy of Justice of Armenia.



HELP Certificate Ceremony in Georgia, 29 November 2018

*“The Academy of Justice is the sole institution in Armenia that provides mandatory courses for judges, prosecutors and investigators. We developed a face-to-face course. It was a very important process, because **we did not develop just the topic, but also the training material, which was translated into Armenian.** We also organised a ToT (training of trainers) session and **we included the training course in the annual curricula of the Academy of Justice**” (Anahit Manasyan, Academy of Justice of Armenia).*

Professionals are also trained in the **HELP online course on violence against women and domestic violence**. On 25 November 2017 a new, free online course on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was launched in the framework of the HELP Programme.

The HELP online course aims at supporting **judges, prosecutors and lawyers** to apply **European human rights standards** in their daily work. This online course covers the key concepts, the international and European legal framework and the European case law governing the prevention and protection of women from violence.

Thanks to the co-operation programmes/projects, the **HELP course** on violence against women and domestic violence has been **translated, adapted and/or launched** in the following countries: **Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine**. The course is in the process of being adapted in the **Czech Republic, Kosovo***, and **Slovakia**. The first step towards ensuring a fully-fledged national adaptation is the translation and proofreading of the course. Once a course is launched for a national adaptation and has been tested, the translated version is uploaded in the HELP platform. This happens in direct collaboration with local stakeholders.

At the time of writing, 332 persons have registered for the **online HELP course on violence against women and domestic violence**, whereas 328 participants have benefited from the tutored versions of this course. Out of this latter figure of 328, around 250 participants have enrolled in and/or passed the tutored versions of the course which were adapted and translated under the Council of Europe’s co-operation programmes/projects.



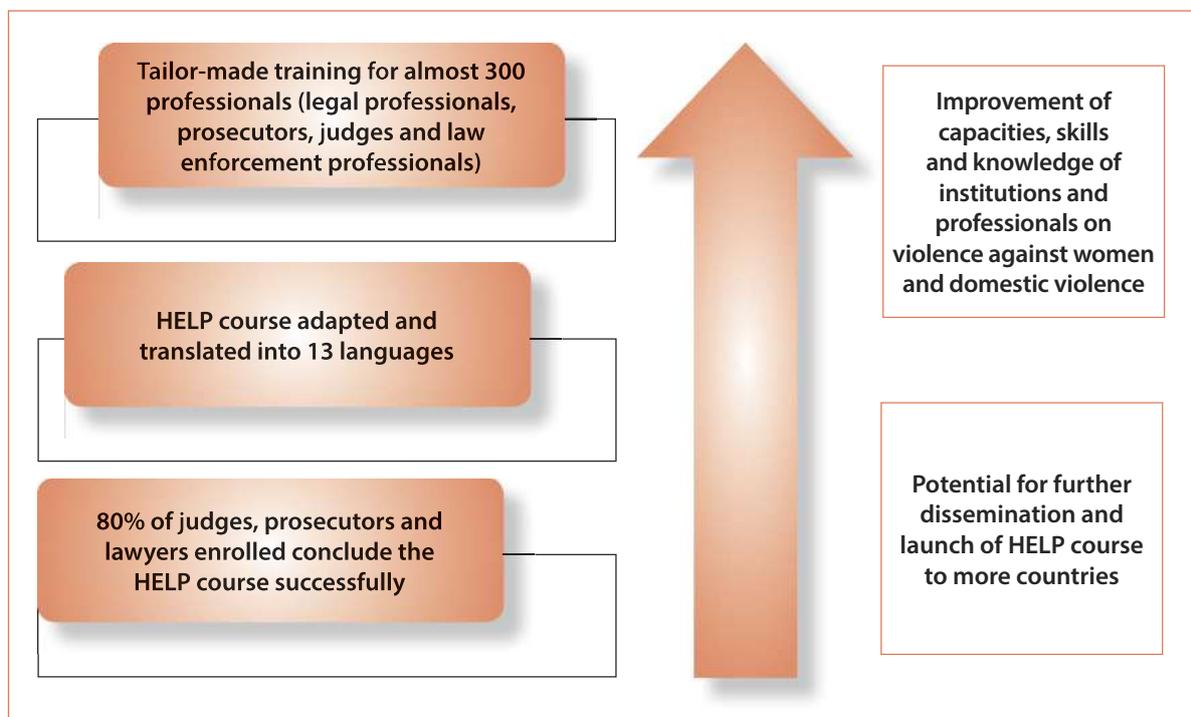
Kick-off for the HELP Violence against Women course for North Macedonian lawyers in Skopje, 13 December 2018

22. These numbers do not include the HELP course participants. The HELP course will be analysed later in this section. In this analysis, events such as conferences, kick-off meetings and workshops have not been taken into consideration. Training, training of trainers and study visits have been considered. The training refers to activities started in 2016 for multi-country projects, in 2017-2018 for bilateral projects, in 2018-2019 for programmes funded under the EEA and Norway Grants and in 2019 regional programmes/projects. A list of training is presented in the Appendix of the report.

— The course on violence against women and domestic violence can be accessed in **English** via the HELP online platform and it has been translated into **Albanian, Armenian, Bosnian, Georgian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovenian, Turkish and Ukrainian**. Under planned projects it will soon also be translated into **Czech, Serbian and Slovak** among other languages.

— Through the development of training, exchanges and the implementation of the online course, concrete achievements have been reached, as indicated in Graph 5.

Graph 5 - Building and strengthening institutional and operational capacities: achievements



Guaranteeing women’s access to justice

— Council of Europe member states have a legal obligation to ensure that **all individuals in their jurisdiction have effective, available and efficient access to justice**,²³ 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.

— Through the co-operation programmes/projects the Council of Europe aims at **guaranteeing equal access to justice for women**, especially women victims of violence. Specifically, the project “Strengthening access to justice for women victims of violence in the six Eastern Partnership countries” is implemented under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG). Carried out in co-operation with national partners in the six Eastern Partnership countries of **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine**, the project builds on the outcomes of the preceding PGG project (2015-2017) and works with national training institutions and judges, prosecutors and other legal professionals to ensure women’s equal access to legal protection and remedies and, overall, their rights. The PGG Phase II 2019-2021 – “Women’s Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards” will last **36 months**.

— The **lack of knowledge of gender sensitive tools and European standards** on gender equality and violence against women coupled with persistent gender stereotypes among legal professionals may **contribute to women not being able to fully enjoy their rights**.

— The current project, building on the experience of the previous one, aims at **creating suitable and practical solutions and tools for judges, prosecutors and legal aid providers** by targeting authorities and justice sector professionals. Measures, including on training, should be included **to ensure that the justice**

23. European Convention on Human Rights, Article 6 (right to a fair trial); Article 13 (right to an effective remedy); Article 35 (admissibility criteria); Article 46 (binding force and execution of judgments).

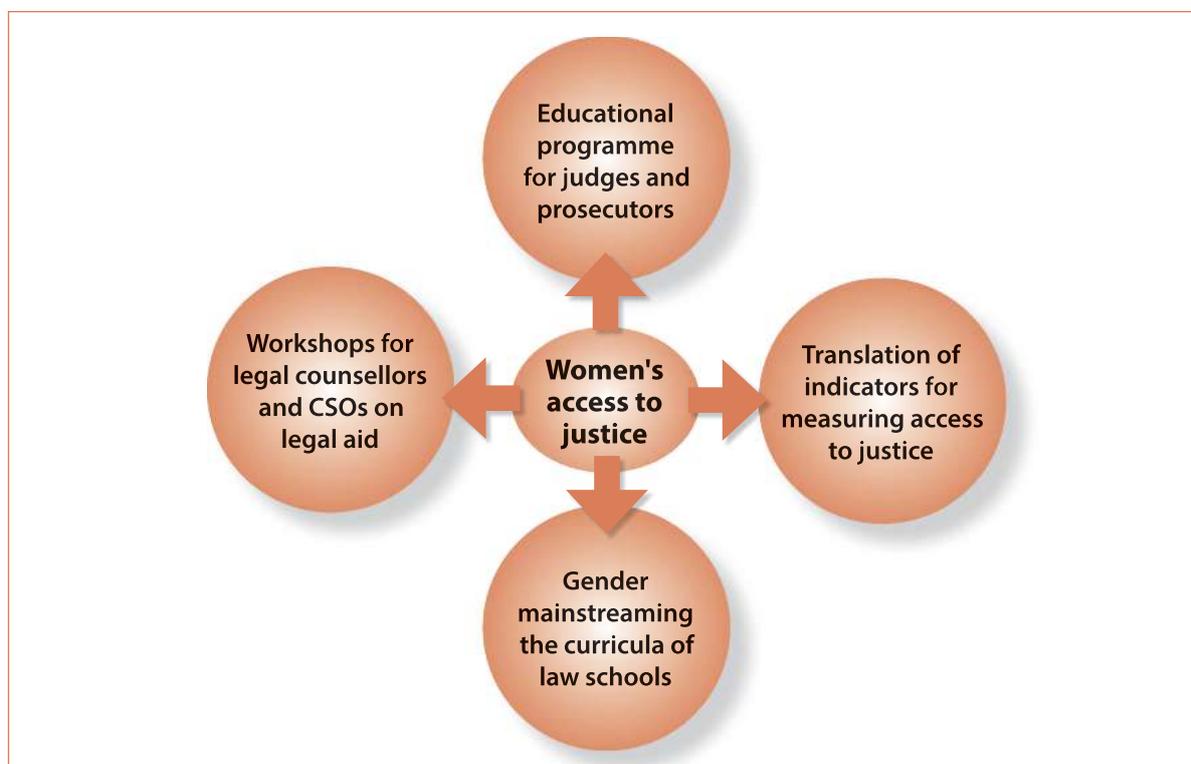
chain is gender responsive, particularly for women victims/survivors of violence in line with the Istanbul Convention and other European standards. The Programme foresees the following activities:

- ▶ an **“Educational programme package”** focuses on the development and setting up of a **mentoring programme within the training institutions for judges and prosecutors** in the Eastern Partnership countries, to build up competences on Istanbul Convention and gender equality standards;
- ▶ **translation of the guide note** “Framework of indicators for measuring Access to Justice including specific challenges facing women” in all the six languages of the Eastern Partnership countries to be disseminated through working groups to the relevant authorities in the region;
- ▶ a **“Legal Aid package”**, which includes a series of **six national workshops for legal counsellors and CSOs providing** free legal aid on the Istanbul Convention standards and barriers faced by women when accessing justice;
- ▶ an **“Educational Curricula package”**, which focuses on **gender mainstreaming the curricula** of law schools in the Eastern Partnership countries.

*In co-operation with the regional project of the Council of Europe, a **training course, programme and material were prepared on the topic of strengthening women’s access to justice and combating domestic violence and violence against women. The fact that six countries were involved in this project - representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine - amplifies its value. Experts from prosecution service and judicial corps worked jointly on this project (Office of the Prosecutor-General of Georgia).***

— The regional project’s achievements are presented in Graph 6.

Graph 6 - Guaranteeing women’s access to justice: achievements



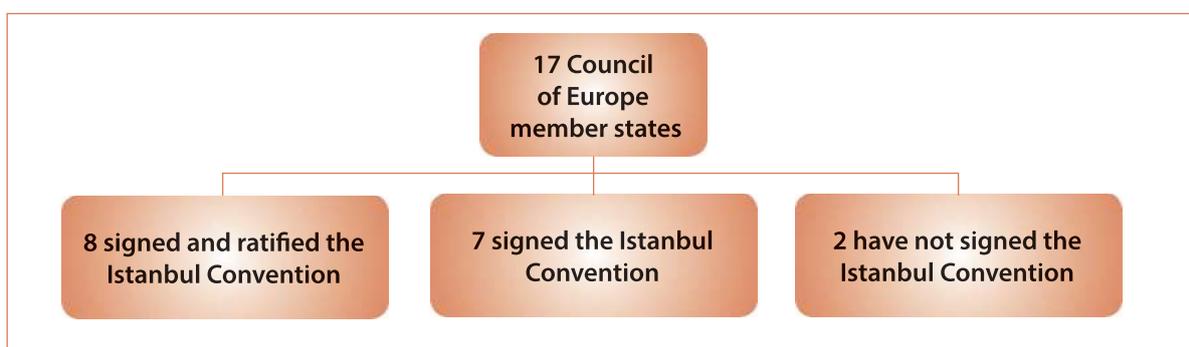
5. LESSONS LEARNED

Potential impact on countries and benefits for women and society

■ The co-operation programmes/projects implemented by the Council of Europe have contributed to a better understanding and knowledge of the Istanbul Convention and European standards on gender equality. But to what extent do such programmes/projects have an **impact on the legal framework of countries?** Victims/survivors of violence against women and domestic violence are the end beneficiaries of these programmes/projects. But **to what extent may women benefit from the implementation of these programmes/projects?**

■ As regards **the status of signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention**, out of the 17 Council of Europe member states currently involved in the programmes/projects analysed in this report, eight have ratified it and seven have signed (but not ratified) it. Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation have not signed the Istanbul Convention yet.

Graph 7 – Current situation of the signature and/or ratification of the Istanbul Convention in the member states involved in the Council of Europe programmes/projects analysed



■ It is true that the signature and ratification of such an important convention depends on several circumstances, above all the political will of governments; however, **raising awareness on the Istanbul Convention** among national authorities and stakeholders, as well as **avoiding misconceptions** of the Istanbul Convention principles including the notion of “gender”, will allow for informed debate and help to deal with such a crucial topic. The added value of Council of Europe co-operation programmes/projects is also to enhance and support the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, in line with its principles and standards.

■ Signature or ratification of the Istanbul Convention represents an important and crucial step towards the alignment to European standards in combating violence against women and domestic violence. Through the co-operation programmes/projects **implementing or amending national laws on violence against women and domestic violence or guidelines for professionals working with women**, in line with the Istanbul Convention standards, will also have a positive impact.

■ In the case of **Armenia**, a new Law on Domestic Violence was approved in 2017²⁴ and **the main benchmarks for the Armenian authorities were the standards of the Istanbul Convention**. The drafting of the new law was also supported by certain activities carried out in 2016, such as the Council of Europe expert support to the Ministry of Justice working group preparing the draft law on preventing and combating domestic violence and a gap analysis of Armenian criminal law conducted in 2017 in the light of the standards of the Istanbul Convention.

*The Council of Europe prepared a publication on the **gap analysis on the criminal code in Armenia. That was excellent.** It was very well done. The gaps according to the Istanbul Convention were mentioned. That is very helpful. **Based on that we can then propose amendments to legislation** (Maro Matosian, Women's Support Centre, Armenia).*

■ Co-operation programmes/projects are especially relevant wherever either the signature/ratification of the Istanbul Convention or the definition/amendments of national legislation on violence against women and domestic violence are on the political agenda of governments, as in the case of **Georgia**. Immediately after the Parliament approved the legislative amendments aligning the Georgian legislation with the standards set

²⁴ Law of the Republic of Armenia on the prevention of violence within the family, protection of victims of violence within the family and restoration of peace in the family (8 December 2017).

by the Istanbul Convention, the Council of Europe organised an awareness-raising workshop on the Istanbul Convention.²⁵ The event provided a timely opportunity to reflect on the practical implementation of those laws against the examples provided by other countries. Organising events and workshops to raise awareness on the Istanbul Convention contributes to spreading European standards on the topic of combating violence against women and domestic violence.

■ The adoption of specific laws on combating violence against women and domestic violence is a first step towards more effective support and protection of women victims/survivors of violence. However, the implementation of such laws and the practical applicability of specific procedures not always reach the desirable standards. Working towards **defining and improving procedures that involve specific professionals**, (for example the prosecutors' guidelines in Georgia or the handbook for police officers in Ukraine) as well as the **training of those professionals**, may guarantee **more effective support for women** victims/survivors of violence and their children. Building capacities of professionals who are involved at the different levels of the justice chain **will contribute to positive changes in the current practices**, such as investigations, prosecutions, convictions, criminal cases against perpetrators of violence against women and domestic violence.

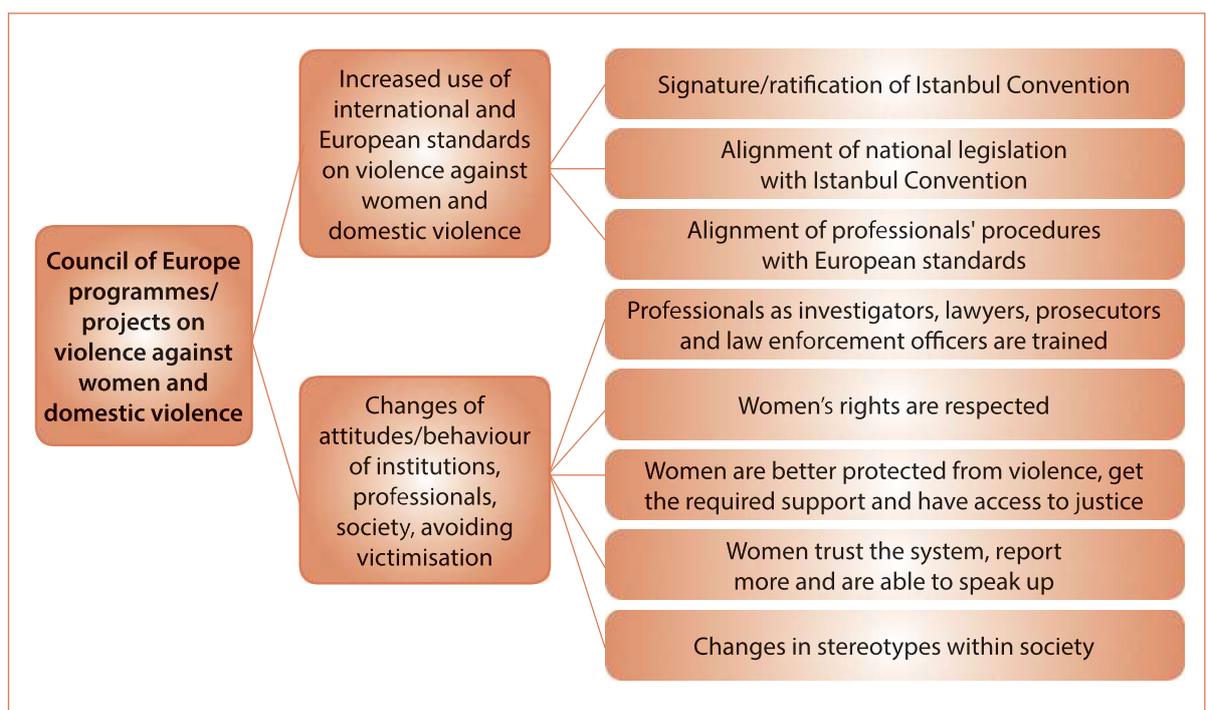
*As a result, **the prosecutors' expertise and professionalism was enhanced**. In their everyday professional activity the **prosecutors actively apply standards** set out by the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of the Court. Furthermore, **figures on the detection of such crimes, launching prosecution and timely and effective response have increased**. (Office of the Prosecutor-General of Georgia).*

■ Such activities may also produce **an increase in reporting** and more **effective response to these crimes**. If an effective response is provided, **women's trust in the public and law enforcement systems as well as on professionals should increase**. **Women should be able to report cases more openly**.

*Perhaps we'll see more violations than now, but this is **because people are more aware of the issue**. **If we will not start we will never change anything. Now is time for change**. And we have to address it. (Olena Sibilyova, National Bar Association, Ukraine).*

■ Council of Europe programmes and projects have **the potential to have a great impact both on the institutional and legal frameworks of member states and on the attitudes and behaviour of those working with and for women** victims/survivors of violence. **Changes in behaviour** of professionals, institutions and society more broadly **are needed** in order to defeat stereotypes.

Graph 8 – Purported impact of Council of Europe co-operation programmes and projects



25. On 5 May 2017.

Added value and challenges

All the steps that are taken by the Council of Europe are really very effective in this field (Anahit Manasyan, Academy of Justice of Armenia).

Operating in the framework of the Istanbul Convention

■ Having the **Istanbul Convention and European standards** in combating violence against women and domestic violence as a framework within which programmes/projects are implemented is an added value. The Council of Europe, as a **standard-setting organisation**, can ensure that standards are respected in all the activities of the projects.

*“The Istanbul Convention is a milestone convention as regards combating violence against women and domestic violence. It provides **some legal guarantees for victims**, it provides **some regulation for the state** in order to be able to provide good services and be able to protect human rights in this regard. It is very important that we ratify the convention and **become a full member of the family that has the same views with regard to the fight against domestic violence.**” (Lusine Sargsyan, the Human Rights Defender’s Office in Armenia).*

■ **Sharing experiences, learning from local and international experts, as well as exchanging best practices** have been considered very effective by the stakeholders interviewed. Furthermore, all the stakeholders interviewed appreciated the technical co-operation put in place by the Council of Europe, both in terms of **approach adopted** in the implementation of programmes/projects and in terms of **thematic focus** of the programmes/projects.

Sharing experiences, local and international promising practices

*It is very important to give prosecutors and investigators **the opportunity to share experiences and successful practices of foreign countries**, which can be achieved by conducting study visits. Sharing experiences on the spot makes received knowledge more robust, as well as it increases motivation of the participants. We think that the effectiveness of projects is provided by the fact that **launching a project is always preceded by a meeting with the beneficiary, study of their needs, identification of such needs and setting priorities**. In addition, we have active communication with the local team of the office, which are always ready to give support. Thus, **activities organised for the project always respond to the present needs**. Likewise, it is important **to maintain flexibility and readiness of the project**, in order to implement relevant changes and activities into it (Office of the Prosecutor-general of Georgia).*

Identification of needs, setting priorities, translation of material

■ **Raising awareness on the Istanbul Convention and European standards** on combating violence against women and domestic violence, making the **material available in the language of the country, strengthening the capacities** of national authorities and professionals such as prosecutors, judges, law enforcement professionals and lawyers: these have been perceived as **fundamental steps towards the protection of women victims/survivors of violence**.

Collaboration with national authorities, local stakeholders, CSOs and international organisations

■ **A strong and effective collaboration with national authorities, local stakeholders and CSOs** is extremely important in order to enhance collaboration among different actors in a framework of **multi-agency co-operation**, to create tools and build a language that different actors may use in combating violence against women and domestic violence. Moreover, a productive collaboration with other international organisations, operating in these countries **avoids the overlapping** of activities. Such **collaborative methodology between institutions at different levels (international, European, national or local)** is crucial to tackle violence against women and domestic violence in a more effective way and to better understand local needs. In the area of violence against women, multi-disciplinary and inter-agency co-operation is essential and also a key principle contained in the Istanbul Convention.

*“I think projects like this one are very necessary because **the main partners are those who can change the policies and can influence changes** in life. That is why I think it is useful to have meetings between different partners/practitioners, to exchange practices. Also, **civil society organisations should be involved**, especially those that work with women victims” (Olena Sibilyova, National Bar Association, Ukraine).*

Involvement of and collaboration with CSOs

— The **involvement of CSOs** is essential: **CSOs' role is vital for the project** and including CSOs from the very early stages of the design of the project outputs adds value to the achievements the project can reach.

The government reacted much better when civil society started to be included (Maro Matosian, Women's Support Centre, Armenia).

— Although the stakeholders interviewed were very positive about the programmes/projects implemented, **some challenges and preliminary recommendations** emerged.

— Both the **short timeline of projects** and the **high number of activities** within one project are perceived as a challenge. Moreover, a longer on-the-ground **needs assessment could lead to better results, in addition to monitoring reports and country-based experience**. Further, if the aim is to generate an impact on women and on society more broadly, there is a need for **longer and strategic interventions**. Change will need time.

— In the programmes/projects analysed **the assessment of impact is not budgeted** and **not enough time** seems to be dedicated **to monitoring and evaluation**. This may drawback for future projects: including in terms of **follow-up** or **continuity between interventions**, due to funding reasons. In order to assess the impact of programmes and projects, a dedicated activity should be provided, through **specific methodologies**, such as *ex-ante*, on-going and *ex-post* evaluations. This will require time and expertise and it will be strictly related to the purported outcomes of programmes/projects. In the projects analysed, feedback from participants is usually requested. Although it is important to understand whether the activities implemented have been aligned to participants' expectations, this is not enough to monitor and evaluate projects effectively. Not only **collecting qualitative and quantitative data** could serve as a basis for analysis, but also **monitoring and evaluating the process, the impact and the outcomes** of activities could add strategic value to future project design.

— **Constant support and follow-up** will help meeting countries' needs, as well as **participatory, strategic and long-term methodology**. The Council of Europe's primary partners are governments and state authorities. Nevertheless, involving **local women's organisations and CSOs** more broadly allows a **comprehensive dialogue among all actors involved** in combating violence against women and domestic violence.

— In terms of activities implemented, one-off training seminars should be limited, preferring **capacity-building training developed in a long-term strategy**. Moreover, training should be **more practical, more grounded on the national legislation**, with the use of role-plays and Tots (Training of Trainers).

The most effective activity is training. We could have round tables, seminars (...). Auditoriums with high number of participants could serve to explain the problem and the project, but it is more effective to have small groups where you discuss practical issues (Anahit Manasyan, Academy of Justice of Armenia).

— Finally, **comprehensive awareness-raising events** "should be spread all over the countries", as Maro Matosian (Women's Support Centre, Armenia) pointed out, and **be more frequent**, and a more significant budget and staff would be necessary for this.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

— Violence against women, including domestic violence, is one of the most serious forms of gender-based violations of human rights. **The technical co-operation programmes and projects** implemented by the Co-operation and Capacity Building Unit of the *Gender Equality Division* **are contributing to ending violence against women and domestic violence**.

— First and foremost, operating in the framework of the **Istanbul Convention and European standards** in combating violence against women and domestic violence is **the added value** of Council of Europe programmes/projects. Ensuring that standards are respected in all the activities will help bridge the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* gender equality.

— The Council of Europe is investing **great effort in co-operating with national authorities, stakeholders and CSOs** to ensure programmes/projects' implementation and to create a shared framework and language among partners in order to achieve common objectives/goals. Not only the Council of Europe methodology is **grounded in the co-operation with national authorities and local stakeholders**, but it is also designed through **collaborations with institutions at different levels**, including international organisations. This

approach strengthens the creation of a common framework among partners and institutions, avoiding the overlapping of activities. Moreover, each programme/project is designed **according to the needs and peculiarities of each specific national context**.

■ The programmes/projects analysed in the report involved **more than 50 partners/stakeholders** and reached **around 1,200 professionals** among judges, prosecutors, lawyers, investigators and law enforcement officers, through specific events, training, workshops, peer-to-peer exchanges and study visits. **Sharing experiences, learning from local and international experts, as well as exchanging promising practices** will lead to the promotion of the Istanbul Convention and to the strengthening of the operational capacities of professionals involved.

■ The programmes/projects **produced a consistent quantity of materials**, including guidance and handbooks for police officers, recommendations for prosecutor guidelines, gap analysis on specific laws and the translation of several Council of Europe documents/reports as well as the HELP course in the language of the member states involved. The material produced aims at **improving legal, regulatory and policy frameworks**, as well as at **strengthening institutional and operational capacities**.

■ Specifically, the programmes/projects analysed achieved the following main goals:

- ▶ **increase of information and knowledge on European standards and the Istanbul Convention**
- ▶ **strengthening of institutional mechanisms and multi-agency co-ordinated bodies/system**
- ▶ **implementation of monitoring system**
- ▶ **alignment of legislation on violence against women and domestic violence**, when adopted or revised, **with European standards**
- ▶ **improvement of capacities, skills and knowledge of institutions and professionals** on violence against women and domestic violence
- ▶ **training and guidance for specific professionals** (such as police and prosecutors) **to effectively protect women victims of violence**
- ▶ **translation of Council of Europe material and HELP course in the language** of member states involved.

■ The Council of Europe programmes and projects contribute to **an increase in application of international and European standards on violence against women and domestic violence**, through the following: path towards signature/ratification of the Istanbul Convention where this has not been signed or ratified, the alignment of national legislation and professional procedures with European standards and the training of stakeholders and professionals.

■ These programmes/projects **may lead to changes in terms of institutional frameworks, professionals' attitudes and even social perceptions** in regard to the policies aimed at combating violence against women and domestic violence. Through the implementation of these activities, **women**, as end beneficiaries of the programmes/projects, **may be better protected from violence, get the required support and have access to justice more effectively**, in line with the Istanbul Convention requirements. **Women's rights will be more respected** and hopefully, in the long run, **society as a whole will become more aware of gender-related issues**, including violence against women.

Based on the results of this analysis, the following recommendations for future project design are suggested.

- ▶ **Continue the on-going co-operation with national authorities, stakeholders and CSOs**
- ▶ **Strengthen the participatory methodology** already adopted through a greater **involvement of local women's organisations and CSOs**, both for the definition of activities and their implementation, using **more systematically an inter-agency approach** when designing and implementing co-operation programmes/projects
- ▶ **Increase awareness-raising efforts to avoid misconceptions and misunderstandings on the Istanbul Convention principles**
- ▶ **Increase the complementarity/consistency of programmes/projects** over the years whilst **providing for greater flexibility with regard to country-specific contexts**, due to political/structural changes in the countries
- ▶ **Include**, particularly in larger projects, **stages dedicated to the assessment of needs and to the evaluation of results/impact of activities**, designing appropriate methodologies for such purpose
- ▶ National training institutions/organisations should be more actively encouraged to **include/mainstream violence against women and domestic violence in the curricula** of selected training institutions/organisations
- ▶ **Increase peer-to-peer exchanges** among experts and professionals and **give more space to workshops in smaller groups** during events
- ▶ **Increase the budgets and staffing of programmes/projects**, where necessary, in order to achieve maximum impact

Institutions/partners/stakeholders involved should consider women victims/survivors of violence as the end beneficiaries of programmes/projects.

APPENDIX

Programmes/projects concluded, implemented or planned

— The table below represents a summary of the programmes/projects analysed, detailing both the duration and the progress of the implementation of the programme/project. As explained above, programmes/projects analysed in this report refer to the ones started in 2016 for multi-country projects, in 2017-2018 for bilateral projects, in 2018-2019 for programmes/projects funded under the EEA/Norway Grants and in 2019 for regional projects.

Table 1: Programmes/projects concluded/implemented/planned analysed

Council of Europe member state and Belarus and Kosovo*	Name of the programme/project	Type of programme/project	Duration	Phase
Armenia	Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia	Bilateral	17 April to 31 December 2018	Concluded/ Reporting phase
	Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia : continuing the path towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention	Bilateral	30 months	Planning phase
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Raising BiH institutional capacity to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence	Bilateral	6 months (January - August 2019)	Implementation phase
Georgia	Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Georgia	Bilateral	1 February to 30 September 2019	Implementation phase
Kosovo*	Fighting violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo*	Bilateral	1 December 2018 to end November 2020	Implementation phase
Russian Federation	Co-operation in the implementation of the Russian Federation National Action Strategy for Women (2017-2022)	Bilateral	3 November 2018 to 2 May 2020	Implementation phase
Turkey	Fostering a comprehensive institutional response to violence against women and domestic violence in Turkey	Bilateral	2019 – 2022 30 months	Planning phase
Ukraine	Combating violence against vulnerable groups (women and children) in Ukraine	Bilateral	1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018	Concluded/ Reporting phase
	The Istanbul Convention: a tool to advance in fighting violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine	Bilateral	1 September 2018 to 30 March 2020	Implementation phase

Multi-country: mainly Albania, Armenia, Georgia, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey	Violence against Women multi-country project	Multi- country	1 January 2016 – on-going	Implementation phase
Multi-country	Promoting visibility of gender mainstreaming and co-operation projects in the area of gender equality	Multi- country	1 December 2018 to 30 June 2019	Implementation phase
Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia	Strategic Advice to Norway Grants programmes in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia	Norway Grants	On-going	Implementation phase
Czech Republic	Implementing European standards to combat gender based violence and domestic violence in the Czech Republic	Norway Grants	24 months	Planning phase (funding secured)
Slovakia	The Istanbul Convention: a tool to raise awareness and enhance the capacity to fight violence against women in Slovakia	Norway Grants	12 months: September 2019 – September 2020	Planning phase (funding secured)
Regional: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine	PGG Phase II 2019-2021 - Women's Access to Justice (WA2J)	Regional	36 months	Implementation phase

List of training activities

— The table below shows the number of training activities (and participants) organised during the programmes/projects analysed. These numbers do not include the participants to the HELP course. They refer to multi-country and bilateral projects analysed in this report.

— **Table 2 – Training conducted and number of participants (multi-country and bilateral projects)**

Council of Europe member state	Training	Participants
Armenia	Training on violence against women and domestic violence for the office of Human Rights Defender of Armenia and NGOs	24
	Peer-to-peer exchange on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence between the staff of the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Public Defender of Georgia	15
	A 2-day ToT for legal professionals, developed and included in the training curriculum of the Academy of Justice for the year 2019	11
	Peer-to-peer exchange visit for legal professional and police officers to Vienna, Austria	16
	1.5 day training conducted for Division Heads and Team Leaders of the Police Department on protection on juvenile rights and combating domestic violence of the General Department of Criminal Intelligence of the Armenian Police	54
	1.5 day ToT for trainers of the Police Educational Complex	8
	Lecture to journalists on international and national framework on violence against women and domestic violence	n.a.

Georgia	Training workshop on the Istanbul Convention (staff members of the Public Defender's Office, other public officials and CSOs representatives)	40
	Peer-to-peer exchange visit to Madrid to streamline prosecutions and sentencing on cases of violence against women and domestic violence in line with European standards on the Istanbul Convention	9
Slovenia	Training session of the intergovernmental group on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention (29 May 2017)	n.a.
	Study visit to Slovakia's Co-ordinating methodical Centre (CMC) on prevention and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence	10
Ukraine	Training on effective representation of the rights and interests of children and women in Ukraine for CSOs	28
	ToT for legal professionals on child-friendly justice, violence against women and domestic violence	12
Multi-country	Training to Council of Europe member states that have ratified the Istanbul Convention on mapping support services for victims of violence against women and domestic violence (8 November 2018)	57

Examples of publications and guidebooks from different programmes/projects

Armenia

- ▶ A gap analysis of Armenian criminal law in light of the standards established by the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
- ▶ A practical handbook on violence against women and domestic violence developed for the Armenian police to provide guidance for police officers when dealing with cases of violence against women and domestic violence
- ▶ A training manual on violence against women and domestic violence developed for the Academy of Justice
- ▶ Information booklet on Article 52 (emergency barring orders) of the Istanbul Convention translated into Armenian
- ▶ A desk review on the new law on domestic violence identifying gaps and providing recommendations

Bulgaria

- ▶ Istanbul Convention translated into Bulgarian

Georgia

- ▶ A review report and recommendations on the prosecution guidelines on violence against women and domestic violence for the Chief Prosecutor's Office
- ▶ The explanatory report of the Istanbul Convention, three factsheets on the Istanbul Convention, a leaflet on the Istanbul Convention monitoring mechanism, one info-booklet on Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention on multi-agency co-operation translated into Georgia

North Macedonia

- ▶ Translation into Macedonian of the course brief on the HELP violence against women and domestic violence course, an overview of the Istanbul Convention, 12 Steps to comply with the Istanbul Convention and a factsheet on the GREVIO (Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) monitoring mechanism

Slovenia

- ▶ Istanbul Convention translated into Slovenian
- ▶ Study on Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention
- ▶ Recommendations for the development of the Slovenian national programme on preventing and combating domestic violence and violence against women: Challenges, gaps and best practices report

Ukraine

- ▶ A guide on state-of-the-art campaigns models and strategies focusing on combating violence against women and gender stereotype, a tailor-made Council of Europe tool
- ▶ Council of Europe paper on the Istanbul Convention Article 13 on raising awareness of violence against women translated into Ukrainian
- ▶ A practical handbook for police officers to deal with cases of violence against women and domestic violence
- ▶ A set of guidelines destined to police management
- ▶ A tailor made guidance to enhance knowledge of competent authorities when developing their own standards
- ▶ Translation into Ukrainian of three European Convention on Human Rights legal summaries on domestic violence, violence against women and gender equality and their dissemination via the project web page

HELP course

- ▶ Translation into Albanian, Armenian, Bosnian, Georgian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovenian, Turkish and Ukrainian. It is planned to be translated into Czech, Slovak and Serbian among other languages.

Norway Grants²⁶

- ▶ Improving the effectiveness of law-enforcement and justice officers in combating violence against women and domestic violence (June 2016)
- ▶ Enhancing the professional capacity of the Bulgarian Police to deal with cases of domestic violence and violence against women (June 2016)
- ▶ Implementing Article 10 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – establishing national co-ordinating bodies (November 2016)
- ▶ Implementing a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach - *An assessment of Poland's response to prevent and combat gender-based violence* (April 2016)
- ▶ Training of Trainers Manual: Effective Multi-agency Co-operation for Preventing and Combatting Domestic Violence (September 2015)
- ▶ Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence against Women: A learning resource for training law enforcement and justice officers (January 2016)

Multi-country (other)

- ▶ "Mapping support services for victims of violence against women in line with the Istanbul Convention standards. Methodology and tools" (November 2018), <https://rm.coe.int/mapping-support-services-vaw/16808ec66b>, made available to ratified countries of the Istanbul Convention, in English and French

Regional projects: Guaranteeing the equal access of women to justice²⁷

- ▶ Guaranteeing Equal Access of Women to Justice (2016)
- ▶ Women's access to justice: a guide for legal practitioners (October 2018)
- ▶ The Training Manual for Judges and Prosecutors on Ensuring Women's Access to Justice (September 2017)
- ▶ Country Studies on Barriers, Remedies and Good Practices for Women's Access to Justice: ARM / AZE / GEO / ROM / UKR (2017)
- ▶ European Court of Human Rights Factsheet on Domestic Violence - ARM / AZE / ENG / GEO / RUS / UKR (January 2018)
- ▶ Compilation of case law of the European Court of Human Rights on Gender Equality Issues (January 2017)

26. These publications refer to the years 2015 and 2016, although the programmes included in the report refer to the ones started in 2018-2019.

27. These publications refer to the years 2016-2017-2018, although the projects included in the report refer to the ones started in 2019.

Interviews conducted

Council of Europe headquarters' representatives:

- ▶ Haapalainen Sara, Policy Advisor, 27 February 2019
- ▶ Sandescu Anca, Project Manager, 8 March 2019
- ▶ Shearer-Demir Jenna, Programme Advisor, 1 March 2019

Council of Europe project managers:

- ▶ Amirkbekyan Liana, Project Manager in Armenia, 15 March 2019
- ▶ Machaidze Tea, Project Manager in Georgia, 5 March 2019
- ▶ Pavlysh Svitlana, Project Manager in Ukraine, 19 March 2019

Stakeholders:

- ▶ Office of the Prosecutor-General of Georgia, written answers provided, 22 March 2019
- ▶ Manasyan Anahit, Academy of Justice of Armenia, 21 March 2019
- ▶ Sargsyan Lusine, Human Rights Defender's Office in Armenia, Project Video
- ▶ Sibilyova Olena, National Bar Association, Ukraine, 21 March 2019

CSO representative:

- ▶ Marosian Maro, Women's Support Centre, Armenia, 20 March 2019

Many more stakeholders and CSOs were contacted but in the short timeframe of the preparation of this report they were not able to respond.

Council of Europe reports analysed

- ▶ Combating violence against vulnerable groups (women and children) in Ukraine – Project reference number: PMM ID 1328 – Final report (Reporting period: 1/3/2017 – 31/1/2018)
- ▶ The Istanbul Convention: a tool to advance in fighting violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine – Project reference number: VC/1868 – Progress report (Reporting period: 1/9/2018 – 31/12/2018)
- ▶ Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Georgia – Project reference number: VC/1940 – Progress report (Reporting period: 1/2/2018 – 31/12/2018)
- ▶ Preventing and combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia – Project reference number: VC/1994 – Final report (Reporting period: 19/3/2018 – 31/12/2018)
- ▶ Violence against Women – Project reference number: VC 3566 – Interim narrative report (Reporting period: 1/1/2016 – 31/12/2016)
- ▶ Violence against Women – Project reference number: VC 215(3566) – Progress report (Reporting period: 1/1/2017 – 31/12/2017)
- ▶ Violence against Women – Project reference number: VC 215 – Progress report (Reporting period: 1/1/2018 – 31/12/2018)

Other reports cited

■ Datta N. (2018), *Restoring the natural order. The religious extremists' vision to mobilize European societies against human rights on sexuality and reproduction*, the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, Brussels, available at https://www.epfweb.org/sites/epfweb.org/files/rtno_epf_book_lores.pdf, accessed on 30 March 2019

■ Kelly, L. (2018), *Mapping support services for victims of violence against women in line with the Istanbul Convention standards. Methodology and tools*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, available at <https://rm.coe.int/mapping-support-services-vaw/16808ec66b>, accessed on 27 March 2019

■ Rabe H. and Ünsal N. (2016), *Implementing Article 10 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence—establishing national co-ordinating bodies*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, available at <https://rm.coe.int/16806f0d38>, accessed on 1 April 2019

SUPPORT OUR WORK TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Visit our website and contact us for further information:

<http://www.coe.int/VAW-gender-cooperation>



www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 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.