

## Pathways to End Violence Against Women Mission Driven Initiative (the Pathways Initiative)

- Making gender equality standards a reality in Europe -

### What is the Pathways Initiative?

The [Pathways Initiative](#) is centred on applying the [Council of Europe's](#) unique expertise on combating violence against women and [gender equality](#) in work through the EEA and Norway Grants.

Pathways provides expert guidance on implementing Council of Europe standards, recommendations and guidance related to violence against women and gender equality within EEA and Norway Grants' programmes and projects across fifteen member states. A significant focus is reinforcing the [SYNERGY Network against domestic and gender-based violence](#), coordinated by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

Through this approach, Pathways strengthens legislative and policy frameworks in line with Council of Europe standards and supports [EEA and Norway Grants' Programme Area 10 objectives to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence](#).

### Scope

[Beneficiary countries](#): Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia

Duration: 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2030 (60 months) | Budget: €2.5M

### The Council of Europe's Strategic Triangle

The Pathways Initiative uses insights from monitoring to provide targeted support based on proven standards. It is an important part of the Council of Europe's unique Strategic Triangle approach, which is based on three independent cornerstones:

- **Standard-Setting** creates legal frameworks like the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the [Istanbul Convention](#)) and the 2024-2029 [Gender Equality Strategy](#) that define norms and obligations.
- **Monitoring** through independent bodies like GREVIO identifies implementation gaps and provides recommendations based on country evaluations.
- **Cooperation**, such as the Pathways Initiative and Council of Europe's [work in EEA and Norway Grants](#), bridges those gaps by providing technical assistance, expertise, and support to help countries meet standards and implement recommendations.

This integrated approach ensures that international commitments translate into real protection for women and girls.

## The Pathways approach

The Pathways Initiative operates through requests from beneficiary countries based on established Terms of Reference. SYNERGY Network members engage through twice-annual events and ongoing regional cooperation activities.

As the repository of the Istanbul Convention and host of its monitoring mechanism GREVIO, the Council of Europe is uniquely positioned to support implementation across member states.

## What we do

### Strategic Advising on Gender Equality and ending Violence Against Women

- We provide expert guidance to help countries implement the Council of Europe standards on combating violence against women, such as Istanbul Convention and the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy.
- Our support addresses all forms of violence addressed by the Istanbul Convention.
- Countries receive tailored advice on legislation, policy frameworks, victim support services, professional training, and multi-agency cooperation.

### Reinforcing the SYNERGY Network

- The SYNERGY Network brings together governmental and non-governmental professionals from across the region to share knowledge and build capacity. Coordinated by Norway's Ministry of Justice, it serves as a powerful platform for regional cooperation.
- Pathways reinforces SYNERGY by:
  - Supporting planning and implementation of network activities
  - Promoting representation from all 15 countries
  - Providing Council of Europe experts at events
  - Facilitating peer-to-peer learning and practice exchange

The Pathways Initiative continues the Council of Europe's partnership with EEA and Norway Grants spanning multiple funding cycles. Through extensive cooperation, the Council of Europe has supported member states in translating international standards on women's human rights into practical outcomes. The current cycle builds on lessons learned and relationships established, while responding to emerging challenges like digital violence and the need for intersectional approaches.

The project is implemented by the [Council of Europe Gender Equality Co-operation Unit](#), Directorate of Equal Rights and Dignity, with support from the EEA and Norway Grants.

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Website: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/pathways-to-end-violence-against-women-mission-driven-initiative-pathways-initiative-2025-2030->



#CoEPathways | #EEANorwayGrants | #SYNERGYnetwork