

FEEDBACK Report on the implementation of the Committee of the Parties' recommendations

Community Safety and Mediation Center Foundation (CMSC)

Community Safety and Mediation Center Foundation (CMSC) enjoys this opportunity to comment on the information submitted by the Romanian authorities on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. We appreciate the efforts made by the authorities to strengthen the legislative and institutional framework that addresses violence against women and domestic violence.

The report provides a detailed overview of legislative provisions, strategies and institutional commitments, but provides limited information on the practical implementation and effectiveness of these measures. That is why we would like to highlight below some gaps that we have noticed between the existing legal framework and its implementation in practice:

1. Lack of evidence of implementation

The report focuses mainly on legislative provisions, strategies, but without highlighting concrete measures and the impact of these measures. It would be very useful to have the following aspects:

- indicators de impact
- results of the evaluation of national strategies
- evidence demonstrating improved protection of victims.

2. Article 4 – Intersectional discrimination (Question 2)

While the report indicates that preventive activities target vulnerable groups, it does not provide concrete evidence of specific programs or services that address intersectional discrimination.

In practice, women who face multiple forms of discrimination – such as roma women, women with disabilities or women living in marginalised rural areas – continue to face barriers to access to services and protection mechanisms.

3. Article 4 - Access to services at national level

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The report does not address regional disparities in the availability of services for victims of domestic violence. Thus, we highlight the following problems:

- many counties still do not have sufficient shelters or specialized services;
- access to services in rural areas remains limited or absent;
- victims often have to travel long distances to access specialized services.

4. Articles 7 and 10 - Limited monitoring of national strategies (Question 4)

The report lists national strategies that address violence against women, but does not mention:

- measurable indicators
- monitoring results
- evaluation reports on the implementation of these strategies.

Without such information, it is difficult to assess whether policies achieve their objectives.

5. Articles 7 and 10 - Capacity of the coordinating body (Question 9)

The report designates the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES) as the coordinating body responsible for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. However, we note that the Agency's human and financial resources remain limited, especially given the size of the responsibilities assigned to it. This can affect the efficiency and results achieved.

6. Article 8 – Absence of national funding dedicated to preventing and combating domestic violence (Question 12)

The report indicates that funding for services addressing violence against women is mainly provided by:

- local budgets
- projects financed from European funds.

We would like to emphasize that Romania does not yet have a stable national public funding mechanism specifically dedicated to combating violence against women. This situation leads to significant regional disparities and lack of continuity in the provision of specialised services. With just 5% from total counties in Romania in which there is a systematic service contracted from

local budgets with specialised NGOs to deliver services for women and girls victims of violence, the remaining 95% of the territory offers services only under adult or children departments of DGASPC and rarely as DAS services (Social Assistance Departments) in larger cities.

7. Article 8 – Sustainability of services

Many specialised services supporting victims of domestic violence are funded through projects with a limited duration (short term), not through long-term structural funding.

As a result:

- services are interrupted when project funding ends;
- there are no NGO delivered services in the majority of territory due to the total absence of funding for VAW.
- The fewer NGOs who are still delivering services face difficulties in maintaining trained and experienced staff, as well as in maintaining all existing facilities for victims of domestic violence.

8. Article 9 – Cooperation with civil society

Although the report mentions the involvement of NGOs in working groups and projects, cooperation with civil society remains largely informal or contextual (within some projects). We propose to establish structured consultation mechanisms and ensure predictable and sustainable funding for the services provided by NGOs, and including funding for travel for NGOs from territory to Bucharest in order to participate in consultations.

9. Article 11 – Lack of gender-disaggregated data (Question 18)

The Report mentions that the statistical indicators on domestic violence-related crimes are not divided by gender. This significantly limits the ability to:

- monitoring of violence against women in particular;
- assessment of the dimension of gender-based violence.

10. Article 11 – Lack of data on criminal justice outcomes (Question 19)

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The Report mentions that the databases do not allow the tracking of conviction rates or types of punishments in cases of violence against women. This represents a significant gap in monitoring the effectiveness of the response in criminal justice.

11. Article 31 – Protection of children in custody cases

The report contains a description of the legislative provisions that require courts to take violence into account when determining custody of children. However, it does not contain:

- statistical data on how often domestic violence is taken into account in custody decisions,
- evidence that visitation rights are constantly restricted when there are safety risks.

12. Article 50 - Response of the public order authorities

The report describes training activities for police officers, but provides limited information on:

- the manner of evaluating these training programmes;
- the practical impact on police responses to domestic violence;
- accountability mechanisms in cases of inadequate intervention.

Unfortunately, our organization continues to face cases where victims encounter inadequate responses from the authorities regarding the application of the legislation in force.

CONCLUSIONS:

Community Safety and Mediation Center Foundation (CMSC) will continue to cooperate with public authorities and important decision-makers at national and international level in order to strengthen the protection of women and girls against violence, as well as to ensure the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Romania. In this way, we ask you to encourage the state institutions to give priorities in the following directions:

- establishing sustainable national funding mechanisms for victim support services (including NGOs in this mechanism);
- strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES);
- Improving data collection systems, including gender-based statistics and criminal justice outcomes;

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- improving access to specialized services at national level by investing in NGOs as key professionals in ensuring coordinated support;
- encouraging the approach to cases in a coordinated response by the responsible institutions by developing new or supporting the already existing one-stop-shop models/family justice centers approaches;
- structured and sustainable cooperation with civil society organisations (NGOs).

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