

# **Committee of the Parties**

Council of Europe Convention  
on preventing and combating violence  
against women and domestic violence  
(Istanbul Convention)

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Recommendation to Spain on building trust by  
delivering support, protection and justice  
on the basis of the Istanbul Convention**

IC-CP(2025)8

Adopted on 5 June 2025

The Committee of the Parties to the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention”), acting under the terms of Article 68, paragraph 12 of the Convention;

Having regard to the purposes of the Convention to protect women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence; to contribute to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and promote substantive equality between women and men, including by empowering women; to design a comprehensive framework, policies and measures for the protection of and assistance to all victims of violence against women and domestic violence; to promote international co-operation with a view to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence; and to provide support and assistance to organisations and law enforcement agencies to effectively co-operate in order to adopt an integrated approach to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence;

Bearing in mind the provisions of Article 66, paragraph 1 of the Convention concerning the monitoring role of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter referred to as “GREVIO”);

Having regard to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of the Parties;

Having regard to the instrument of ratification deposited by Spain on 10 April 2014;

Having regard to the baseline evaluation report adopted by GREVIO concerning the implementation of the Convention by Spain, the Committee of the Parties’ recommendations adopted on 18 December 2020 and the Committee’s conclusions on the implementation of those recommendations, adopted on 31 May 2024;

Having examined the first thematic evaluation report “Building trust by delivering support, protection and justice” concerning the implementation of the Convention by Spain adopted by GREVIO at its 33rd meeting (18-21 June 2024), as well as the comments of the Government received on 21 November 2024;

Welcoming the measures taken and progress achieved by the Spanish authorities in implementing the Convention and noting in particular:

- the further expansion of the legislative and policy framework to prevent and combat violence against women and the substantial measures taken to widen the scope of policies and services to other forms of violence against women than intimate partner violence, in particular sexual violence;
- the adoption, in 2022, of a law on sexual violence criminalising all sexual acts with a person who has not given free consent, creating the offence of “sexual femicide” and offering a comprehensive framework for preventing and combating sexual violence and providing protection and redress to victims of sexual violence; measures to set up 24-hour comprehensive assistance centres for victims of sexual violence across the country;
- the adoption of a Multi-Annual Joint Plan on Violence against Women (2023-2027) aimed at ensuring a sustainable and co-ordinated response of all the relevant institutions and of a reference catalogue of policies and services on violence against women, with the aim of guaranteeing a set of minimum services; the steady increase of funds for preventing and combating violence against women;

- steps to enhance the safety of children and their mothers in decisions regarding custody and visitation rights in cases with a history of domestic violence by introducing the principle of suspension of custody and visitation rights in cases in which children have been exposed to domestic violence and the legal ban on the use of the so-called parental alienation syndrome;
- substantial improvements and promising practices in the approach of law-enforcement agencies, in particular specialised units, to women victims of violence and an overall improvement in the training and specialisation among law enforcement officers, which is likely to increase trust of women victims in the system; the important role played by the special courts on gender-based violence and the special units on violence against women within the Prosecutor's Office in improving the effectiveness of prosecution of violence against women and in enhancing conviction rates.

A. Recommends in light of the considerations indicated in the preamble above, that the Government of Spain take the following measures identified in GREVIO's first thematic evaluation report<sup>1</sup> for immediate action to:

1. ensure consistent implementation of existing policies to prevent and combat gender-based violence against women across national, regional and local levels, including policies aimed at meeting the specific needs of women victims of violence exposed to intersectional discrimination; regularly evaluate policies aiming to achieve the comprehensive and co-ordinated policy approach required by the Istanbul Convention; involve NGOs working with women victims of gender-based violence in policy making and in the monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures (Article 7);
2. ensure that data collected by law-enforcement agencies, judicial authorities and health services are disaggregated with regard to the sex and age of victim and perpetrator, type of violence, the relation of the perpetrator to the victim and the geographical location; harmonise data collection between law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary and harmonise data-collection efforts by the health sector across the country while also introducing data collection by social services in relation to all forms of violence against women (Article 11);
3. teach children about the notion of freely given consent in sexual relations and raise their awareness of the harmful effects of violent pornography and the implications of sharing intimate images of oneself and others (Article 14);
4. step up the training of all professionals dealing with victims and perpetrators of violence against women on all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention, as well as on the specific needs of women belonging to vulnerable groups, based on standardised protocols aimed at identifying, providing support to and further referring victims (Article 15);
5. ensure that existing perpetrator programmes include an approach centred on the victim's safety and support and are implemented in close co-operation with victim support services (Article 16);
6. set up multi-agency co-operation mechanisms on all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention and involving all the relevant agencies and specialist support services, ensure that such mechanisms are adequately resourced

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1. The Istanbul Convention's provisions concerned by GREVIO's proposals and suggestions are indicated in brackets.

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and regularly monitor their operation; simplify and harmonise the process of official recognition of victims of all forms of violence against women in order to ensure their swift and effective access to protection and support services and set up, where appropriate, counselling and support in the form of one-stop-shop services (Article 18);

7. ensure that all victims of sexual violence have access to support services, including the collection and storing of forensic evidence free of charge and without any obligation to press charges (Article 25);
  8. carry out a review of the judicial practice regarding the legal provisions requiring judges to withdraw custody and visitation rights in cases of parental separation with a history of violence; ensure mandatory training of judges presiding over such cases on the negative effects that witnessing violence against women has on children and the importance of taking into account such instances when reaching a decision; step up efforts to prevent secondary victimisation of women victims of violence and to strengthen co-operation and information exchange between civil courts and criminal courts; ensure that supervised visitation facilities are adequately resourced and focus on the safety of children and their mothers (Article 31);
  9. ensure that mediation procedures carried out in family law proceedings do not constitute quasi-mandatory mediation in cases with a history of domestic violence, by setting up screening mechanisms to ensure the systematic detection of domestic violence by judges and mediators in family law proceedings and by putting in place adequate safeguards to ensure freely given and informed consent of women victims of violence throughout voluntary family mediation processes; regulate the system of family co-ordination to ensure that it is not mandated in cases with a history of intimate partner violence (Article 48);
  10. identify and address any factors preventing women and girls from reporting their experiences of violence against women to law-enforcement agencies; address legislative and procedural factors that contribute to secondary victimisation of women victims of violence as well as factors leading to attrition in cases of gender-based violence (Articles 49 and 50);
  11. ensure that the competent authorities have access to emergency barring orders meeting the requirements of Article 52 of the Istanbul Convention to ensure the safety of women victims and their children in their own home; enforce sanctions for any breaches of these orders; carry out an analysis of the reasons for the high rates of rejection of requests for protection orders in some parts of the country and increase measures to address breaches of such orders by perpetrators of violence against women (Articles 52 and 53);
- B. Requests the Government of Spain to submit a written report to the Committee of the Parties on the measures taken to improve the implementation of the Convention in the above-mentioned areas by 7 June 2028.
- C. Recommends that the Government of Spain take measures to implement the further conclusions of GREVIO's first thematic evaluation report.
- D. Invites the Government of Spain to continue the dialogue in progress with GREVIO.