

**Committee of the Parties**  
Council of Europe Convention  
on preventing and combating violence  
against women and domestic violence  
(Istanbul Convention)

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**Reply by FINLAND to the reporting form on the implementation of the  
Recommendation of the Committee of the Parties adopted on 30 January 2020**

Document received by the Committee of the Parties  
on 28 February 2023

IC-CP/Inf(2023)4

In accordance with Article 68, paragraph 12, of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the Committee of the Parties adopts, on the basis of the report and conclusions of GREVIO, recommendations addressed to state parties concerning the measures to be taken to implement the conclusions of GREVIO.

The applicable procedure for issuing recommendations was settled by the Committee of the Parties at its 4th meeting and is described in document IC-CP(2018)6. In accordance with this procedure, the recommendations call upon state parties to implement all the proposals and suggestions set out in GREVIO's baseline evaluation report. However, the obligation to report on measures taken is limited to those specifically outlined in section A of the recommendation, namely: a) all the proposals and suggestions formulated by GREVIO throughout the report which require immediate action – these are qualified by the use of the verb “urge”, and b) the proposals and suggestions related to Chapters I and II of the convention which require taking remedial action in the near future and are qualified by the use of the expression “strongly encourage”. According to the agreed procedure, state parties are given a period of three years to implement the recommendations of the Committee of the Parties and report back to the Committee.

To facilitate this reporting, state parties are requested to use this questionnaire to report on the implementation of recommendations issued by the Committee of the Parties. Recommendations not issued in relation to Finland do not need to be reported on. As a result, the Finnish authorities are not required to answer the following questions in the reporting form: questions 20 and 26.

<b>I. Fundamental rights, equality, and non-discrimination (Article 4)</b>		
1	Have your authorities taken measures to ensure that the provisions of the Istanbul Convention are implemented without discrimination on any grounds listed in Article 4, paragraph 3, of the convention, including in terms of the availability of services and the protection by law enforcement agencies?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
1.1	<p>If yes, please specify:</p> <p>In all public activity, the Constitution of Finland (731/1999) and the Non-discrimination Act (1325/2014) must be observed. According to section 6 of the Constitution, everyone is equal before the law. No one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently from other persons on the ground of sex, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or other reason that concerns his or her person. Further provisions on equality and non-discrimination are given in the Non-discrimination Act.</p> <p>Victim Support Finland is the general victim support service required by the Victims' Rights Directive (2012/29/EU). According to the public service obligation, issued by the Ministry of Justice, these services must be available without discrimination and in accordance with the needs of the victim (see also question 14). According to the annual report of Victim Support Finland, 77 % of all clients in the services of Victim Support Finland were women in 2021. Of those who had a support relationship with the Victim Support Finland, 81 % were women in 2021. Approximately half of all female clients in 2021 had been victims of sexual or intimate partner violence, or victims of crimes that were related to an intimate partnership such as stalking or breaches of restraining orders. Victim Support Finland trains all their staff and volunteers in matters relating to gender-based violence. The geographical coverage of the Victim Support Finland services is nationwide.</p> <p>Finnish shelter services have also adopted several measures in order to ensure that no one is discriminated.</p>	

Regarding persons with disabilities, shelters cater for and determine each client's individual situation and needs. Work at the shelters is client-driven and conducted on the clients' terms. Shelter employees have been provided with training on the particular characteristics of violence against persons with disabilities. Aspects taken into account when working with persons with disabilities include:

- when interpretation is needed in order to work with the client, the shelter arranges for it;
- when the client has a personal assistant, the assistant may accompany the client to the shelter, if the client so wishes;
- persons with disabilities may be accompanied at the shelter by their assistance dog or seeing eye dog;
- the shelter may reimburse the client for travel to the shelter (e.g. when the client has exhausted his or her entitlement to taxi services for the disabled).

The accessibility of all the shelters have been analysed and improvements have been made. The following are some of the measures taken in 2021 and 2022 to enhance shelter accessibility for persons with disabilities:

- The ESKE Accessibility Centre of the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities prepared an accessibility audit form for use in shelter services. Training on how to conduct an accessibility audit was provided to the entire shelter network on 19 March 2021 (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, ESKE and the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities).
- The shelters used the form to conduct accessibility audits in spring 2021.
- In 2021, shelters could apply for discretionary government grant to carry out the corrective actions identified as necessary in the accessibility audits. Such corrective actions have been carried out in 2021 and 2022.
- The training on methods of working with children and young people held on 1 September 2021 included a module on ways to support the communication of children and young people in need of special support. Shelter employees were educated on how to use pictures and drawing as aides to support conversation (the training was organised by the Communication and Technology Centre Tikoteekki of the Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities).
- An easy-language page in Finnish on Nollalinja, a 24/7 national helpline, was prepared (<https://nollalinja.fi/selko/>, the Selko symbol for easy language has been granted for the page).
- Finnish sign-language videos on shelter services were prepared and added to the Nollalinja site (<https://nollalinja.fi/viittoma/>).
- A shelter client brochure geared for persons with disabilities was prepared: "Help is available for persons with disabilities who have experienced domestic violence" (<https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe2021052832013>, in English).
- The brochure for healthcare and social services professionals as well as professionals in other fields, "Persons with disabilities as victims of domestic violence" was revised (<https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe20201209100092>, in English).
- A campaign (on radio and social media) on persons with disabilities in shelter services was run in November 2020.

Concerning Roma women, a training session on how shelters may engage and assist Roma victims of intimate partner violence was held for shelter services employees on 1 November 2022. In addition, cooperation with Roma organisations is being pursued. The association Romano Missio, for example, explored Roma women's experiences of shelter services and possible impediments to availing themselves of the services in summer and autumn 2022. In addition, shelters cooperate with Romano Missio in the context of the project Arvokas Elämä [*Valuable Life*] that aims to leverage preventive measures and early intervention in breaking cycles of violence and increasing security and wellbeing in the Roma community. The project is under the administration of Romano Missio and funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health

Organisations STEA). A brochure has also been prepared; Roma women in shelters for victims of domestic violence (<https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe201602247353>).

People with substance abuse issues have been identified as a group in need of special service in shelters. A round table discussion on the theme among actors in the field of substance abuse treatment was held on 15 December 2021. It is currently considered whether a certain shelter might specialise in clients with substance abuse issues or whether remote shelters might be set up for such clients. Remote shelters would mean setting up a shelter with 2–3 places in connection with a substance abuse treatment unit that would be responsible for the clients' safety, the substance abuse work needed by the clients and their everyday living, while work on intimate partner violence would be provided to the treatment unit from the nearest in-person shelter.

Training was held on 4 May 2021 for the shelter network on the topic of violence against the elderly and special issues concerning the elderly at shelters (provided by the association Suvanto and experts of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare).

The ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210, 'Istanbul Convention') and the Act on State Compensation to Providers of Shelter Services (1354/2014) have resulted in systematic enhancement of the network of shelters and the coverage of the service, with considerable capacity increases achieved in recent years. The funding for shelter services and hence the number of shelter places has been increased annually in order for Finland to meet its national and international obligations in helping adults and children who are victims of intimate partner violence. The network of shelters needs to be further strengthened in areas where such services are entirely lacking and in areas where the service is inadequately available in relation to need and population. There are still areas in Finland where the geographic distance to the nearest shelter is too long. At present, such blind areas can be found in Lapland in particular. According to a study conducted by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare in 2020, the actual need for family places at shelters in Finland falls between 262 and 367 places instead of the currently available 228, meaning that annual funding of EUR 29.6–36.7 million should be allocated to shelter services (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare THL 2020: Arvio turvakotien perhepaikkojen riittävästä määrästä ja kustannuksista [*Estimate of sufficient number and costs of family places at shelters*] <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-604-6>).

The Nollalinja helpline provides services in nine languages (Finnish, Swedish, English, Dari, Arabic, Farsi, Sorani, Somali and Russian). Information is also available in easy Finnish. The services was augmented by Thai and Spanish interpretation in 2022. The helpline is also looking into the possibility of providing Sámi-language interpretation.

In the administrative sector of the Ministry of the Interior, all performance contracts included a performance target related to equality, such as the target for the National Police Board: "The police shall ensure and promote equality and equal treatment of staff and clients in all situations, with due respect for fundamental and human rights." Also, an online course on prevention of inappropriate behaviour and harassment was carried out in the course of 2020, which is mandatory for all administrative staff. The course taught how to identify inappropriate behaviour and harassment, as well as the discriminatory structures behind them, and how to address them. Equality and equality issues are also part of the Ministry of the Interior's general approach. A training course on discrimination was organized and was open to all administrative staff in spring 2021.

In the Finnish Defence Forces, learning material on aggression management for conscripts, which also includes the prevention of intimate partner violence, was updated in 2022. A new instruction has been published (20 April 2022) for all personnel on the prevention and handling of discrimination

	and inappropriate behavior. The guidelines do not deal with violence against women separately, but talk about discrimination on a more general level and emphasize proper behavior.	
1.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:	
2	Have your authorities taken measures contributing to prevent and combat violence against women who are or might be exposed to intersectional discrimination?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
2.1	<p>If yes, please specify:</p> <p>As stated above, in all public activity, the Constitution of Finland and the Non-discrimination Act must be observed. The Non-discrimination Act also applies to intersectional discrimination when one of the grounds for discrimination is gender and it is thus monitored by the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman. Otherwise gender-based discrimination is monitored by the Ombudsman for Equality.</p> <p>Fundamental and human rights indicators have been developed as part of the third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights. The indicators include e.g. experiences of violence at population level disaggregated by population group and violence by intimate partner. The aim of the monitoring is to provide systematic data on the realisation of rights among different population groups to support effective and knowledge-based policy-making.</p> <p>The National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal is an impartial and independent judicial body that supervises compliance with the Non-discrimination Act and the Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986, Equality Act) both in private activities and in public administration and commercial activities.</p> <p>One of the three main (cross-cutting) objectives of the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention (see reply to question 4; <a href="http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-9704-2">http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-9704-2</a>) is to strengthen the gender perspective and intersectionality in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. According to the Action Plan, strengthening the gender perspective and intersectionality in the context of implementing the Istanbul Convention is linked to the key principles of the Convention. The Action Plan refers to the findings of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter 'GREVIO') on intersectionality, prevention of intersectional discrimination and the importance of taking minorities and women in vulnerable situations into account in national measures to combat violence.</p> <p><u>The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020–2023</u> relies on intersectionality. Intersectionality is also a cross-cutting principle of the Government Report on Gender Equality Policy published in 2022.</p> <p>In order to enable timely intervention and strengthen the pupil's legal position, the Basic Education Act (628/1998) and Basic Education Decree (852/1998), Act on Vocational Education and Training (531/2017), Act on General Upper Secondary Education (714/2018) and the Act on Preparatory Education Leading to an Upper Secondary Qualification (1215/2020) have been amended. The aim is to prevent bullying, harassment and violence in schools and educational institutions and to secure a safe learning environment for all. These legislative amendments took effect in August 2022. Amendments to the Equality and Non-discrimination Acts were accepted by the Parliament in the fall 2022 and the laws will take effect in June 2023. The non-discrimination planning and promotion of equality under the Non-discrimination Act will be extended to early childhood education and care</p>	

	<p>(ECEC) providers and service providers and the obligation to plan for gender equality will extend to early childhood education and care. In addition, the provisions on the prevention of discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression will be extended to include early childhood education and care.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education and Culture has granted the National Union of Students in Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (SAMOK) a special grant for the project “Equality to higher education institutions 2021-2022” to implement the measures assigned to higher education institutions in the Action plan for the prevention of bullying, violence and harassment. The Ministry of Education and Culture published an accessibility plan for higher education and higher education institutions in 2021, including, e.g. objectives and policies for promoting accessibility specifically for under-represented population groups and minority groups.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education and Culture instructed also higher education institutions to draw up their own accessibility plans during 2022. In the future, higher education institutions will report on the attainment of the objectives of their accessibility plans, and be monitored as part of the guidance process between higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education and Culture. The National Teacher Education Forum (TEF) financed by the Ministry of Education and Culture has revised in 2022 the Teacher Education Development Programme for 2022 - 2026. The revised programme takes into account challenges relating, e.g. to equity and equality, to support and guidance for learners and the accessibility of education.</p> <p>Within the police, a training package for all police staff in the fight against domestic violence and violence against women has been carried out by the Police University for 2021-2022, including both e-learning and face-to-face education. However, in the Finnish Defence Forces, characteristics related to the person such as ethnicity, age or sexual orientation are not separately considered in the guidelines on discrimination.</p> <p>See also replies to questions 1 and 9.</p>			
2.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:			
3	In case your authorities have taken further measures contributing to the implementation of recommendations in relation to Article 4, which were not covered by the questions above, please report on these measures [word limit: 1000 words]:			
<b>II. Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies implemented under the responsibility of an adequately mandated and resourced co-ordinating body (Articles 7 and 10)</b>				
4	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%; padding: 5px;">           Have your authorities developed a long-term plan/strategy to prevent and combat violence against women?             The task of drawing up action plans for the Istanbul Convention has been assigned by Government Decree on the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (1008/2016) to the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter the ‘NAPE Committee’) attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Operating since the beginning of 2017, the NAPE Committee was set up to assume the role of the coordinating body for national action required under Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention. The         </td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;">           Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> </td> <td style="width: 15%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;">           No <input type="checkbox"/>             N/A (a plan/strategy was already developed at the time of         </td> </tr> </table>	Have your authorities developed a long-term plan/strategy to prevent and combat violence against women?  The task of drawing up action plans for the Istanbul Convention has been assigned by Government Decree on the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (1008/2016) to the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter the ‘NAPE Committee’) attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Operating since the beginning of 2017, the NAPE Committee was set up to assume the role of the coordinating body for national action required under Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention. The	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>  N/A (a plan/strategy was already developed at the time of
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	<p>first Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention drawn up by the NAPE Committee was published in 2017 (<a href="http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-3972-1">http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-3972-1</a>). It covered the period from 2018 to 2021 and included 48 measures, which have mostly been implemented. A separate evaluation report has been drawn up on the plan (<a href="http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-8663-3">http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-8663-3</a>). The second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2022-2025 was published in March 2022 (<a href="http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-9704-2">http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-9704-2</a>). The plan contains long-term objectives which the plan aims to advance and measures geared towards initiating or implementing the necessary change. The objectives are mainly based on the observations and recommendations set out in GREVIO's (Baseline) Evaluation Report on legislative and other measures giving effect to the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in Finland (GREVIO/Inf(2019)9). The progress of the measures to be implemented over the next four years will be monitored annually.</p> <p>The Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women for 2020-2023 was published in October 2020 (<a href="http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-835-6">http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-835-6</a>). The cross-cutting theme of the Action Plan is the prevention of violence. Emphasis is placed on the work to be carried out with perpetrators of violence and on the competence development of authorities responsible for criminal investigation, criminal procedure and criminal sanctions. The plan contains altogether 32 measures. The implementation period of the Action Plan extends from autumn 2020 until spring 2023.</p>		<p>GREVIO's baseline evaluation)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
4.1	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
5	<p>Which forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention are addressed by the plan/strategy? Please offer a brief description specifically indicating the forms of violence not previously addressed in plans or strategies at national level.</p> <p>In the new (second) Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention, most of the measures can be considered to focus on domestic violence. However, the plan does take into account the existing work with regard to expanding the network of SERI Support Centres for victims of sexual violence and rape and continuing the work on preventing honour-related violence and female genital mutilation (FGM). During the preparation of the second Action Plan, NAPE Committee considered whether certain forms of violence, which have not received much attention in previous governmental plans or programmes, should be highlighted in the next plan. In the process, NAPE Committee took note of the following developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A comprehensive reform of the Criminal Code with regard to sexual offences was passed by the Finnish Parliament in June 2022 and the amendments entered into force in the beginning of 2023. As required by the Finnish Parliament, measures to raise awareness on the new legislation as well as training of the relevant authorities have been completed.</li> <li>- A focal point for preventing FGM and honour-related violence has been established within the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare.</li> <li>- A number of legal reviews are being undertaken in order to respond to GREVIO's recommendations for Finland. To this end, working groups have been established to assess the existing legislation/criminal code with regard to annulling/dissolving forced marriage and introducing a specific criminal offence on FGM. (The working group on specific criminal offences on FGM published its report in February 2023, where it did not propose any amendments to the provisions of the Criminal Code.) A legal study is also being carried out with regard to assessing the legislation on psychological violence, including stalking and coercive control.</li> </ul>		

	<p>Recognising the partial overlap of the implementation periods between the two governmental programmes (Action Plan For Combating Violence against Women coordinated by the Ministry of Justice and the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention coordinated by the NAPE Committee) the NAPE Committee concluded that the second Action Plan will not highlight specific forms of violence against women. Instead, the Action Plan has three main cross-cutting objectives that aim at i) strengthening the gender perspective and intersectionality in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, ii) reinforcing intersectoral and multiprofessional cooperation and iii) improving both the identification of violence against women and domestic violence and intervention in them.</p> <p>The Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women covers honour-related violence and digital violence. These forms of violence have not been covered in previous action plans or strategies at national level.</p>		
6	Was specific attention given to place the rights of women victims at the centre of all measures planned?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.1	<p>If yes, please specify how:</p> <p>The majority of the 36 measures of the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention focus on prevention (12) and support services for victims and witnesses of this violence (9). One of the three cross-cutting objectives of the new Action Plan is to strengthen the identification of and intervention in cases of violence against women.</p> <p>The Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women aims at preventing violence against women with a wide-ranging perspective. Most of the measures in the action plan are female specific in nature and give attention to the rights of women victims. However, as some of the measures aim at changing social norms and the prevailing culture, they are not only targeted at women.</p>		
6.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
7	Do the plan/strategy and the measures contained therein involve all relevant actors, such as government agencies, the national, regional and local parliaments and authorities, national human rights institutions and civil society organisations?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.1	<p>Please specify the actors involved:</p> <p>The measures included in the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention fall under the responsibility of the following ministries and government agencies within: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In addition to the ministries, the Association of Finnish Regional and Local Authorities and non-governmental organisations are involved in implementing the measures.</p> <p>The Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women was prepared in a cross-administrative working group under the Ministry of Justice. The working group had representatives from the following organisations: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Office of the Prosecutor General, the National Police Board, the</p>		



	Finnish National Agency for Education, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, and the National Council of Women. The measures of the action plan were planned in four workshops, which were organized in early 2020. In total, nearly 70 experts from approximately 40 NGOs, research institutes and authorities participated in the workshops.		
7.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
8	Have the authorities assigned the role of co-ordinating body to one or more fully institutionalised entities?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>  N/A (a co-ordinating body was already established at the time of GREVIO's baseline evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/>
8.1	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
9	<p>Please specify the mandate, powers, and competences, as well as the composition, of the co-ordinating body/bodies:</p> <p>The NAPE Committee was appointed for its second term for the period of 21 January 2021 – 20 January 2025 in accordance with the Government Decree establishing the NAPE Committee. The Committee is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- coordinating, monitoring and assessing the effects of the measures required for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, and prepares a plan for the implementation of the Convention, which is approved by the Government;</li> <li>- coordinating the collection of information referred to in Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention, and examining its results and informing about them;</li> <li>- keeping in touch with entities operating in other countries, established pursuant to Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention;</li> <li>- performing other tasks assigned to it by the Government.</li> </ul> <p>The NAPE Committee consists of a chairperson (representative of Ministry for Foreign Affairs), Deputy Chairperson (representative of Ministry of Social Affairs and Health Members) and members representing Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, National Police Board, Finnish National Agency for Education, National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, Statistics Finland, Office of the Prosecutor General, Government's Anti-trafficking Co-ordinator, and NAPE sub-group of non-governmental organisations (JÄTY). The NAPE Committee has also invited representatives of the following entities to perform the role of</p>		

	<p>permanent advisers to the Committee: Human Rights Centre, Office of the Ombudsman for Equality, Office of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and Gender Equality Unit of Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.</p> <p>Since the beginning of 2022, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman has had the task of acting as the rapporteur on violence against women. In accordance with the amended to the Act on the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman (988/2021), the Ombudsman monitors violence against women and domestic violence, the functioning of national legislation and the implementation of international obligations. The Ombudsman also monitors and assesses measures and policies to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence in accordance with the Istanbul Convention. The rapporteur can observe all forms of violence against women and domestic violence. The rapporteur can also observe intersecting issues, such as violence against women belonging to minorities or violence against women with disabilities. The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman can complete or commission studies on violence against women and domestic violence, submit initiatives, issue statements and offer consultation. The Ombudsman is entitled to receive confidential information for the purpose of completing its tasks.</p>		
9.1	<p>In particular, please indicate whether the co-ordinating body/bodies is/are responsible for:</p>		
	<p>- Co-ordination of policies and measures to prevent and combat violence against women</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The co-ordination body responsible is:  The Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>- Implementation of policies and measures to prevent and combat violence against women</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> The co-ordination body responsible is:</p>	<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
	<p>- Monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent and combat violence against women</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The co-ordination body responsible is:</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

		The Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman (rapporteur for violence against women)	
	- Co-ordination of the collection of data, analysis and dissemination of its results	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The co-ordination body responsible is:  The Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence is responsible, according to the Government Decree, for the coordination of the collection of the data referred to in Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention,	No <input type="checkbox"/>

		examination of the results and providing information on them.	
10	<p>Please specify the human and financial resources allocated to the co-ordinating body/bodies:</p> <p>Since 2021, the funding for the NAPE Committee is included in the four-year budget (forming part of the central government spending limits) of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (150,000 euros per year). The Parliament has also granted additional resources for the NAPE Committee and the implementation of the Istanbul Convention (EUR 300,000 for 2021-2022 and EUR 300,000 for 2023-2024).</p> <p>Since 2020, the NAPE Committee has had a secretary general.</p>		
11	<p>In case your authorities have taken further measures contributing to the implementation of recommendations in relation to Articles 7 and 10, which were not covered by the questions above, please report on these measures [word limit: 1000 words]:</p> <p>In 2021, the police administration carried out the MARAK -project, which prepared tools to improve guidance to the services of victims of domestic violence, as well as a functional police handbook on cases of domestic violence and violence against women.</p>		
<b>III. Financial resources (Article 8)</b>			
12	Have your authorities allocated specific funds at the		
	- National	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- and/or regional	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- and/or local	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	levels of government for activities to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention?		
12.1	<p>If yes, what is the annual amount of these funds? If possible, please specify the percentage of the total national state budget that the amount represents.</p> <p>Grants to entities that provide support services to victims of crime is budgeted for EUR 5,425,000. The item covers discretionary government grants to entities that provide support services to victims of crime. The most significant crime victim support service funded out of the item is Victim Support Finland, the activities of which are subject to a public service obligation in order to ensure general victim support services under the Victims' Rights Directive (2012/29/EU). Compensation of approximately EUR 4.7 million per year is paid for activities under the obligation. The item also funds Nollalinja, the 24/7 helpline for victims of intimate partner violence and violence against women (a free-of-charge helpline that is one of the low-threshold services required of member states to the Istanbul Convention) for EUR 725,000 per year. In 2023, the appropriation is EUR 70,000 lower than in the current year. In the context of considering the 2022 Budget, Parliament added an equivalent amount to Nollalinja that is not included in the</p>		

	<p>2023 Budget. Parliament added to the grants item in the 2021 Budget a one-off allocation of EUR 300,000 to Victim Support Finland and to other organisations providing support services to victims of crime to combat violence against women.</p> <p>Discretionary government grants relating to the implementation of the Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women and combating intimate partner violence is EUR 400,000 per year. The appropriation has been included in the Budget since 2020. In recent years, part of the appropriation has been transferred to the Ministry of Justice's operating expenses to allow the implementation of the Action Plan also by other means than through grants.</p> <p>An annual additional appropriation of EUR 200,000 was allocated to the duties of the National Rapporteur on violence against women as of 2022. With regard to the reform of legislation covering sexual offences, the Ministry of Justice is allocated EUR 1.87 million in 2023 and EUR 6.03 million as from 2024, while restraining order enhancement is allocated EUR 468,000 in 2023 and EUR 1.494 million as from 2024.</p> <p>The new legislation related to speeding up the investigation of crimes against children will enter into force on 1 October 2023. The proposal for the amendment was submitted to the Parliament as a budget act. The funding allocated for this is EUR 565,000 for the operating expenses of the police, EUR 326,000 for the operating expenses of the courts and EUR 238,000 for the operating expenses of the prosecutor as from 2023. It should be noted that this does not target women (or girls) expressly.</p> <p>EUR 100,000 has been assigned in year 2021 to the police to develop the MARAK risk assessment and to improve the fight against violence against women.</p> <p>The Ministry of Interior's Police Department allocated in 2021 funding of EUR 20,000 to the Police University College for a review of the investigation of intimate partner killings. In addition, each year, the Budget allocates to the police funding that covers the general measures of the police to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence that fall within the scope of the Istanbul Convention. In other words, the basic funding for the police provides the basic activities. No resourcing to the measures of the police to prevent and combat within the scope of the Convention can be separated out from this funding. Certain other measures under the Government Programme have enhanced action to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence that falls within the scope of the Istanbul Convention. However, they do not directly constitute funding to implement the Istanbul Convention. These measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reform of legislation covering sexual offences, EUR 854,000 per year as from 2023.</li> <li>- Enhancement of restraining orders, EUR 285,000 in 2023 and EUR 1.117 million as from 2024.</li> <li>- Establishment of a human trafficking unit within the police, approx. EUR 1.5 million in 2021.</li> </ul> <p>The funds are allocated to the police at a national level, but not at a regional or local level.</p> <p>The Finnish National Agency for Education grants discretionary subsidies for staff training in education and early childhood education by approximately EUR 15 million per year. In 2020–2023, the themes of staff training include promoting equality and non-discrimination, promoting inclusion, well-being and security in learning communities (including honour-based violence), and strengthening leadership skills and community development. For example, in 2021 a total of approximately EUR 1.8 million has been granted for staff training to promote equality and nondiscrimination, including training related to increasing equality in digitalisation, and about EUR 2.4 million in 2022.</p>
12.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:

13	Have these funds increased since the publication of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, by what amount:  For example, with regard to the implementation of the Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women there has been an increase of 400,000 euros. There has also been a new budget allocation of 200,000 euros for the Rapporteur on violence against women.  See also reply to question 12.1.	No <input type="checkbox"/>
14	Have your authorities taken measures to foster long-term and sustainable financial support for non-governmental organisations working to support victims and prevent violence?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
14.1	If yes, please specify:		

	<p>In Finland, the Act on the Victim Surcharge (669/2015) was enacted to build up the amount of state funding given to victim support services, mainly provided by the NGOs. Furthermore, general victim support services under the Victims' Rights Directive (2012/29/EU, Articles 8 (1) and 9 (1, 2)) have been defined as Services of General Economic Interest (SGEI) in Finland. To ensure that victims have access to the services, the Ministry of Justice has issued a public service obligation to Victim Support Finland for providing these services in 2018-2027. This means that the funding of these services, defined in the act of entrustment, will be secured from the state budget for a ten-year period. The act of entrustment includes, <i>inter alia</i>, the content and duration of the public service obligation, and a description of the compensation mechanism and the parameters for calculating, controlling and reviewing the compensation. It also includes a reference to the applicable EU law, such as Commission Decision of 20 December 2011 on the application of Article 106(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to state aid in the form of public service compensation granted to certain undertakings entrusted with the operation of services of general economic interest.</p> <p>The Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA) is a government grant authority operating in connection with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. STEA is responsible for processing the applications for grants from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to social welfare and health organisations, for preparing the draft grant proposals, and for disbursing the grants. STEA also monitors the use of the grants and evaluates the outcomes of the activities for which grants have been awarded. Grants may be awarded for organisation-driven promotion of health and welfare. The grants may not be used to carry out activities for which the public sector is responsible. The grant scheme is application-based and the funding authority has no role in directing the substance of the activities for which grants are sought, any more than connections between actors. Grants may be awarded, within the confines of the annual distributable amount of grants, on the basis of verified need for activities meeting the criteria of the call for grant applications and the reporting criteria. STEA awards discretionary government grants to development projects (3-year grants, as a rule) as well as general and targeted grants for established activities. For the latter, the application for the grant is made for one year at a time. However, STEA makes the funding more predictable with its "indicative grant plan" prepared for the following two years. The award of further grants is influenced by the need for and effectiveness of the activities. In 2022, funding for activities to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence and to provide assistance and support to victims totalled approximately EUR 8.9 million. Of this sum, EUR 0.7 million was allocated to a total of six development projects that may include the perspective of harmonising approaches and putting chains of assistance on an established footing. The sum of EUR 8.1 million was allocated to 35 distinct projects in the form of more permanent operating grants. The grants cover both preventive themes and victim assistance and support, and also to some extent work with perpetrators of violence. One grant project provides assistance specifically to victims of 'honour-based violence' to both help them survive and cope with their situation and, when necessary, to accomplish an orderly exit from the abusive community. Some of the funded activities are local, others nationwide. It is not possible to precisely separate the funding allocated to victims and perpetrators of violence, as there is overlap in respect of these in the funded activities. The STEA grants for the prevention of violence against women as well as victim assistance and support have come to be awarded to a fairly established set of actors, even though new actors could also be funded, were they to submit applications that meet the criteria. This may be taken to serve sustained development and activities to assist the target group and to prevent the phenomenon.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education and Culture grants statutory state aid annually to certain national women's organisations for promoting gender equality and social participation (Act on State Subsidies for Certain Women's Organisations 663/2007): The National Council of Women of Finland, The Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS and MONIKA – Multicultural Women's Association Finland. In 2020 –2022, the amount of subsidies granted has been higher than ever before, totaling EUR 918,000 per year.</p>
14.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:

15	<p>In case your authorities have taken further measures contributing to the implementation of recommendations in relation to Article 8, which were not covered by the questions above, please report on these measures [word limit: 1000 words]:</p> <p>The organisations that receive STEA grants cooperate with the Criminal Sanctions Agency and various authorities in order to create local support chains for situations of intimate partner violence. The health and social services reform has brought changes in these cooperation structures with regard to municipal authorities. STEA-funded organisations take part in discussions on future modes of cooperation mainly at the local level, yet there is also nationwide discussion in the context of e.g. the development of local Family Centres. Service paths for various groups, victims of violence included, are being created in the new wellbeing services counties now responsible for organising health and social services. These service paths will also include services provided by non-governmental organisations.</p>		
<b>IV. Non-governmental organisations and civil society (Article 9)</b>			
16	<p>Have your authorities taken measures contributing to further recognise, encourage and support the work of relevant non-governmental organisations and of civil society active in combating all forms of violence against women covered by the Istanbul Convention, including in terms of funding and co-operation?</p>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
16.1	<p>If yes, please specify:</p> <p>The Ministry of Justice has granted government grants to five rehabilitation programmes aimed at sexual and domestic violence crime offenders. The programmes are run by non-governmental organisations (The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters, Setlementti Tampere, Sexpo, Silta-Valmennus, Kalliola Setlementti) during 2019-2023. The Ministry of Justice has granted government grants from the appropriation allocated for the implementation of the Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women. Government grants have been granted to the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To Victim Support Finland for organizing specific training to police officers, prosecutors, judges and legal counsels on the different forms of violence against women and the related phenomena.</li> <li>- To the National Council of Women for a project that encourages Finnish gaming studios to diversify gender roles and worldview in games.</li> <li>- To the Association of Iraqi Women (INY ry) and MONIKA – Multicultural Women’s Association for community work and/or individual work to combat violence against women and honour-related violence among immigrants.</li> <li>- To Tampere University for developing the competence of teachers and students in teacher education when it comes to identifying and addressing violence.</li> <li>- To Suomen Opiskelija-Allianssi – OSKU ry (Finnish National Union for Students) for increasing awareness of safe dating, emotional skills and safety skills among students in vocational education institutions.</li> <li>- To Save the Children for a social media campaign targeting young people about digital violence.</li> </ul> <p>The National Police Board has put to use the USEL network (network associated with victims, mediation, guardianship and restraining affairs) of representatives of the police services. Meetings of this network have also been attended by civil and criminal mediation practitioners (SOVITTELU), the Victim Support Finland and the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters. The National Police Board has expanded the network during its operation, and all police departments are currently involved in its activities.</p>		



	<p>The NAPE Committee has set up a permanent sub-group consisting of mainly non-governmental organisations (JÄTY) for the period of 23.9.2020 – 31.12.2024. The sub-group is also represented in the NAPE Committee (see question 9).</p> <p>STEA, on the other hand, does not engage in substantive work with NGOs and does not promote the activities of any given groups of NGOs. STEA's only role is to provide funding as a government grant authority. STEA has awarded EUR 1.7 million to support the activities in nine municipalities of Tyttöjen Talo establishments for girls and young women who experience bullying, sexual violence or growing-up challenges. The funding is also used for associated activities in these municipalities. In Espoo STEA grants fund activities associated with Tyttöjen Talo, whereas the Tyttöjen Talo activities themselves are funded by the City of Espoo. Tyttöjen talo establishments provide a safe environment for girls and young women as well as non-binary individuals who are in need of particular support. They provide sexual counselling and gender-sensitive support for growth as well as support for girls who are victims of violence or sexual abuse.</p> <p>The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has funded the Family Federation of Finland's project to train different actors in the field of integration (home educators, interpreters, representatives of immigrants' own organisations) in sexual health issues, e.g. harmful traditions. In addition to that, the ministry has funded 12 other small organisations' projects with the theme of promoting family integration. One of their aim is to dispel gender roles. The projects include a variety of female and male-specific activities. The projects are quite small and the funding totals around EUR 700,000. Otherwise, the approach of the work of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is mainly to support preventive work, e.g. supporting the inclusion and employment of immigrant women.</p> <p>The Finnish Defence Forces have co-operated to prevent violence against women, e.g. with the Family Federation of Finland and the Generation Equality campaign.</p>		
16.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
<b>V. Data collection and research (Article 11)</b>			
17	In implementation of the recommendation addressed to your authorities, have new sectors of the administration started the collection of data in accordance with the requirements of Article 11, paragraph 1?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
17.1	<p>If yes, please specify which sectors:</p> <p>In 2021, the Police College implemented a study and planning project to build a monitoring and risk management function to prevent domestic violence. The planning of the research activity will continue in cooperation between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice.</p>		
17.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
18	In implementation of the recommendation addressed to your authorities, have sectors of the administration improved their data collection?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

18.1	<p>If yes, please specify which sectors and how, in particular whether new data categories were added:</p> <p>In the course of 2021, police surveillance and alerting activities have introduced a completely new performance category for a range of service monitoring. The National Police Board receives information from, inter alia, the Victim Support Finland on the number of customer referrals carried out by the police. A similar approach has also been provisionally agreed with the Federation of Mother and child homes and Shelters (including police referrals to community services). Police shelter-guidance is monitored through performance guidance. The development of data collection is closely linked to progress in the development of the new operational guidance system of the police, the Vitja system. The introduction of the system has been delayed.</p> <p>The Prosecutor's new information system (AIPA) will be put into operation during 2023. It will be possible to sort out cases of domestic violence from the new information system.</p>															
18.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:															
19	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="275 624 1659 687">Does statistical data collection by law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary enable cases of violence against women to be tracked in order to indicate:</td> <td data-bbox="1659 624 1868 687"></td> <td data-bbox="1868 624 2038 687"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="275 687 1659 727">- Conviction rates</td> <td data-bbox="1659 687 1868 727">Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td data-bbox="1868 687 2038 727">No <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="275 727 1659 767">- Types of sentences</td> <td data-bbox="1659 727 1868 767">Yes <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td data-bbox="1868 727 2038 767">No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="275 767 1659 807">- Attrition rates</td> <td data-bbox="1659 767 1868 807">Yes <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td data-bbox="1868 767 2038 807">No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="275 807 1659 871">- Time-barred proceedings</td> <td data-bbox="1659 807 1868 871">Yes <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td data-bbox="1868 807 2038 871">No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Does statistical data collection by law-enforcement agencies and the judiciary enable cases of violence against women to be tracked in order to indicate:			- Conviction rates	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	- Types of sentences	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	- Attrition rates	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	- Time-barred proceedings	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
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20	<del>As regards population-based surveys, please indicate any survey conducted since the publication of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report, while specifying the forms of violence covered:</del>															
21	<p>In case your authorities have taken further measures contributing to the implementation of recommendations in relation to Article 11, which were not covered by the questions above, please report on these measures [word limit: 1000 words]:</p> <p>Statistics Finland conducted the EU-wide Gender-based Violence Survey (EU-GBV) in Finland in Fall 2021 – Winter 2022 (<a href="https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/wdn-20211004-1">https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/wdn-20211004-1</a>). The data are analysed and published in the course of 2023. The total sample size was 25,000, including 15,000 women aged 18 to 74, 5,000 women aged 16 to 17 and 5,000 men aged 18 to 74. The sampling and target population both follow the European Union Gender-based violence survey guidelines and requirements. In order to meet the needs of national policy making and stakeholders, two additional samples, one for women aged 16-17 as well as adult men aged 18-74 were included. In addition to the Eurostat and Statistics Finland funding, the Finnish data collection was also funded by the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and the Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p>The questionnaire included all the themes of EU guidelines (incl. the prevalence of intimate-partner violence, non-partner violence, violence in childhood, impacts of violence etc.).</p>															

	<p>Furthermore, Statistics Finland included national questions concerning online hate speech, sense of safety in everyday situations, honour-related violence, attitudes on female and male genital mutilation, the use of shelters as well as social and health services, and effects of the Covid-19 pandemic to safety at home.</p> <p>Statistics Finland's purpose is to produce victims data from prosecutions, sentences and punishments. Statistics Finland expects to receive the information from the Ministry of Justice's information system AIPA.</p>		
<b>VI. Custody, visitation rights and safety (Article 31)</b>			
22	Have your authorities taken measures contributing to ensure that incidents of violence covered by the scope of the Istanbul Convention are taken into account in the determination of custody and visitation rights of children, notably by judicial authorities?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
22.1	<p>If yes, please specify how this has been done (by legislative amendments or other means)</p> <p>The Act on Child Custody and Rights of Access (361/1983) was revised by Act 190/2019, which entered into force on 1 December 2019. In this connection specific provisions were added to the Act according to which in matters concerning child custody and rights of access special attention shall be paid to the protection of the child from all forms of violence (Sections 1 and 10). The judges and other judicial authorities who decide on child custody and rights of access cases have received a wide range of training in which violence covered by the Istanbul Convention has been examined from many perspectives.</p> <p>In 2022, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare published a guide on carrying out a report from social welfare board to the court that is required in cases concerning child custody and right of access. The guide includes special part about violence and takes Istanbul Convention into account. The guide provides comprehensive guidance on how to take violence into account as part of the investigation and report. Guide is targeted to professionals in social services, but also the judicial authorities and parents can use the guide. It is publically available online in Finnish: <a href="https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-733-3">https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-733-3</a>.</p>		
22.2	<p>If yes, please specify how the above obligation is implemented in practice, including by providing data indicating to what extent judicial authorities consider all issues related to violence against women in their decisions on custody and visitation rights:</p> <p>As mentioned above, judicial authorities have received training on identification of violence and considering it in the decisions. Obtaining statistics on the extent to which all violence has been taken into account in the decisions would be challenging, as a thorough analysis of all cases and the evidence presented in connection with them would be required to investigate the matter.</p> <p>If the parents are unable to reach an agreement concerning their child's living arrangements, guardianship, visitation rights and child maintenance support, they can ask the District Court to give a ruling on the matter. The court will take into consideration the child's best interest and his or her own wishes. The court will also ask the social services in the municipality to give a report on the situation. Professionals in social services use the national guide in their work.</p>		

22.3	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
23	Have your authorities taken measures contributing to ensure that visitation rights do not jeopardise the rights and safety of the victim or children?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
23.1	<p>If yes, please specify:</p> <p>When parents are able to agree their child's living arrangements, guardianship, visitation rights and child maintenance support, local social services (Child Welfare Officer) may confirm the agreement. The social services check that the agreement takes into consideration the child's best interest and his or her own wishes and only those agreements that meet these criteria are confirmed. An agreement confirmed by social services is as official as a court decision.</p> <p>In the previously mentioned revision of the Act on Child Custody and Rights of Access provisions on supported and supervised meetings and supervised exchanges were added to the Act. Provisions on the arrangement of supported and supervised meetings and supervised exchanges are laid down in the Social Welfare Act (1301/2014). Meetings of a child and the parent living separately or the exchange of the child between parents can, for a justifiable reason, be ordered or agreed to be supervised or supported. The operations are meant to ensure the safety of the child during visits and to strengthen the child's right to visit the parent who lives separately. In supervised changes the overseer makes sure the child transfers from one parent to the other. In supported visits the overseer is available during the visit. In supervised visits the overseer can see and hear the child and the parent at all times during the visit. The implementation of the supervised or supported visits requires a court decision or a visiting agreement verified by a Child Welfare Officer.</p> <p>According to the <i>travaux préparatoires</i> the need for support or supervision must be assessed on a case-by-case basis on the basis of the presented evidence. If the safety of the child is at risk, the right of access cannot be ordered at all. A matter concerning right of access shall, first and foremost, be decided in accordance with the best interests of the child.</p> <p>Other relevant measures include the national guide mentioned in question 22.</p>		
23.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
24	In case your authorities have taken further measures contributing to the implementation of recommendations in relation to Article 31, which were not covered by the questions above, please report on these measures [word limit: 1000 words]:		
<b>VII. Immediate response, prevention, and protection (Article 50)</b>			
25	Have your authorities taken measures contributing to improve the prompt and appropriate response of law enforcement agencies, in particular by:		

	- Enhancing training of law enforcement officials on the gendered nature of violence against women and its consequences	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Ensuring a sufficient number of female police officers	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Setting up premises designed to establish a relationship of trust between the victim and the law enforcement personnel	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Ensuring the efficient collection of evidence so that the reliance on the victim's testimony is lessened	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
25.1	<p>If yes, please specify:</p> <p>The Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women contains several measures on the competence development of authorities responsible for criminal investigation, criminal procedure and criminal sanctions. The most comprehensive of these measures is the specific training that is provided to police officers, prosecutors, judges and legal counsels on the different forms of violence against women and the related phenomena. Issues to be covered in the training include honour-related violence, digital violence, questions related to sensitive encounters with victims, dynamics of intimate partner violence, gendered perspective on violence, and referral of victims and perpetrators to services.</p> <p>A training package for all police staff in the fight against domestic violence and violence against women has been carried out by the Police University for 2021-2022, including both e-learning and face-to-face education. All performance contracts in the management sector of the Ministry of the Interior include performance objectives related to equality. The Police Board's performance agreement for 2022-2026 will monitor percentage of women in police officers at different levels and percentage of total staff. The National Police Board receives information from, <i>inter alia</i>, the Victim Support Finland on the number of customer referrals carried out by the police.</p>		
25.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
26	<del>Have your authorities taken measures contributing to enable the identification and careful analysis of any failure of protection?</del>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
26.1	<del>If yes, please specify what kind of measures, and if further preventive measures were adopted to remedy this situation:-</del>		
26.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:-		
27	In case your authorities have taken further measures contributing to the implementation of recommendations in relation to Article 50, which were not covered by the questions above, please report on these measures [word limit: 1000 words]:		
<b>VIII. Emergency barring, restraining or protection orders (Articles 52 and 53)</b>			
28	As regards emergency barring orders, have your authorities taken measures contributing to ensure that the competent authorities are granted the power to order, in situations of immediate danger, a perpetrator of domestic	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

	violence to vacate the residence of the victim or person at risk, and to prohibit the perpetrator from entering the residence of or contacting the victim or person at risk.		
28.1	<p>If yes, please indicate which authorities have the power to issue emergency barring orders:</p> <p>Emergency barring orders can be issued by a civil servant with power to arrest (senior police officers and prosecutors) (Act on Restraining Orders 898/1998, Section 11 (2)). The police have a wide-ranging power to impose the prohibitions required by the article.</p>		
28.2	<p>If yes, please indicate the length of time for which emergency barring orders may remain in force:</p> <p>Pursuant to Section 12 of the Act on Restraining Orders the officer entitled to arrest shall, without delay and no later than three days after the imposition of a temporary restraining order, submit his decision to the competent District Court. Pursuant to Section 12a of the Act on Restraining Orders the District Court must hold the main hearing within one week from the date on which the decision to order a temporary injunction to stay away from the family has been brought before the Court by the official entitled to arrest. If the main hearing is cancelled, the new main hearing must take place no later than two weeks from the date on which the main hearing was scheduled to take place. If there is a compelling reason, the period may be set longer. If the main proceedings are cancelled or postponed, the District Court must at the same time order whether the temporary injunction to stay away from the family is maintained. An emergency barring order remains in force until the Court gives a ruling on the matter.</p>		
28.3	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:		
29	Have your authorities taken measures contributing to ensure the availability of restraining or protection orders to victims of the following forms of violence against women?		
	- Domestic violence	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Stalking	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Sexual violence	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Sexual harassment	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Forced marriage	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Female genital mutilation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Forced abortion	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Forced sterilisation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
29.1	<p>If yes, please specify:</p> <p>A restraining order may be imposed to prevent an offence against life, health, liberty or privacy or a threat of such an offence or some other kind of severe harassment (Act on Restraining Orders, Section 1). According to the preparatory works for the Act an offence against life, health or liberty is</p>		

	<p>interpreted broadly. It covers all criminal law provisions that are intended to protect such legal interests, including sexual offences (government proposal HE 144/2003, p. 29).</p> <p>It is possible to impose a restraining order in the above mentioned cases, provided that the other conditions for the restraining order are met. An inside-the-family restraining order may be imposed if it can be concluded from threats, previous offences or other behaviour of the person against whom the restraining order is requested that he or she would likely commit an offence against the life, health or liberty of a person who feels threatened, and it is not unreasonable to impose the restraining order, taking into account the seriousness of the threatening offence, the circumstances of the persons living in the same apartment and other circumstances.</p>	
29.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:	
30	Have your authorities taken measures contributing to ensure the effective enforcement of barring, restraining or protection orders?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
30.1	<p>If yes, please specify:</p> <p>In accordance with the Government Programme, the Ministry of Justice appointed a working group to assess ways to enhance the effectiveness of restraining orders in 2020. On the basis of the working group report, proposals to reform the legislation on restraining orders were prepared in the Ministry of Justice. The proposal was accepted by the Parliament in December 2022 and the new legislation will enter into force on 1 October 2023. The reform improves the effectiveness of restraining orders, reduces the incidence of violations of restraining orders and improves the safety of victims of intimate partner violence in particular.</p> <p>According to the new legislation, in cases of immediate danger, the police shall order emergency barring orders at their own initiative regardless whether victims are able to apply for the order themselves. In most serious cases, compliance with extended restraining orders can be monitored electronically. Applying for a restraining order will be free of charge in all situations while currently a fee is charged in cases where the restraining order is not granted.</p> <p>In June 2020, the National Police Board issued a guideline on the activities of the police in cases of domestic and intimate partner violence and violence against women. The guidelines deal with restraining orders as well as practices related to victim protection. The guidelines take into account GREVIO's first report on Finland from September 2019 and emphasise the importance of developing police expertise on the forms and combating of peer and intimate partner violence and violence against women.</p>	
30.2	[Optional question: if not, please specify the reasons]:	
31	In case your authorities have taken further measures contributing to the implementation of recommendations in relation to Articles 52 and 53, which were not covered by the questions above, in particular in relation to the collection of data on the number of orders issued and their violations, please report on these measures [word limit: 1000 words]:	

### Specific recommendations

32	<p>Please report on measures taken by your authorities contributing to the implementation of the recommendation to introduce clear protocols and guidelines on mediation in domestic violence cases with a view to ensuring that all law-enforcement and prosecution staff are aware that mediation is prohibited in cases of repeated violence; while safeguarding that all offers of mediation are accepted entirely voluntarily and that they do not result in the discontinuation of criminal investigation and prosecution in violence against women cases and to reconsider the power vested in the police to propose mediation as a criminal justice measure in domestic violence cases which might jeopardise the effectiveness of criminal investigations (Recommendation A.10, IC-CP/Inf (2020)3).</p> <p>The Government notes that according to studies, only a very small proportion of domestic violence is brought to the attention of the authorities. It is important, in order to prevent these crimes and produce effective crime prevention, that cases of intimate partner violence are guided to mediation only after careful investigation of the possible repetition or continuity of intimate partner violence, assessment of the victim's need for protection and guidance to the service. It is considered challenging if all cases of violence against women are referred to the courts also in cases where the parties concerned have reached a settlement. The termination of a pretrial investigation or the failure to prosecute should be carried out with special consideration in these cases.</p> <p>In Finland, victim-offender mediation in domestic violence cases - as in other cases as well - is voluntary for all parties. There are clear rules and guidelines that ensure voluntariness. According to section 2 (general conditions for conciliation) of the Act on Conciliation in Criminal and Certain Civil Cases (1015/2005), conciliation may be carried out only between parties that have personally and voluntarily expressed their agreement to conciliation and are capable of understanding the meaning of conciliation and the solutions arrived at in the conciliation process. Before the parties agree to conciliation, they must be explained their rights in relation to conciliation and their position in the conciliation process. Each party has the right to withdraw their agreement at any time during the conciliation process. Moreover, according to section 19 (interruption of conciliation), conciliation offices must interrupt conciliation immediately if a party withdraws their agreement or if there is a reason to suspect that the agreement has not been given voluntarily. Conciliation must also be interrupted if there is a justified reason to suspect that a party to the conciliation process cannot understand the meaning of conciliation and the solutions to be made in the process.</p> <p>The importance of voluntariness is also emphasized in the guidebook for mediators titled "Good practice model for mediation of violence in near relations" that was updated 2022 and is now being piloted and will be published early 2023. In the course of a ministerial working group work (<i>Mediation of domestic violence crimes – Current situation and development proposals. THL Discussion Paper 2/2019</i>), mediation office workers (n=19) were interviewed. They confirmed that when the parties are being contacted by the mediation office professionals before the actual mediation, one important aspect that is being examined is voluntariness.</p> <p>The Ministry of Justice has appointed a working group to promote the use of mediation. One special tasks of the working group is to assess the continuation of mediation in domestic violence cases. The term of the working group is 1.3.2020 – 30.4.2023.</p>
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	<p>A study on mediation of domestic violence started in 2021. The main aim of the study is to produce information on the experiences of those referred to mediation due to intimate partner violence regarding the process and its impact on the lives of the parties involved and possible end of violence. The study report was published in February 2023.</p> <p>For some less severe offences, the settlement reached in mediation may result in the criminal investigation authority closing the procedure. Mediation may also lead to the prosecutor waiving prosecution. The court may also decide not to sentence the defendant to a punishment or to sentence him or her to a less severe punishment.</p>
33	<p>Please report on measures taken by your authorities contributing to the implementation of the recommendation to ensure that fear of deportation from Finland, with or without their children, may not prevent migrant women from leaving abusive spouses/partners, by informing newly arrived migrant women of the possibility of obtaining an independent residence permit after leaving an abusive relationship, and ensuring capacity-building for immigration officials to increase their understanding of the trauma this may cause, and to remove excessively high evidential barriers for applications for extended residence permits such as the requirement of a criminal conviction to prove the abuse. (Recommendation A.13, IC-CP/Inf (2020)3).</p> <p>Under section 54, subsection 7 of the Aliens Act (301/2004), an alien who has been issued with a temporary or continuous residence permit on the basis of family ties may, after these family ties are broken, be issued with a residence permit on the basis of close ties to Finland or on the grounds that his or her personal circumstances are particularly difficult, because his or her spouse committed or endorsed acts of violence or abuse against him or her or his or her child while their family ties were still in force, and it would be unreasonable to refuse the permit under the circumstances. According to the drafting history of the provision (government proposal HE 155/2014, pp. 81–82), evidence of violence might consist of e.g. a criminal record, criminal conviction, decision on restraining order, medical certificate, court decision on divorce, decision of dissolution of registered partnership, or information and documents obtained from social services.</p> <p>In practice, this provision is applied also in the absence of a criminal conviction, as put forward in the Recommendation. In addition to the residence permit applicant's own statement, evidence of violence against the applicant and threat of such violence that could be taken into account include the applicant seeking protection at a shelter, or a medical certificate.</p> <p>The Finnish Immigration Service has implemented several measures or actions that seek materially to combat and prevent violence against women. The Recommendation highlights the importance of increasing awareness among newly arrived migrant women. The work and study activities organised by reception centres, for example, include a course for asylum seekers on Finnish society. This course provides the clients with information on society, legislation (in relation to violence in particular), equality and non-discrimination in Finland as well as the avenues for victims of violence to seek assistance. The course comprises contact teaching organised by the reception centre, self-study materials and an online course that includes a final exam. The Naisten vuoro [<i>Women's turn</i>] campaign that advocates for women to personally manage their residence permit process should also be mentioned. Women are encouraged, when submitting their residence permit application, to deal with the proceedings independently despite any shortcomings in their language skills.</p> <p>The Recommendation also raises the point of immigration staff training. The healthcare and social services professionals working at reception centres initiate a review of all asylum seekers' specific individual needs as soon as possible and no later than two weeks after the asylum seeker's arrival at the centre. This review of specific individual needs may also necessitate referral of the asylum seeker to services outside the centre. Reception centre staff strive to identify all forms of violence defined in the Istanbul Convention and to ensure the safety and empowerment of victims by means of</p>

appropriate housing services as well as health and social services. Reception centre staff have been provided with training on topics including gendered violence and FGM.

The Finnish Immigration Service has also organised training for officials who conduct oral hearings on how to interview vulnerable persons. Matters discussed in this training have included how to hear and advise victims of domestic violence. Staff who conduct these hearings have been instructed to provide the contact information for shelters to interviewees who are in need of such information, and also to tell them about associations to which the persons may turn for advice and support. The persons conducting oral hearings have been instructed to inform persons seeking a family ties permit in a relationship with an abusive person that applying for and obtaining a residence permit does not require them to remain in the abusive relationship.

Oral hearings are always arranged without the spouse/partner present. The aim in the hearings is to create an atmosphere of trust that allows the person concerned to feel that they can share in confidence. The confidential nature of the hearings is emphasised. In cases where there are prior indications of domestic violence, this is taken into account already when planning the interview questions.