

**Group of Experts on Action against Violence  
against Women and Domestic Violence  
(GREVIO)**

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on preventing and combating violence  
against women and domestic violence  
(1<sup>st</sup> thematic evaluation round)**

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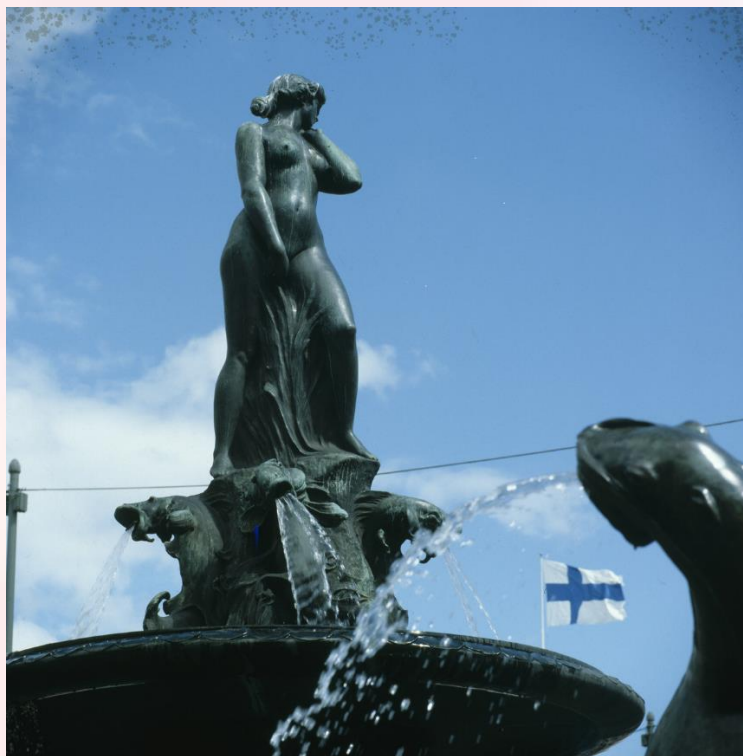
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## Report of the Government of Finland on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)



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**First thematic evaluation round:  
“Building trust by delivering support, protection and justice”**

**26 October 2023**

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## Foreword

Violence against women is a global phenomenon and a serious human rights violation, also in Finland. According to international and national studies and statistics most common forms of violence are domestic violence and intimate partner violence.

Finland has for decades advocated ending all forms of violence against women and girls as well as domestic violence both nationally and internationally. In addition, we have committed ourselves to endorse and support all acts in combatting all forms of violence against women in multilateral cooperation as well as in bilateral relations with all actors and by aiming at finding sustainable solutions for ending this widespread human rights violation.

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention; Treaty Series of the Statute Book of Finland 52 ja 53/2015) with its four pillars has served as an important tool to intensify efforts, coordination and awareness raising in various fields of life in combatting and especially preventing all forms of violence against women as illustrated in this report.

The Government of Finland recognizes that everyone in the Finnish society is needed for this collective work, including men and boys.

The Government would like to highlight the following recent sectoral reforms and developments:

In the field of Ministry of Justice, the new legislation on sexual offences entered into force on 1 January 2023. The legislative reform strengthens everyone's right to sexual self-determination and personal integrity. The key change is that the definition of rape is now based on consent. Rape is sexual intercourse with a person who does not participate in it voluntarily. The absence of voluntariness is also an essential element of other sexual offences. As a result of the reform, punishments for sexual offences will become tougher. In addition to rape, most other provisions on sexual offences in chapter 20 (723/2022) of the Criminal Code were amended. An important change is, for example, that when the act is sufficiently severe, sexual harassment can be committed through acts other than touching. Non-consensual dissemination of a sexual image is punishable under the amended legislation. The amended legislation addresses sexual abuse online in many ways.

In the field of Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, shelter services have been further increased. The number of places in shelters has doubled from 2015 and during the last four years the number of places has increased from 203 to 230. Seri Support Center network has been expanding since 2017 to nationwide and by the end of 2023 there are 25 Seri Support Centers with the newest center in Åland.

In the field of the Ministry of the Interior, several initiatives have been carried out by the Police in order to prevent and recognize better violence against women. Such initiatives include, for instance, the improvement of services that recognize victims and better service coordination to meet the needs of the victims. Also, preliminary criminal investigations have been concentrated in specific units with the view of improving professional skills of the investigators and the streamlining of processes for quicker and more effective investigations. The National Police Board has actively developed preventive tools such as the MARAC-action on national level, and it organizes several trainings and publishes guidelines and manuals for effective prevention of violence against women and prompt investigation of criminal cases.

The Ministry of Education and Culture strives to strengthen the skills of the youth workers about the online risks, such as sexual grooming and sexual violence against children and young people. Koordinaatti is a national expert in youth work that provides training, information and materials to increase the knowledge of youth workers and volunteers working with young people, so that they could help prevent sexual violence and sexual grooming against young people. Many of the Koordinaatti's materials and trainings are carried out in cooperation with other experts in the field.

Several studies and research projects have been carried out and published to better recognize various forms of violence against women and girls. In this respect Statistics Finland conducted the Gender-based Violence (GBV) Survey in Finland in 2020–2023 as a part of Eurostat’s European Gender-based Violence Survey. The GBV Survey meets the data requirements set by the Istanbul Convention and is a part of the national Action Plan to combat violence against women. The GBV Survey offers information on the prevalence and different forms of inter-personal violence, especially violence against women. The Finnish GBV survey also brings information on violence experienced by men as well as the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on domestic violence, feelings of fear, experiences of online violence, honour related violence and forced marriages, attitudes towards genital mutilation and the use of social and welfare services and shelters.

The results of the Finnish GBV survey indicate that the prevalence of violence against women is very high in Finland: as many as 47% of women aged 16–74 reported having experienced physical or sexual violence at least once in their life after turning 15. According to Eurostat’s preliminary results, Finland seems to have the highest prevalence rate of violence against women when compared to other EU countries. However, at the same time the results indicate that the recognition of gender-based violence is quite high especially among young women in Finland, and that they are willing to report their experiences in surveys, if not to police or other authorities. The survey data will be made available for researchers via the research services of Statistics Finland, which hopefully leads to further national analysis and action plans.

The report also contains information on the measures taken to combat violence against women in Åland which is an autonomous, demilitarised, Swedish-speaking region of Finland consisting of more than 6,700 islands. The special administrative status of the Åland Islands is guaranteed by the Constitution of Finland. The details concerning the arrangement are provided for in the Act on the Autonomy of Åland (1144/1991).

In addition, the report includes references to the information the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has received from the Sámi Parliament. Under the Constitution of Finland, the Sámi, as an indigenous people, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Similarly, the Sámi have linguistic and cultural autonomy in the Sámi homeland.



# Part I: Changes in comprehensive and co-ordinated policies, funding and data collection in the area of violence against women and domestic violence

## Article 7: Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies



Finland has further developed policies covering all forms of violence against women and domestic violence in a coordinated and comprehensive manner and in order to further strengthen the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. This work has been done in close cooperation with the coordination mechanism of the Istanbul Convention and together with its all actors in order to ensure information sharing on state of play of the existing instruments as well as to consolidate possible best practices.

1. The Criminal Code of Finland has been amended, especially on sexual offences and several developments listed underneath have taken place in further defining various forms of violence in accordance with the Istanbul Convention. This work is due to continue further.
2. The responsibility of drawing up coordinated and cross-administrative action plans for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention has been assigned by the Government Decree (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. The NAPE Committee has been appointed for its second term for the period of 21 January 2021 – 20 January 2025. The NAPE Committee prepares action plans for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, which covers timeframe beyond Government terms.
3. The first Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention<sup>1</sup> for 2018-2021, which covered time beyond the first baseline report, included 48 action measures, which have mostly been implemented. A separate evaluation report<sup>2</sup> on the Action Plan considered that the Action Plan was successful and laid the foundations for cross cutting administrative cooperation and speeded up, in particular, the development of service entirety in Finland. In addition, the evaluation concluded that the Action Plan together with other ongoing processes made a revolutionary change in combatting violence against women. The evaluation suggested, among others, that the following Action Plan should be target-oriented and clearly structured with measures and with a separate budget.
4. After the first Action Plan for years 2018-2021, the NAPE Committee agreed on the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2022-2025<sup>3</sup>, published in March 2022. This Action Plan contains long-term objectives and 36 measures. The Plan has three main cross-cutting objectives that aim at
  - strengthening the gender perspective and intersectionality in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention;
  - reinforcing and strengthening intersectoral and multi-professional cooperation and in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence at all levels; and
  - improving both the identification of violence against women and domestic violence and intervention in them.
5. The second National Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention consists of 36 measures, in more detail:
  - Prevention of violence against women and domestic violence: 12 measures
  - Support for victims of violence and services for all parties involved: 9 measures
  - Preventing further violence and enforcing criminal accountability: 8 measures
  - Coordination of measures and data collection: 7 measures

6. Most of the measures in the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention focuses on domestic violence. However, it does take horizontally into account the existing work with regard to expanding the network of Seri Support Centers for victims of sexual violence and rape and continues the work on preventing so called honor related violence and female genital mutilation (hereinafter FGM). During the preparation of the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention, the 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 plan. The NAPE Committee also noted in its preparatory work the developments in the Criminal Code with regard to sexual offences and the establishment of a national resource or competence cluster for the prevention of FGM and so called honor related violence as well as possibilities for annulling or dissolving forced marriage and introducing a specific criminal offence on FGM.
7. The objectives and measures in the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention are largely based on the observations and recommendations set out in the 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).
8. In addition, the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention has taken into consideration also the first Action Plan's evaluation recommendations. The progress of the implementation is monitored annually for the next four years and the first round is due at the end of 2023.
9. Recognizing the partial overlap of the implementation periods between the two governmental programmes, the Action Plan coordinated by the Ministry of Justice and the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention, the NAPE Committee concluded that the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention will not highlight specific forms of violence against women.
10. In addition to the Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention, the Ministry of Justice coordinated a separate Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women for 2020–2023 (hereinafter the Action Plan by the Ministry of Justice)<sup>4</sup>.
11. The Action Plan by the Ministry of Justice was published in October 2020 with a cross-cutting theme on prevention of violence. The Action Plan covered so called honor related violence and digital violence, which had not been addressed in past programmes or action plans and included altogether 32 measures. Most of them have been implemented and the remaining ones will be completed during this year.
12. The Ministry of Justice carried out a legal analysis of the criminalisation of coercive control/psychological violence in 2022, including the effectiveness of legislation on stalking. This is one of the measures in the Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women for 2020-2023<sup>5</sup>.
13. Within the framework of the Action Plan by the Ministry of Justice, a large number of authorities and professionals were trained with increased awareness raising on so called honor related violence and digital violence, for example. Furthermore, campaigns on sexual harassment and new legislation on sexual offences were carried out.
14. As part of the Action Plan, the Ministry of Justice also carried out a legal analysis of the criminalization of coercive control/psychological violence in 2022, including the effectiveness of legislation on stalking.
15. The Action Plan by the Ministry of Justice included altogether 32 measures. Most of them have been implemented and the remaining ones will be completed during this year. Within the framework of the Action Plan, a large number of authorities and professionals have been trained with increased awareness raising on so called honor related violence and digital violence, for example. Furthermore, campaigns on sexual harassment and new legislation on sexual offences have been carried out.

16. The Government Action plan for Gender Equality for 2020–2023<sup>6</sup> includes measures focusing to prevent sexual harassment. During the years 2021–23, an expert workshop and five roundtables were organized on prevention of sexual harassment by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health together with Ministers of Nordic Cooperation and Equality, Social Affairs and Health, Science and Culture, and the Interior. In discussions with experts and decision-makers, necessary measures were considered to prevent harassment in working life in general, as well as more specifically in the fields of rescue, sports and culture.
17. The new legislation on sexual offences in the Criminal Code (chapter 20) entered into force on 1 January 2023 (723/2022). The legislative reform strengthens everyone’s right to sexual self-determination and personal integrity. The definition of rape is now based on consent and rape is defined as sexual intercourse with a person who does not participate in it voluntarily. The absence of voluntariness is now also an essential element of other sexual offences.
18. In addition, most other provisions on sexual offences were amended. For example, the definition of sexual harassment was extended to cover acts that do not involve touching. The amended legislation also addresses sexual abuse online in several ways. By the reform punishments for sexual offences have been aggravated.
19. The Ministry of Justice published a memorandum on the punishability of forcing a person into marriage in 2021. Written statements on the memorandum were received in January 2022 and a compilation of the statements was published in April 2023.
20. Under the Criminal Code, forcing a person into marriage is currently punishable as trafficking in human beings, aggravated trafficking in human beings or coercion. As an alternative to specifying the Criminal Code, the memorandum assessed the possibility of enacting a separate provision on forced marriage and supplementing the provision on human trafficking or coercion. The memorandum outlined that Prime Minister Orpo’s Government, which took the office in June 2023, will decide on further measures on the subject. This work is ongoing.
21. According to Prime Minister Orpo’s Government Programme, published in June 2023, the Government will take necessary measures to clarify the punishability of forced marriage in the Criminal Code. The Ministry of Justice has appointed a working group in September 2023, which will prepare a government proposal to clarify the punishability of forced marriage in the Criminal Code. The term of the working group will run until the end of February 2024.
22. In 2021, the Ministry of Justice set up a working group to examine different regulatory options that could be adopted to clarify the punishability of FGM in the Criminal Code. The working group assessed a number of different regulatory options, of which all included problematic aspects in the working group’s opinion. The working group published its report in February 2023 and did not end up proposing any amendments to the Criminal Code in order to clarify the punishability of FGM. However, FGM is currently punishable as assault or aggravated assault. According to the Prime Minister Orpo’s Government Programme, FGM will be criminalized in a more clear way. In addition, taking a minor girl abroad for FGM will also be explicitly criminalized. The Ministry of Justice is preparing a government proposal on the matter. The proposal is to be submitted to Parliament in summer 2024.
23. The second National Action Plan for the Prevention of FGM was published in 2019<sup>7</sup>. It contains recommendations on measures for preventing FGM and supporting women and girls who have undergone it. The short-term objective is that girls who live and reside in Finland will not be mutilated in Finland nor be sent abroad to be mutilated. In addition to the number of good practices to prevent FGM that were already identified and being implemented, stronger measures are proposed to promote wellbeing of women and girls who have undergone FGM, including improving the quality and availability of the services offered to them. The implementation of the Action Plan has progressed, and an interim evaluation of the implementation is made during the autumn of 2023 and the results will be published



in the beginning of 2024. Conceptualizing FGM as a form of so called honor related violence against women and girls has already helped targeting the preventive actions to wider target groups and securing the resources for the preventative work, consequently contributing to the success of implementation of this action plan.

24. Prime Minister Marin's Government programme 2019 stated that Finland will secure resources for work against FGM during the government term and so it did. Also, Prime Minister Orpo's Government Programme states that the capability of public authorities to identify FGM as phenomenon and exchange information will be improved and that the Government will step up measures to prevent FGM.
25. The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (hereinafter THL) published in June 2022 new national guidelines and recommendations<sup>8</sup> for the municipalities and wellbeing services counties to support the regional and local governments on prevention of violence, coordination and structures for prevention, services, and service chains, etc. This was also one of the actions in the Action Plan by the Ministry of Justice.
26. An Action Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Children 2020–2025 (Non-Violent Childhoods<sup>9</sup>) with 93 measures was published in 2019<sup>10</sup>. The objective of the action plan is to prevent all forms of violence against children aged 0–17. In addition to prevention, it also covers elements to minimize harmful impacts and to provide treatment for victims. The Plan covers violence against children in vulnerable situations<sup>11</sup> such as children and young persons with disabilities and reduced functional capacity and children in ethnic groups, as well as FGM, so called honor violence and human trafficking<sup>12</sup>. A broad group of experts from various organizations, several Ministries and CSOs participated in the planning and implementation of the Plan. This has been considered a good practice by the WHO<sup>13</sup>. The implementation of this Plan is monitored regularly by a steering group<sup>14</sup>. According to the mid-term evaluation in 2023<sup>15</sup>, very good progress has been made in 44 measures, while for the other 44 measures the work is still in the early stages. No progress has been made on three measures, and the evaluation was not able to assess the progress in two measures. The action plan deals with the rights of the child, inclusion, factors that protect against violence as well as risk factors and their consequences. The aim is to improve the position of the child victim in the current service, care and crime systems, also taking into account those children who are at risk of ending up using or have already used violence.
27. In addition, Finland has a national action plan for the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) to protect children from sexual violence<sup>16</sup> and a National Child Strategy<sup>17</sup>.
28. The objectives and measures included in the second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention are based on the obligations set out in the Istanbul Convention and special attention has been dedicated to GREVIO's recommendations of 2019 to Finland. The second Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention mainstreams strengthening of gender perspective and intersectionality in the context of its implementation as one of the main cross-cutting objectives.
29. Each government since the beginning of 2000's has drafted a Government Action Plan for Gender Equality. Violence against women has been one of the main focuses in each of the action plans. In addition to the follow-up work by the group of representatives of all Ministries, the cabinet Ministers have annually followed-up and discussed the action plan.
30. In Prime Minister Marin's Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020–2023 there was a strong emphasis on mainstreaming intersectionality, but in practice it was not implemented systematically.
31. The preparation of Prime Minister Orpo's Action Plan for Gender Equality has started. The preparation is coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and conducted in close co-operation with all ministries. Also the civil society will be involved in the process.

32. Violence against women is also one of the central topics in the Government Report on Gender Equality that outlines the Government's gender equality policy by setting long-term national and international objectives for gender equality for Finland until the year 2030. The report is built on seven strategic objectives, one of them being violence against women, including sexual and gender-based harassment. The strategic objectives will be implemented in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality for the Government period 2023–2027.
33. The national Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme 2020-23<sup>18</sup> includes several measures aimed at improving the competence of young persons and professionals working with young to ensure that all young persons recognize their and other person's right to physical integrity. In line with Prime Minister Marin's Government Programme 2019-23, measures have been taken to improve sexual education across different levels of education in order to support young person's physical integrity and to advance their emotional skills.
34. In addition, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman was appointed to the task of a National Rapporteur on Violence against Women as of 1 January 2022. The duties of the National Rapporteur include monitoring violence against women and domestic violence, the effectiveness of legislation and how international obligations are met. The National Rapporteur is autonomous and independent.
35. Monitoring and evaluating measures taken to prevent violence against women and domestic violence are a part of the National Rapporteur's tasks that also cover monitoring violence against men and boys as a part of domestic violence.
36. As the National Rapporteur, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman can complete or commission studies on violence against women and domestic violence, submit initiatives, issue statements and offer consultation. The National Rapporteur is entitled to receive confidential information under certain terms for the purpose of completing tasks. The National Rapporteur does not provide legal counsel in individual cases.
37. The Act on the Ombudsman for Older People (753/2021), which entered into force on 19 August 2021, established an autonomous and independent Ombudsman for Older People with a duty to promote and assess the realization of the basic and human rights of older persons in legislation and decision-making in the society. The duties of the Ombudsman for Older People involve also advocacy.
38. In 2020, the Government of Åland adopted a strategy to prevent and combat violence against women, entitled 'Strategi för nolltolerans mot våld i nära relationer 2020–2030 ('Strategy for zero tolerance to violence in intimate relationships').
39. The strategy prioritizes four focus areas:
  - Enhanced and effective general prevention of violence;
  - Better recognition of violence and stronger protection and support for women and children exposed to violence;
  - More effective law enforcement against violence in intimate partner relations and in violence against women; and
  - Improved knowledge and methodological development in the field of violence against women and violence in intimate partner relations, especially with regard to violence prevention with particular focus on the link between masculinity and violence.
40. In 2019, the Government of Åland adopted an Agenda for Equality for 2019–2030 with six sub-goals, one of which is "violence against women must end".

41. In the Development and Sustainability Agenda for Åland, a sub-goal is on working actively on abolishing all forms of physical, sexual and verbal violence, especially in close relationships tackles specially violence against women.
42. In addition, the Government of Åland emphasizes the goal of ending violence against women in various policy areas and highlights it in various strategies, guidance documents and plans. The action plan for LGBTQIA person's equality in Åland for 2019–2025 emphasizes the importance of awareness of and work against violence against LGBTQIA persons.
43. Åland's new Disability Policy Action Plan for 2022–2025 includes measures for increasing knowledge of gender equality and of violence against persons with disabilities as well as to provide easy-to-read information about where victims of violence can turn to. A new Public Health Strategy for 2023–2030 aims to "reduce the percentage of victims of violence in intimate partner relations over the last twelve months".
44. In February 2021, the Government of Åland appointed a committee for implementing and monitoring of the Istanbul Convention for a period from 2021 to 2023.
45. The committee consists of representatives of several government agencies (police, social welfare, healthcare and medical treatment) and representatives of workplaces that come into contact with victims of violence (the Church, ATV Alternative to Violence), as well as the Minister of Equality Affairs, Minister of Social Affairs and Health and the Åland Government's Senior Specialist for Gender Equality.
46. The committee is mandated to:
  - identify existing routines, methods and structures in Government operations to prevent and combat all forms of violence in intimate partner relations;
  - draw up an action plan for Government operations;
  - identify the need and take the necessary measures for competence-enhancing efforts for the professionals that come into contact with crime victims and perpetrators regarding detection, visibility and preventive measures;
  - collect relevant statistical data on all matters falling within the scope of the Istanbul Convention; and
  - take relevant measures for cooperation between authorities based on professionalism and shared values to enable a comprehensive and professional approach to violence in intimate relationships.
47. Working to support women's empowerment forms a key part of the committee's mandate.
48. Since 2022, women who have experienced violence have been able to access counselling free of charge through referral municipal social welfare services in Åland.
49. CSOs have underlined adequate financial and human resourcing as well as concerns of the lack of adequate concrete targeting in various action plans. On the other hand, organisations find it positive that the task of the National Rapporteur on Violence against Women was given to the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman.
50. In addition, CSOs advocate for further strengthening intersectionality in all activities in combatting violence against women, including persons with disabilities. The sanctions for sexual abuse are lower if the victim is in hospital or institution, which is considered affecting the enjoyment of equal rights for persons with disabilities, depending on where the crime is committed.



## Article 8: Funding



Finland has increased and multiplied the financing and human resourcing in combatting violence against women in a comprehensive manner. The financial resources are distributed in national budget for individual Ministries and can therefore be seen fragmented. Human resources have also been increased as well as financial resources for women's organizations while the economy is facing overall challenges.

51. Since 2021, the State budgetary funding for the NAPE Committee has been EUR 150,000 per year. Parliament has also granted additional resources for the NAPE Committee for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention EUR 300,000 for 2021-2022 and EUR 300,000 for 2023-2024. Since 2020, the NAPE Committee has employed a fulltime secretary general.
52. The State budget financing for the implementation of the Action Plan by the Ministry of Justice, referred to in para 10 has been EUR 400,000 per year 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.
53. An annual additional appropriation of EUR 200,000 was allocated to the duties of the National Rapporteur on violence against women as of 2022.
54. The central government has financed shelter activities from the beginning of 2015, when the Act on Compensation Payable to Providers of Shelter Services (1354/2014) entered into force. In 2023 central government funding for shelter activities is EUR 25.2 million. This includes one-off payment of EUR 600 000 aiming at enhancing accessibility of shelters. The funding for the period 2024-2027 is planned to be 26.6 million euros. The funding for 2024 is EUR 26.55 million.
55. The appropriation may be used for compensating producers providing shelter services in Finland as well as hiring personnel for the coordination, guidance, maintenance, quality control, development, training, evaluation and administration of shelter activities. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is responsible for the general management and guidance of shelters while steering, evaluation, development and national coordination falls under the responsibility of THL.
56. In 2023, there are in total 29 State funded shelters for victims of domestic violence in Finland. The funding of shelter operations amounts to EUR 24.55 million and employed total of 300 salaried personnel in 2023. Information for the funding of shelters from 2019 to 2023 is provided in Annex 2.
57. In addition, the Social Welfare Act states that wellbeing services counties must provide social services in case a need for support arises from example after domestic violence or abuse.
58. Nollalinja<sup>19</sup> is a 24/7 Government funded, free-of-charge helpline for victims of violence against women and domestic violence. Nollalinja has received EUR 795 000 in 2022 and EUR 725,000 for 2023. In 2022, Parliament added EUR 70 000 for Nollalinja's chat service and the NAPE Committee allocated in 2023 a one-off additional allocation of EUR 50 000. The additional funding is intended for the continuation of the Nollalinja chat service until the end of 2023.
59. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has financed the national work against FGM since 2018, but the funding has been intermittent. Since 2021 the funding (EUR 46 000 per year) from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has been permanent. THL funded some part of the preventive work during 2019. Since 2021, THL has received permanent budget funding EUR 100 000 per year for tackling so called honor related violence, including FGM. In addition Parliament allocated EUR 100 000 for 2022 and EUR 150 000 for 2023 for the implementation of the Action Plan to prevent FGM.



60. With regard to the reform of legislation covering sexual offences, the Ministry of Justice has allocated EUR 1.87 million in 2023 and EUR 6.03 million as from 2024.
61. Enhancement to reform restraining order has received EUR 468,000 in 2023 and EUR 1.494 million as from 2024.
62. The Police was allocated EUR 100,000 in 2021 to develop the MARAC risk assessment and to improve combatting violence against women.
63. For the 2023 budget Parliament allocated to THL additional EUR 200 000 for MARAC project for combatting intimate partner violence.
64. In general, the role of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in preventing and combating violence in accordance with the objectives of the Istanbul Convention is to support preventive work, such as supporting inclusion and the integration and employment of women and especially immigrant women.
65. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has funded THL for its work against so called honor related violence since 2021 enabling THL to hire 1-2 persons to work against so called honor related violence. The Ministry has further funded the Family Federation of Finland to train different actors in the field on integration in sexual health issues, *e.g.* harmful traditions. Two projects<sup>20</sup> funded during 1 October 2020 – 31 December 2021 have been aiming to improve the knowledge and understanding as well as promoting identification and prevention of equality and sexual rights, right to self-determination, so called honor related violence, forced marriages and FGM among migrants. The first project was targeted to professionals working at city guidance and advisory points and centers of expertise and the second project included immigrants from different language groups. See also para 59.
66. In 2021, over 560 professionals from centers of expertise and advisory points were trained to identifying and bringing up harmful traditions. This was considered as useful:
- 75% of respondents felt that they had received enough information about sexual rights.
  - 79% felt that the training increased their understanding on reasons why it is important to discuss about sexual rights with migrants.
  - 78% felt they had gained more skills to talk about sexual rights issues with migrants. See Annex 13.
67. In the second project a total of 15 immigrants from several different associations in different parts of the country were trained to become instructors in their own language in gender equality and sexuality issues. As a result of the activities 230 immigrants, both men and women, were reached through the integration package in their own language in 2021, and 180 in 2022. In addition, modified training was provided for new social orientation trainers.
68. The Family Federation of Finland carried out also a project in 2020 with an objective to produce competence to bring up challenging topics related to sexuality and intimate life for those working in integration in different regions at the national level. The sub-objective of the project was to examine the functionality and usability of existing material on sexual rights in the work carried out with immigrants and to produce any additional material needed to support to bring up of topics considered difficult. The toolkit on sexual rights and integration<sup>21</sup> is available on the website of the Family Federation of Finland and most of the material in the material bank is free of charge for the users.
69. Within the framework of the Action Plan, the Ministry of Justice has distributed discretionary government grants to several organizations in 2020-2023. These include for example INY ry (Association of Iraqi Women) for a project aiming to change attitudes towards the prevention of so called honor related violence, and MONIKA – Multicultural Women’s Association Finland for supporting the recovery of immigrant women who have experienced violence after the shelter period.

70. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has funded for EUR 590 000 ten other small organisations' projects during 2021-2022 in promoting family integration. One of their aims is to dispel gender roles.
71. 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): National Council of Women of Finland, Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS and MONIKA – Multicultural Women's Association Finland. In 2020–2023, the amount of subsidies granted has been higher than ever before, totaling EUR 918,000 per year.
72. The Government of Åland is planning to further and update information about violence in intimate partner relations in multiple languages, knowledge-enhancing efforts for those who work with persons in particularly vulnerable situations. The Government of Åland funds the Kompassen Information Centre, which provides new residents with information in different languages, including information about the shelter for victims of domestic violence. Municipalities can also make use of community and health communicators in several languages to explain Åland's gender equality policy and the types of support available with violence in intimate relationships.
73. According to the Sámi Parliament there is a well-working funding mechanism in use in Finland for ensuring the availability of culturally appropriate Sámi-language services. The funding mechanism promotes the realization of the right of the Sámi to self-determination in services targeted at the Sámi. The funding allocated for ensuring the availability of the services is, however, insufficient and often there is no culturally appropriate Sámi-language services available at all. The Sámi Parliament underlines that when establishing culturally appropriate Sámi-language services to ensure that the services are implemented in a culturally appropriate way from the beginning. Funding resources should also be allocated to the training of Sámi-speaking professionals who provide culturally appropriate services. There is a need to increase knowledge of the special characteristics of the Sámi culture.
74. CSOs underline that they are of the view that both financial and human resources to combat violence against women and domestic violence are still inadequate and too uncertain, especially for various activities covered by CSOs. At the same time, the Government gets credit for the progress made in increasing shelter activities in general.

## Article 11: Data collection and research



Data collection and research have well established procedures in Finland and is therefore also comparable at national level. Authorities have also aimed at more gendered research during last years as stated under this chapter. In addition, Finland participated in the European wide research project on violence against women and domestic violence organized by Eurostat to produce comparable gendered information on the occurrence and various forms of experienced violence. One of the project's purposes is to develop further and produce internationally comparable information on violence against women. The research work will be further developed with a view on, for example, research methods, and cultural differences in recognizing violence and general trust for society and authorities in order to reinforce its comparability. The research had a strong gender perspective with various forms of violence, including physical, mental and sexual violence, intimate partner violence and harassment. This research project will be a good tool to use further detailed information on violence against women in Finland.

75. On gender dimension in statistics based on Statistics Finland Gender Based Violence Survey in 2023, as part of the EU wide Survey with an additional national dimension, on violence against women in a more detailed way<sup>22</sup>:

- 17% of women considered violence against women very common and 58% fairly common, whereas of men, 4% considered it very common and 45% fairly common; and
- 3% of women considered violence against men very common and 38% fairly common, whereas of men, 1% considered it very common and 22% fairly common.

76. In addition, gendered dimension on violence according to the national Gender Based Violence Survey<sup>23</sup>:

- 50% of women and 41% men had experiences of psychological intimate partner violence in their lifetime;
- 25% of women and 13% of men had experiences of physical intimate partner violence in their lifetime;
- 25% of women and 11% of men had experiences of threatening by an intimate partner; and
- 10% of women and 2% of men had experiences of sexual intimate partner violence in their lifetime.
- Especially persons experiencing serious health problems or belonging to sexual or gender minorities seem to be at risk to face intimate partner violence and its consequences.
- Women who had experienced intimate partner violence (physical/sexual violence and/or threatening) had reported their experiences varyingly: 51% had reported to a close person, 20% to health or social services, 8% to victim support services, and 11% to police. All in all, 56% had reported to at least someone. (The Finnish GBV survey.)
- 43% of women aged 16–74 and 12% of men aged 18–74 have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.
- 16% of women and 3% of men have been raped in their childhood or adulthood. The experiences of sexual violence are more common among young adults than among older age groups. Typically, sexual violence is experienced by an unknown perpetrator.
- 51% of women aged 16-34 and 20% of men aged 18-34 reported sexual violence experiences in their lifetime. 10% of ever-partnered women and 2% of men had experiences of sexual violence by the current or previous partner.

- Experiencing or witnessing violence by or between parents under the age of 15 increases the risk of experiencing intimate partner violence later in life.
  - 46% of women aged 16–74 and 42% of men aged 18–74 have experienced physical or sexual violence or threatening by a non-partner after turning 15 years old. In general, men have more experiences of physical violence and threatening by a non-partner, whereas women have more experiences of sexual violence by a non-partner. The non-partner perpetrators were male in more than 80% of the violent episodes.
77. In the previously mentioned survey on gender-based violence in Finland (Attila et al. 2023), almost every tenth person aged 16–74 living in Finland had either observed or experienced so-called honor related violence during their lifetime. 2% of persons aged 16–74 had personally experienced so-called honor related violence or the threat of it.
  78. Most of the observations of so-called honor related violence were reported by people between 16 and 34 years old, while most of the personal experiences were reported by people from immigrant backgrounds aged 55–74. The large number of observations reported by younger persons with native Finnish as well as immigrant backgrounds suggests that the phenomenon is widely recognized by them and perhaps evident in schools and at leisure time, since 11% of people aged 16–34 reported having personally known at least one victim or perpetrator.
  79. Of ever-married people aged 16–74, 1% reports entering a marriage against their own will. Most of them did so by persuasion or under pressure, very few reported facing direct forcing. However, forced marriages mainly concern a few population groups in Finland, and because of that, it's hard to measure realistic prevalence rates using a nation-wide population survey.
  80. Attitudes towards female and male non-medical circumcision, *i.e.* FGM, are in general negative. On average among both women and men, attitudes towards male circumcision are more permissive than towards girls' FGM. However, there are considerable differences between age groups: among older people the attitudes are more critical and negative than among younger persons. Men aged 16–34 have the most permissive attitudes.
  81. The information management system of the Police is constantly being developed, but there have been no changes in relation to violence against women and domestic violence lately. Information on cases of domestic violence and emergency barring has been available for years.
  82. The Police use a different information management system than the Prosecutors and courts, but there is a link between them that enables monitoring throughout the process. Cases that go from the Police to the Prosecutor and further to the court can be traced back to the Police report number. The classification data put into the system by the Police (*e.g.* domestic violence, hate crime, organized crime, etc.) is also visible to the Prosecutor.
  83. Tracking of cases of violence against women and domestic violence in the authorities' information systems is currently not possible. However, the Ministry of Justice has commissioned a study that examines how cases of violence against women proceed in the criminal justice system. The study is carried out by Statistics Finland and will be published at the end of 2023.
  84. Regular annual data collection on public and CSO run shelter services for victims of domestic violence started in 2015 when the Act on Compensation from State Funds to Shelter Service Providers (1354/2014<sup>24</sup>) took effect. Service providers are obliged to compile statistics on the operations of the shelters and to submit the previous year's statistics to THL<sup>25</sup> by March each year. The data is collected for THL at sum level and no personal information on the shelters' clients is collected. A statistical report is published annually.



85. The statistics are collected using an electronic data collection form. Since 2017, THL has had access to up-to-date information on the number of vacancies in the shelters. Each shelter updates the up-to-date place situation every day. The number of vacancies and the utilisation rate of the shelter are calculated from the data.
86. Quality in shelters for victims of violence against women and domestic violence and clients' feedback is done for feedback and developments on voluntary basis anonymously either online or in paper format. Most shelter clients are extremely satisfied with the service, with an overall score of 4.8/5 in 2022. The clients gave the highest ratings to their sense of security during their stay in shelters, for the service and the confidentiality of the service.
87. The shelter service statistics collected by THL contain information on, for example, the number of clients in shelters, the duration of client relationships, the underage children of clients, and the clients' background information. THL also collects statistics on forms of violence experienced by shelter service clients, including physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence, threat of violence, economic abuse, negligence, cultural or religious violence, persecution, exposed to violence, chemical violence (since 2020), so called honor related violence (since 2020) and digital violence (since 2023).
88. From 2015 onwards an annual report on shelter services has been published.<sup>26</sup>
89. Number of shelters, family rooms and service users have increased nearly every year. A total of 5,163 clients used the services of shelters for victims of domestic violence in 2022. Of these, 57% were adults and 43% children. Of the adults, 91% were female and 9% male. See Annex 3.
90. In 2022, the number of both adult and underage clients in shelters increased by 4% compared to 2021. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of clients had grown each year since 2015, but the pandemic put a stop to this trend and the numbers went down in 2020 and 2021.
91. In 2022, a total of 89,394 days were spent in the shelters, which is 4,932 more than in 2021. The average stay per client was 17 days: 82% of shelter periods lasted less than 31 days and 18% 31 days or more.
92. Shelter clients experience various types of violence. Psychological violence (72%), threat of violence (46%) and physical violence (52%) were the most reported types of violence in 2022. The violence experienced by shelter clients had lasted for one year or less in 31 % of the clients in 2022. 40% of the clients had experienced violence from one to five years, and 29% of the clients had experienced violence for over five years.
93. THL is responsible for collecting data on the statistics of the anonymous and cost-free Nollalinja helpline for anyone who has experienced violence against women, domestic violence or a threat of violence in a close relationship. Anonymous data is collected of contacts for example, on the role of the contact-taker, gender of the victim and the perpetrator and the type(s) of violence. Anonymous data is only available to the extent that it comes up in conversations. Statistical information is collected and reported only of calls that concern violence (about 2/3 of all answered calls). Data on contacts of genders are also collected on Nollalinja, but since the numbers are so small, they are not reported here, however, see Annex 4.
94. In around 85-88% of Nollalinja contacts in years 2019–2022 the contact-taker has been a victim. Perpetrators rarely take contact. See Annex 5.
95. The majority (around 82%) of victims of violence in Nollalinja helpline's contacts are women. Men account for around 12% of those experiencing violence. See Annex 6.
96. Most cases (around 75%) the perpetrator of violence in Nollalinja helpline's contacts are men. Women account for around 12-14% of perpetrators of violence. See Annex 7.

97. Contacts to Nollalinja concern most typically intimate partner violence. Violent perpetrators are most often either a current or a former spouse, or current or former partner. About 84% of victims of intimate partner violence contacts are women. See Annexes 8 and 9. In addition, the five most common types of violence reported in contacts between 2019 and 2022 are psychological violence, physical violence, threat of violence, sexual violence, and economic violence. Many of the victims of violence have experienced more than one form of violence. See Annex 10.
98. The client information system for mediation in criminal and civil cases (SOPU) was put into operation from the beginning of 2019. The system is used by all 17 Mediation Offices. THL<sup>27</sup> is responsible for developing, administrating and controlling the SOPU database, which collects information for example, on crime titles; gender and age of the victim and perpetrator; type of the close relationship (*e.g.* current or previous partner) and location and time of the suspected crime. Information is also collected on whether the case was accepted to be mediated or not and the juridical reasoning for the decision; to which services the parties were directed to; whether an agreement was reached and whether the agreement was followed-up by the mediation office.<sup>28</sup>
99. Nationwide mediation statistics based on data from SOPU are published annually. The last published statistics concern the year 2021<sup>29</sup>. During 2021, 13,339 criminal and civil cases were directed to mediation mostly by Police or Prosecutor. Of these cases, 2476 were related to violence in close relationships (intimate partner violence and domestic violence). This represents 18.6% of all cases directed to mediation. In these cases, 66% (1632) of the victims were women and 34% (838) men, while 29% (721) of the suspects were women and 71% (1749) were men.
100. Of all the cases (2476) related to violence in close relationships the mediation process was started in 1385 (55.9%) cases. If mediation was not started, the reason was most likely one of the party's refusal to mediate<sup>30</sup>. In cases where mediation process begun, 11.3% (157) ended up being interrupted and 73.3% (1015) resulted in an agreement. In the rest of the cases, the outcome of the mediation was not known within the follow-up period for the statistical reports.
101. THL has collected data since 1987 on every pregnant woman who gives birth in Finland for the Medical Birth Register. Data on pregnant or delivering women with FGM and defibulation procedures during the delivery have been collected since 2017 as a part of the Medical Birth Register routine data collection via a structured form filled in by healthcare professionals by the time the infant is discharged from the delivery hospital or is seven days old, whichever occurs first.
102. The Care Register for Health Care collects data on the activities of health centers, hospitals and other institutions providing inpatient care and, on the clients, treated. The register has included information about defibulation with a new procedure code since 2017.<sup>31</sup> The prevalence of FGM has varied between 117 (0.23% of all parturients) and 207 (0.45% of all parturients) in years 2017 to 2021<sup>32</sup>.
103. THL has carried out several population-based studies including data collection on FGM from 2012. Migrant health and wellbeing study (the Maamu study)<sup>33</sup>, survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin (the UTH Survey)<sup>34</sup>, survey on wellbeing among foreign born persons (the FinMonik Survey)<sup>35</sup>, the asylum seekers health and wellbeing survey (the TERTTU study)<sup>36</sup>, the school health promotion study (the SHP study)<sup>37</sup> and ongoing National survey on health, well-being and service use among foreign-born population (MoniSuomi<sup>38, 39</sup>). The prevalence of FGM has varied between 0.6% and 69% depending on the country of origin of the respondent. According to the School Health Promotion Study, there are also under aged girls in Finland who have undergone FGM but no research evidence and no court cases on the actual pursuit of FGM in Finland<sup>40</sup>.
104. THL has also made estimates of the prevalence of FGM using register information on the number of migrants from each country residing in Finland and the most recent data on the prevalence of the practice in the countries of origin among different migrants in Finland<sup>41</sup>. Based on national statistics

there are approximately 38,000 girls and women living in Finland originating from countries where FGM is practiced. Roughly 10,000 girls and women living in Finland could have undergone FGM, and approximately 650–3,080 could be at risk of FGM, depending on how acculturation affects the tradition.

105. The prevalence of FGM cases is also monitored by the police. Since summer 2022, FGM has been a reason for initiating a child protection report, which has also been registered offering information of the FGM prevalence in the future.
106. There are no comprehensive prevalence studies on the cases of so called honour related violence nor forced marriage in Finland yet. Statistics Finland has carried out a study Gender based violence and domestic violence in Finland 2021. 8% of the 16 to 74 years old respondents had experienced so called honor related violence or the threat of it or had witnessed it and 2% had self experienced so called honor related violence.<sup>42</sup> According to statistics from shelters (<sup>43</sup>, <sup>44</sup>, <sup>45</sup>), number of customers admitted at shelters as victims of so called honor related violence was 211 in 2020, 162 in 2021 and 101 in 2022.
107. Also, the Assistance system for victims of human trafficking reports of cases related to forced marriage in the system and in 2021 there were 176 clients and in 2022 there were 221 cases<sup>46</sup>. Also, the CSOs working on violence have reported on over 400 cases of so called honor related violence in 2021<sup>47</sup>.
108. The national FinChildren<sup>48</sup> survey 2020 produces regular follow-up data on the well-being, health and service experiences of small children and their families. Data collection is carried out every four years and the target groups are both parents of babies aged 3–6 months and children aged 4 years. The target group for the 2020 data collection were parents of babies. The survey was answered by 8,995 women (response rate 50) and 5,825 men (response rate 36)<sup>49</sup>.
109. According to the results of 2020, 12% of parents of families with babies had experienced at least one form of intimate partner violence by a spouse or ex-spouse during the past year, men more often than women (14% vs. 11%). Most commonly, parents had experienced emotional violence, 9% of women and 11% of men. Physical violence was experienced by 3% of women and 4% of men. Experiences of sexual violence had 2% of women and less than 1% of men. Economic violence was experienced by 2% cent of women and 4% of men. 7% cent of women and 8% of men reported experiencing only one form of violence. Of both parents, 3% had experienced two and 2% at least three forms of violence.
110. The national School Health Promotion study (SHP)<sup>50</sup>, carried out every other year, covers physical, mental and sexual forms of violence. The latest study came out in 2023. Participants are aged 9–21 and include four groups:
  - 1) 4th and 5th graders in Basic education (BE 4-5) (2023: n=95 523 /77 %) since 2017;
  - 2) 8th and 9th graders in Basic education (BE 8-9) 2023: n=87 147 / 70 % since 1996;
  - 3) 1st and 2nd year students in General upper secondary school (GUS) 2023: N=44 862 / 69 % since 1999; and
  - 4) 1st and 2nd year students in Vocational upper secondary education and training (VET): n=19 215 / 25%) since 2008.
111. According to the latest study, among others, the following information:
  - Physical violence by parents: according to the 2023 Study, 10–16% of girls and 5–9% of boys in groups BE 8-9, GUS and VET had experienced physical violence by their parents during a year. In group BE 4-5, 18% of boys and 14% of girls had experienced physical violence by their parents during a previous year.
  - Mental violence by parents: according to the 2023 Study, 37–42% of girls and 12–17% of boys had experienced psychological violence by their parents in groups BE 8-9, GUS and VET. In group BE 4-5, 26% of boys and 30% of girls had experienced psychological violence from their parents during the previous year.



- Sexual harassment and violence: according to the 2023 Study, 45–49% of girls and 8–12% of boys in groups BE 8-9, GUS and VET had experienced sexual harassment during the previous year. More than every fifth girl (22%) of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade had experienced sexual harassment in a public space and over every third (38%) on the phone or online. In group BE 4-5, 13% of girls and 9 % of boys had experienced sexually disturbing messages or showing of videos or images during the previous year. In groups BE 8-9, GUS and VET, 3–6% of boys and 12–17% of girls had experienced sexual violence during the previous year (Being forced to undress, unwanted touching of intimate parts of the body, being pressured or coerced into sexual intercourse or other sexual acts, being offered money, goods or intoxicants in exchange for sex). See Annex 11.

112. The annual adult health and well-being study (FinSote<sup>51</sup>) includes a few questions regarding physical and psychological violence. The study is a sample study with roughly 28,000 samples. According to the latest study (2020), 6.8% of the respondents reported having experienced physical or psychological domestic violence during the previous year. Physical or psychological violence had been experienced by 8.4% of women and 5.2% of men. The results are available nationwide and regionally in THL's website and reports are drafted thereof for THL's publication series<sup>52</sup>.
113. A research project<sup>53</sup> on frequency of domestic violence was carried out between 1 March 2021 and 28 February 2022 under THL's leadership and in cooperation with the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities and Kynnys ry. The research data used in the study include population study data sets, which are the School Health Promotion study (2019, 2021), National FinSote Surveys (2018, 2020) and the FinHealth 2017 follow-up study (2020) and as well the Disability and Domestic Violence survey and interview data from (2021)<sup>54</sup>.
114. Domestic violence is more common for persons with disabilities than among rest of the population. There are differences between genders in frequency of experiencing different forms of violence. Persons with disabilities who received insufficient assistance in their daily activities had more frequent experiences of violence than those who did not need or received enough help.
115. At all school levels, most common experiences of sexual harassment were among girls with disabilities, of whom three out of five (60 to 62%) had experienced sexual harassment. Experiences of sexual harassment were also common among other girls (42–46%). At all school levels, boys with disabilities (14–20 %) had experienced sexual harassment more often than other boys (6–8%). At all school levels, experiences of sexual violence were twice as common among girls with disabilities and three times more often among boys with disabilities. Around half (48–57%) of girls with disabilities had experienced psychological violence from their parents – more often girls in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades of comprehensive school.
116. A population survey of persons aged 21 and over found that 12% of women and 5% of men with disabilities had experienced sexual harassment, compared with 10% and 2%, respectively. In the second population survey, experiences of violence were most common among persons aged 20 to 49 and rarest among persons aged 70 or over, both among persons with disabilities and without.
117. In the disability and violence survey<sup>55</sup>, a large majority of respondents reported having experienced violence, which indicates that the survey mainly selected respondents with experiences of violence. Many respondents had experiences with different forms of violence. For most cases, the perpetrator of the violence was a person familiar to the person with a disability. Professionals were also reported as perpetrators of violence and neglecting help.
118. Persons with disabilities who participated in the interviews expressed difficulties in seeking and receiving help, with insufficient help for violent experiences. 60-63% of persons with disabilities, who had experienced violence, felt that it was challenging or difficult to get help due to, for example, inadequate services, an inaccessible environment, the constant control of the aggressor or the need for help from the person seeking help.



119. Persons with disabilities are more likely than others to experience violence at all stages of their lives. Young persons with disabilities experienced at least one form of violence 1.5 times more often than other young persons, girls with disabilities more often than boys. Experiences of sexual harassment and sexual violence were also more common especially for girls, and their experiences had become more common between 2019 and 2021. Young persons with disabilities have experienced violence from their parents or other care taking adults more often than others, girls more often than boys. Women experienced sexual violence and harassment more often than men. Experiences of sexual harassment and emotional violence were significantly more common among girls with disabilities than boys.
120. The worrying result was also that young persons with disabilities across all school levels felt to have received assistance for matters weighing on their minds twice as rarely as other young persons of the same age. This means that inequalities in access to assistance for persons with disabilities may begin to develop at a young age.
121. The research project 2020-2021 on Costs of Domestic Violence in Finland (LAKU)<sup>56</sup> examined the impacts of domestic violence on the use of health, social and legal services and the resulting costs.
122. In the study<sup>57</sup>, data was collected from the registers of primary health care and specialist medical care, shelters, the Police and the Kela (Social Insurance Institution of Finland), and from the Gender-Based Violence population survey. For the period 2015–2020, a total of 33,000 victims of domestic violence were identified in the registers and a control group was formed, which was five times larger. More than 7,700 persons responded to the population survey.
123. The additional cost in health services as a result of domestic violence was EUR 1,024 per person annually compared to the rest of the population. Over a five year period, the direct additional healthcare costs caused by physical intimate partner violence experienced by women totaled EUR 150 million per year (146,000 women).
124. According to the population survey, 44% of Finns aged 16–74 had experienced intimate partner violence and 65% domestic violence in their childhood. Intimate partner violence had been experienced by 48% of women and 39% of men. Among those who had experienced intimate partner violence, the costs in social services were 60–90% higher and in legal services (incl. the Police), 70% higher. Domestic violence experienced in childhood was visible in adulthood as social and legal services costs that were 50% higher.
125. The Centre of Expertise for Digital Youth Work published a report<sup>58</sup> in 2020 on sexual harassment, grooming and sexual violence faced by children and young persons in Finland.
126. According to the GBV Survey mentioned in para 75, in the world of work, 6% of women and 1% of men considered sexual harassment very or relatively common in their present or latest workplace.
127. In addition, 54% of women and 14% of men reported having experienced harassment during their working career. Among women, the youngest group of women reported the most experiences of harassment, and the oldest least. Among men there weren't similar variations according to age group.
128. In current workplace, 21% of women and 6% of men had experienced sexual harassment. Among women, harassment was most common in commerce as well as in accommodation and nutrition sectors. More detailed information on harassment at work can be found in the Quality of Work Life Survey<sup>59</sup>, in Gender Equality Barometer<sup>60</sup> and in Working Life Barometer<sup>61</sup>.
129. According to the Working Life Barometer in 2022, sexual harassment at work within the 12 preceding months was experienced by 6% of the labor force; women (9%) more often than men (2%). See also paras 126-128.

130. The need to clarify the terminology used in Finland related to sexual violence against children has been identified, for example, in the implementation of the national youth work and youth policy programme 2020-23. The Barnahus project coordinated by THL and Koordinaatti, national expert in youth work, have jointly published a terminology handbook that explains language of sexual violence against children. The manual “Words Have Meaning – a terminology handbook<sup>62</sup> is broadly directed towards professionals and volunteers working among children and youth.
131. According to the Sámi Parliament, the production of information about the Sámi is insufficient, and there is no up-to-date, comparable information available. The intersectional examination of gender-based violence requires improving the production of information with necessary resources to gathering information and studying it. No Finnish authority produces information on preventing and combating violence against Sámi women and domestic violence. The Sámi Parliament is the only party that produces information on the Sámi. The resources currently allocated to the Sámi Parliament are insufficient for meeting the constantly growing needs.
132. The independent Ombudsmen also collect some data within their respective competences including gendered violence.
133. Most of the staff working in social and health care services are women, and according to a study commissioned by Tehy - The Union of Health and Social Care Professionals in Finland, 69% of those working in these sectors have experienced violence or threat of violence. In addition, the Finnish rescue professionals (SPAL) and the Union of Finnish Contract Fire Departments (SSPL) stated, that 90% of respondents have experienced at least threat of violence (Työturvallisuus ensihoitotyössä 2020, ‘Occupational safety in emergency medical services’).
134. CSOs have expressed concern about the uncertainties in the continuation of the monitoring system of offences against life. In addition, intersecting forms of discrimination needs to cover information collection and increased data collection and research about intersectionality, including persons with disabilities, is needed. Research and data collection on intersectionality should include also analysis of the consequences on full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in this respect.
135. CSOs consider it positive side that research on violence experienced by persons with disabilities is carried out, even though the results are worrying, and not enough has been done to correct the situation.
136. According to the research on working conditions by Labor Unions from 2018, 18% of women and 4% of men had faced sexual harassment during their working life. It seem to be especially common among young females and by digitalization online violence seems to have increased. Experience of violence in the world of work varies by sectors and is more common on female dominated sectors. Even though there has been positive concrete developments and improvements, the Trade Unions underline the need for further developing proper and efficient follow up care for victims of violence and harassment in the word of work. See also paras 126-129.
137. According to the Finnish Confederation of Professionals’ Survey from 2021 on “Healthy and safe working life” in 14% of working places during the last three years occurred threat of physical violence.
138. Even though doxing and other digital harassment have become significant issues for occupational safety, the phenomena is not yet well recognized.
139. According to labor unions in Quality of Work Life survey<sup>63</sup>, the number of employees who have experienced threat of violence or at least think about it has tripled since 1980. In 2018 almost every fifth of women (19%) and 7% of men had experienced violence at work during last 12 months, and women and 7,5% of men of those 13% even before. In general, every third woman and 13% of men have faced violence at work. A positive sigh is that clear methods on how to react on violence are more common at

commerce (2008 49% and 2022 57%) in commerce and from 33% to 40% in property business. See also paras 117-120.

140. According to a research on AKAVA Works little under half of those who have experienced violence also noted that the employer had not reacted to the experienced violence. In 17% of those cases, the employer didn't know about the violence. Every third employer had reacted to the violence brought into their knowledge and this decreased both violence and harassment. The unions also underline that during Covid-19 pandemic, there were not enough health-, social- or legal services.
141. Sexual violence is less common among women in leadership positions and women working in public sector.
142. Note also that the minor discrepancies in Annexes 15, 16 and 17 are due to different statistical collection periods.

## Part II: Information on the implementation of selected provisions in priority areas in the field of prevention, protection and prosecution

### Article 12: General obligations



Many different activities and projects have been carried out on prevention of various forms of violence and to influence on mentalities in combating violence against women. The work has been done in cooperation with CSOs and engaged men and boys. In addition, this preventative work has been done through various channels, including social media, with an aim to reach wider groups in society.

143. Within the framework of the Action Plan, the Ministry of Justice carried out a campaign in August 2021 to intervene in sexual harassment against young women. The campaign focused on the role of bystanders and aimed to show how bystanders can intervene in harassment and support the victim. The campaign involved several Finnish celebrities and social media influencers who took a stand in campaign videos broadcast in social media and on Finnish Broadcasting Company's channels. In addition, the campaign included text and image advertising in social media, as well as outdoor advertising.
144. THL promotes nationwide Nollalinja helpline services by marketing and campaigning through various channels, media and social media<sup>64</sup>. Nollalinja campaigns are organized 4-6 times a year to raise awareness on different forms of violence and Nollalinja services for all. The main target group of the campaigns varies by gender and age.
145. The National Action Plan for the prevention of FGM<sup>65</sup> includes prevention measures aiming to change mentalities and attitudes among communities coming from countries where FGM is practiced. One objective is to influence attitudes especially through key persons of the communities, including religious leaders and other role models. Cooperation in prevention will also be stepped up between CSOs, CSOs and authorities, as well as between the authorities and communities practicing FGM. One of the aims is that CSOs will focus on FGM prevention, guiding grass-root level activities and using experts from countries where FGM is still practiced by reaching out to key persons in communities with a focus to change attitudes. Measures like training community ambassadors to educate members of their own community, organizing debates on the subject by both public authorities and communities, and strengthening cooperation by participating in events organized by various grassroots actors, for example in mosques, have been taken to achieve the objective.
146. The ongoing mid-term evaluation of the Action Plan will provide more accurate results on the achievement of the object. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and THL have invited persons and CSO representatives with knowledge on FGM to an annual FGM working meeting for discussions between all parties. Community representatives have also been increasingly invited to work together with authorities. Authorities have also entered various community forums, mosques and other venues to enable direct dialogue with community members. Communities from countries where FGM is a tradition have been more active in promoting their own attitudes to combat FGM, for example by organizing their own seminars on the topic. Many CSOs have representatives from different communities, and some are fully community-based, which has enabled some attitudinal changes to take place directly at the grass-root level.
147. THL has developed an online training for professionals aimed at tackling violence at a lower threshold and thereby also changing attitudes of the professionals. The online training includes a section of so



called honor related violence and harmful traditions which also seeks to address the subordinate position of women and girls as victims of these forms of violence. THL together with community-based CSOs has also produced and disseminated videos in languages such as Somali and Kurdish to prevent FGM<sup>66</sup>. In addition, THL has worked with various community-based organizations to produce different materials to prevent harmful traditions and so called honor related violence.

148. THL maintains a steering group for work against so called honor related violence, with members from various ministries, professionals, organizations and communities. The Group raises challenges of tackling so called honor related violence, seeks to develop cooperation between actors, including CSOs working with harmful gender stereotypes and prejudices, customs and traditions and intersectional discrimination. The group also shares information on the causes and prevention of so called honor related violence and harmful traditions.
149. EU funded a project Gender matters? Promoting equal gender representation in the media, politics and leadership positions (2019–2021)<sup>67</sup> provided trainings for journalists and developed information on elections and decision-making. The project produced an online training for journalists and communication experts to promote gender-aware communication and to break gender norms and stereotypes in the media. It also promoted a more inclusive and intersectional understanding of gender and raised awareness about the goals and benefits of balanced numeric participation and equal substantive representation of all genders and about the intertwined nature of inequalities in public debates, political decision-making and leadership.
150. The project Dismantling segregation - tools for a more equal working life (2021–2023)<sup>68</sup> aimed to reduce gender-based segregation in working life for example by promoting gender-aware and equal communication to break gender stereotypes related to professions, workers and jobs in segregated sectors. The project strengthened cooperation between working life and education actors and published new tools in three regional networks and in pilot organizations to dismantle segregation in working life. One of the tools was a policy brief with guidelines for decision-makers on more permanent methods of dismantling segregation in working life and education.
151. The Centre for Gender Equality Information, operating under THL, is a national information service that offers updated, research-based information on gender equality. The Centre provides information on gender equality, including a website, which offers updated, research-based information on gender and gender equality in Finland<sup>69</sup>. In addition, the Centre gathers and disseminates information on prevalence of gender-based violence. The pages were redesigned in 2019–2020 with a separate section on violence from a gender perspective and other principal themes of working life, family, education, health and wellbeing and decision-making as well as Covid-19 pandemic pandemic and gender. The pages include also information of gender norms and stereotypes. The Centre also has online trainings on gender equality.
152. Statistics Finland offers gathered statistical information, publications, and relevant links on the topic on their thematic website on Gender Equality and Gender-based violence. The main content will be available in English by the end of 2023.
153. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has funded training to identifying and bringing up harmful traditions mainly regarding sexual health and rights, such as so called honor-related violence.
154. THL and the Family Federation of Finland projects funded by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment are targeted to train different actors in the field of integration since immigrant women are often at risk of intersectional discrimination.
155. During 2021-2023 the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment implemented a Working life diversity programme including measures to reduce structural discrimination and racism in the labor

market by increasing the awareness of the benefits of diversity in work and by improving recruitment and management skills related to diversity and inclusiveness in working life.

156. The Act on Promotion of Integration (1386/2010) aims at promoting the integration of immigrants and their active participation in Finnish society, gender equality and non-discrimination, and positive interaction between different groups. Integration training increases understanding, acceptance and appreciation of differences and promotes gender equality and understanding of the diversity of gender and sexual orientation. In addition, capabilities are provided for identifying forms of structural and everyday racism and ways of affecting them are discussed.
157. With the amendments to the Equality and Non-discrimination Acts of June 2023, non-discrimination, planning and promotion of equality is extended to early childhood education and care (ECEC) providers and service providers and the obligation to plan for gender equality is extended to early childhood education and care.
158. The provisions on the prevention of discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression will be extended to include early childhood education and care. The Finnish National Agency for Education has prepared extensive guide material for the personnel in early childhood education and care (ECEC) in drafting plans and advancing equality and non-discrimination. The responsibility for drafting a plan already existed in schools and higher education institutions.
159. The Government of Åland arranges knowledge-enhancing education and training in gender equality. During 2019–2023, the Åland Government has funded projects to work specifically with leisure sector actors in order to counter harmful gender stereotypes and norms. The projects entitled 'En jämställd vardag fri från sexualiserat våld' ('An equal everyday life free from sexual violence') and 'Unga - Jämställd skola och fritid' ('Young persons – Equal school and leisure') continued in cooperation with the leisure sector. The projects have resulted in methods, models and checklists to strengthen the work against sexual violence among children and young persons, within associations, CSOs, schools and care institutions. Gender-disaggregated statistics, facts and knowledge are produced annually in Åland to shed light on unequal living conditions.
160. In 2022, a training course in gender mainstreaming was carried out for the administration.
161. In 2019, the Government of Åland commissioned a qualitative survey on sexual violence, parental violence and mental illness among young persons in Åland<sup>70</sup>.
162. Continuing training sessions are organized at regular intervals on intimate partner violence, also taking into account women in particularly vulnerable situations, from an intersectional perspective.
163. Education on masculinity norms is organized at regular intervals. Men and boys are also considered to have a great responsibility to get involved in and take responsibility for ending violence. A gender equality bonus was introduced ahead of the 2023 election, rewarding parties for equal candidate lists.
164. CSOs underline the need to strengthen mainstreaming of gender perspective as well as intersectionality in national implementation of the Istanbul Convention and call for more direct discussions on violence against women. They also consider that many sectors still value gender neutral approach to combatting violence against women even though special characteristics on violence against women is better recognized than before. In addition, the CSOs values more often hold media campaigns that bring forward violence against women, intimate partner violence and harmful attitudes and practices.

## Article 14: Education



Equity, gender equality and non-discrimination are promoted in many ways at all levels of education, from policy to practice. All educational institutions are obliged to prepare a gender equality plan to develop their activities, as well as a plan for the promotion of non-discrimination.

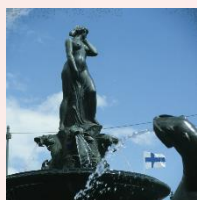
165. The National Teacher Education Forum (TEF) has created the Teacher Education Development Programme 2022-2026 that outlines the objectives and measures that ensure that teacher education supports equity and remain strong and attractive also in the future. The programme covers teachers' initial and in-service education, including induction as well as continuous professional development.
166. In 2018, the National Teacher Education Forum adopted a joint commitment by all teacher educators to prevent sexual harassment and other inappropriate behavior in teacher education. Common principles ensure that both current and future teachers have the skills and tools to identify and intervene in inappropriate behavior. The National Teacher Education Forum's pledge to prevent sexual harassment and other inappropriate behavior.<sup>71</sup>
167. In order to enable timely intervention and strengthen the pupil's legal position, the Basic Education Act (628/1998) and the Basic Education Decree (852/1998), the Act on Vocational Education and Training (531/2017), the 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 in 2022. The aim is to prevent bullying, harassment and violence in schools and educational institutions and to secure a safe learning environment for all. In addition, the Media Education Policy Guidelines as part of information and awareness raising for pupils were introduced in 2019.
168. Digital competence, including digital literacy and online safety, are not taught as a separate subject in ECEC, pre-primary nor basic education in Finland. However, multi-literacy and ICT skills are included in the National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care 2022, the National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education 2016 and the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014 as transversal competences, which need to be taken into account in all subjects.
169. The Finnish National Agency for Education and the National Audiovisual Institute published a Framework for Digital Competence<sup>72</sup> in June 2022, which is produced as part of the Right to Learn program in the New Literacies development program (2020–2023) launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture.
170. The Ministry of Education and Culture awarded EUR 12 million during a programme towards developing and improving digital competence throughout Finland. The Framework for Digital Competence has been prepared in cooperation with teachers, experts and digital competence networks.
171. The Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986) obliges all educational institutions to prepare a gender equality plan to develop their activities (section 5 a; 1329/2014). It must contain an assessment of the gender equality situation within the institution, the necessary measures to promote gender equality and a review of the previous plan. Special attention must be given to pupil and student selections; organization of teaching; learning differences and the evaluation of study performance; prevention of sexual harassment and gender-based harassment.
172. Education providers at all level of education are also obliged to prepare a plan for the promotion of non-discrimination. This is stipulated by section 6 of the Non-Discrimination Act (1325/2014). The plan must cover all discrimination grounds pursuant to the Non-Discrimination Act, thus age, origin, nationality,



language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.

173. Teachers have been provided with continuing training on equal education, including study materials. Additional information on teachers training, see paras 207-209.
174. The Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) provides guidance for teachers, schools and education providers in their equality and non-discrimination planning.
175. The National Agency for Education has produced various materials (in Finnish and in Swedish) to support the implementation of curricula:
- Prevention of bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence<sup>73</sup>;
  - Together! Equality and parity work on the second grade<sup>74</sup>;
  - A guide to prevent and intervene in sexual harassment at schools and educational institutions<sup>75</sup>;
  - Gendered education and guidance<sup>76</sup>; and
  - Operational equality and parity planning<sup>77</sup>.
176. In Åland the overall curriculum states that schools must work “norm-consciously for non-discrimination, equal treatment, justice and gender equality”. Gender equality and LGBTQIA are included in curriculum to a greater extent than before. Sexuality education has also been redesigned and includes more gender equality issues.
177. Gender equality, non-discrimination and democracy are key objectives in the new school curriculum (in place since 2021). Schools should work in a norm-conscious manner. A gender perspective should be taken into account in all education. Sexuality education has also been redesigned and contains more topics, such as LGBTQIA+, personal integrity, respect, sexual offences and sexual rights.
178. A project entitled Stop! My body!<sup>78</sup> ('Stop! Min kropp!') is organized by Save the Children Åland for interested schools to teach children in comprehensive school about consent and sexual integrity.
179. Since 2007, the Save the Children has been working to promote safe and sound internet and media use for children and young persons through the 'Barnens internet' ('Children's Internet') programme. This includes education on cyberbullying, online hate and porn, etc.

## Article 15: Training of professionals



**Gender specific training and education is provided to all occupational groups. Teachers' on-the-job -training is widely covered. Also, training provided by women's organizations is an important component of the overall training on all forms of violence against women and domestic violence.**

180. The tables I and II are completed in the Annexes 1, 13, 14, and 19.
181. According to the National Prosecution Authority, there is currently no specialized training available on violence against women or domestic violence. However, many prosecutors, especially senior specialized prosecutors, have participated in the Council of Europe e-learning platform of the Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme. This training is voluntary and is aimed at prosecutors who prosecute domestic violence cases and cases dealing with violence against children.



182. The National Prosecution Authority often uses lecturers from support services such as Victim Support Finland (RIKU) in their trainings.
183. The number of judges trained is not available. The training for judges is not mandatory.
184. There is no fixed frequency on training of judges but, as a general rule, some training on of violence is offered on a regular basis, approximately every other year or every two years by the National Courts Administration and the Training Board.
185. Issues on violence against women and gender based violence are usually incorporated in training sessions targeting violence as a general phenomenon. Gender based and/or domestic violence has not been a specific training topic *per se* in the training.
186. Nevertheless, judges are often invited to attend training together with other legal professionals (prosecutors, attorneys-at-law, the Police) and training conducted by victim's rights' organizations.
187. Finnish judges can also participate in the training offered by the European Network for Training of Judges (EJTN) and other international events, including the Council of Europe. The HELP courses include an online course on violence against women, tutored in Finnish.
188. Mandatory training of mediators in civil family matters includes training on domestic violence. See Annex 19.
189. The Action Plan 2020-2023 included a number of training measures aimed at in particular to the professionals working in criminal proceedings and in the criminal sanctions sector. Training information is listed below:
- The Ministry of Justice provided funding for 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. Issues to be covered in the training included honor-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. Six training events were organized in different parts of Finland in 2022. Five of these were organized also online.
  - Four trainings on violence against women were organized for public legal aid attorneys and professionals in legal aid chat service/helpline in 2021 and 2023, see Annex 1.
  - The Criminal Sanctions Agency employees have been trained on violence against women, addressing violence and intervening in cases of violence, risk assessment and how violence should be taken into consideration in the work of the Agency. In addition, online training on gender specific issues has been included in the basic studies at the Training Institute for Prison and Probation Services and in the studies of Bachelors of Social Services. Moreover, professionals working with female prisoners, have been provided with training on gender-specific violence work, trafficking in human beings and identification of the victim's trauma,
  - Shelter personnel have been provided training on digital violence and persecution.
  - Competences of teachers and students in teacher education in identifying and addressing violence has been developed by drawing up and disseminating material.
190. The expertise of CSOs and support services was integrated in the design and implementation of all trainings that were included in the Action Plan 2020-2023.
191. Each year, since 2019, the THL organizes a one-day training on mediation in close relations (including intimate partner violence and domestic violence) for the professional staff of the mediation offices. The training includes a component on the different forms of violence against women and domestic violence.

The educational content is evolved annually, relating to current topics such as evaluation of conditions for mediation in intimate partner violence and identification of manipulation by the parties. Although not compulsory, the training is attended by most mediation office professionals (approx. 70 persons).

192. Volunteer mediators are also trained. In order to be able to mediate cases of violence in close relationships (including intimate partner violence and domestic violence), a volunteer must undergo basic mediator training (54h) and serve at least one year as a mediator.
193. If volunteer mediators wish to mediate violence in close relationships, they have to enroll in a compulsory training aimed for mediators working on cases of violence in close relationships. The professional staff of the mediation offices recruit the most suitable trainees from those enrolled.
194. Since 2015 compulsory training program for mediators specialized in mediating violence in close relationships comprises of 135 hours of training and capacity building. The competence of the experienced mediators who started before 2015, is maintained by continuous education. The training of experienced mediators of violence in close relations and intimate partner violence is to be unified and consolidated nationally. Planning for this training complex begun in fall of 2023.
195. From 2022 to 2023, the training for mediators was implemented nationwide with 40 to 60 volunteer mediators participating annually. The training covers topics such as mediation process and all its stages, assessing the type of violence and the conditions for the parties to enter the mediation process (including voluntariness), available support services for both victims and perpetrators, opportunities and criticism of mediation, as well as cooperation between the volunteers and the professional staff of the mediation office. The training also includes undergoing an online training "Stop the Violence" (8h) on responding to intimate partner violence.
196. Nurses, public health nurses, midwives and paramedics have continues professional training. In addition, education for legal nurses started in September 2023.
197. Universities of applied sciences in Helsinki, Turku, Tampere, Kuopio and Oulu studies include education on care for persons who has faced sexual violence.
198. In addition several CSOs, in particular Tukinainen<sup>79</sup>, Rikosuhripäivystys<sup>80</sup>, Setlementti<sup>81</sup>, organizes training Seri Support Centers can also utilize.
199. All teams starting working in Seri Support Centers are offered basic and further training. In addition, those Seri Support Center teams that have undergone training on sexual violence organized by CSOs, have been offered also financial support.
200. THL sends six times in a year a network letter with updated information on care and support for those faced sexual violence and information on additional training programmes.
201. THL has also established a team-group for all those working in Seri Support Centers with all materials and news supporting their work and with discussion possibilities.
202. Training on combatting FGM is included in training of doctors and midwives but there is no information available on numbers of participants.
203. The Police work in close cooperation with various authorities and CSOs. Development needs in general are automatically taken into account in police operations, directives and training. Specialists are also used in the Police training in the Police University College as well as in in-service trainings in the various Police Departments.

204. In practice, the key partner of the Police, is the Victim Support Finland (RIKU). Locally, the Police also cooperates with local organizations and actors that are regularly involved in various projects and training by the Police and the Police is invited into their training sessions. See also Annex 14.
205. With regard to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and in-service training provided to professionals at city guidance and advisory points and centres of expertise, see Annex 13.
206. Higher education institutions are autonomous and decide independently on the content of the education they provide. For this reason, the contents of the training of different professionals - including contents on identification and prevention of violence against women - may vary from one higher education institution to another so it is not possible to provide detailed information on the training of each professional.
207. With a reference to para 173, teachers take actively part in in-service training, which is provided by a range of actors. The Finnish National Agency for Education finances, monitors and develops continuing education for teaching staff. In-service training in the education sector is funded around EUR 15 million annually, with more than 23,000 participants. Gender equality and non-discrimination have been among the themes promoted. Themes and contents of the training vary from year to year. In 2020–2023, the themes of training include promoting equality and non-discrimination, inclusion, well-being and security in learning communities (including so called honor based violence), and strengthening leadership skills and community development. For example, in 2021 a total of approximately EUR 1.8 million and EUR 2.4 million in 2022 have been granted for staff training to promote equality and non-discrimination, including training related to increasing equality in digitalization. Funding is granted to various actors, such as education providers (higher education institutions), cities, CSOs and other organizations. For example, in 2022, the Finnish Women’s Association (Naisiasiitto Unioni ry), was granted a grant for the equal early childhood education training project.
208. Regional State Administrative Agency organizes several training sessions each year for teachers and other professionals in the education sector. The trainings are financed by the Ministry of Finance and are free for participants.
209. Higher education institutions also provide in-service training for teachers. The contents and implementation of the training vary according to the needs of the education providers.
210. In the field of youth work, one of the aims is to strengthen the skills of the youth workers about the online risks such as sexual grooming and sexual violence against children and young persons. Koordinaatti<sup>82</sup> is a national expert in youth work that provides training, information and materials to increase the knowledge of youth workers and volunteers working with young people, so that they could help prevent sexual violence and sexual grooming against young people. Many of the Koordinaatti’s materials and training is prepared in cooperation with other experts of the field.
211. In the field of cultural and arts policy, the dialogue card<sup>83</sup> is a tool for cultural diversity and sustainable development, which enables agencies and other organizations to develop their competence and practices with the aim of promoting equality and cultural diversity. One of the cards deals with the UN Agenda 2030’s objective of gender equality. The themes included in are: rigidity of gender roles, outdated understanding of gender, conflicts in gender perception, invisible inequality, perceptions that maintain inequality. Violence is one income angle through which the themes are addressed in practical workshop work. Other themes include the right to self-determination, lack of information, attitudes, confrontation, etc. in the pilot year of the project (2023), art and cultural organizations can order both digital cards and diversity agents as facilitators of workshops free of charge.
212. The Finnish Film Foundation promotes equality and non-discrimination in the film sector by developing a digital equality and non-discrimination tool for audiovisual productions. The Finnish Film Foundation



promotes the employment of women in the film industry, as actors in the industry and as applicants for funding from the Foundation. In cooperation, guidelines have been drawn up to combat sexual harassment and all forms of unfair treatment in the film sector. The Finnish film Foundation and co-workers organize training.

213. The Government of Åland provides continuing training as following:

- All new employees in social work have to take the web-based training course provided by the Swedish National Centre for Knowledge on Violence against Women (NCK) on gender based violence against women and on violence in intimate partner relations. The training is a basic introductory course and gives new employees comprehensive knowledge of the subject. New employees have to take the course within 6 months of the beginning of work.
- Continuing training on violence is being planned at Åland's healthcare service.
- The Government of Åland organizes continuing training on violence against women and violence in intimate partner relations every couple of years, intended for everyone who encounters girls and women exposed to violence in their work.

214. In 2021, Nursing Research Foundation sr, (NRF or Hotus in Finnish) published an evidence-based tip on how elder abuse and violence can be recognised in health and social care settings, including housing services.<sup>84</sup>

215. According to CSOs, education and training has been increased for various authorities. They underline, however, the need to include also education and training for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, which is still insufficient.

## Article 16: Preventive intervention and treatment programmes



Various authorities have started developing several measures on prevention for perpetrators at different stages, including in detention, to combat violence against women. This work is done in cooperation with CSOs. In 2024, a study on current programmes for perpetrators on intimate partner violence and sexual violence will be conducted. However, further coordination and sufficient human and financial resources are needed.

216. In 2020-2023, the Ministry of Justice funded three intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of sexual violence maintained by CSOs (Sexpo, Setlementti Tampere and Silta). The projects provide low-threshold support services free of charge for persons who have a high risk of committing a sexual offence against children and young persons in particular, and develop methods for preventing recidivism of persons with migrant background who have committed sexual offences.

217. In addition, the Ministry of Justice has funded a programme for perpetrators of domestic violence maintained by the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters. The programme is intended for those who have used violence or perpetrated a violent offence in their intimate partner relations and for those concerned about their own behavior.

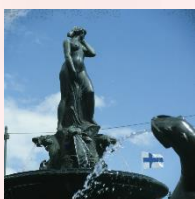
218. In 2020-2023, the Ministry of Justice funded three programmes for the treatment of sexual offenders maintained by organizations and one programme for perpetrators of domestic violence. Organizations actively disseminated information about the programmes to their stakeholders. Between 2020 and 2023, the programmes aimed at sexual offenders had a total of almost 300 clients and programmes aimed at perpetrators of domestic violence had just over 300 clients.



219. A working group appointed by the Ministry of Justice drew up quality standards for violence prevention and termination programmes. The standards was published in 2022.<sup>85</sup>
220. The quality criteria aim to help providers of the perpetrator programmes plan and implement their activities in accordance with good practices and to ensure high-quality and equal services for all those who need them at the national level. The customer of the service can use the criteria to determine what is required of the programme and its provider and how the activities should be monitored.
221. In the standards for violence prevention and termination programmes published by the Ministry of Justice, cooperation with the support services for victims is one of the criteria of a good perpetrator programme.
222. The Ministry of Justice has commissioned an evaluation study at the University of Helsinki on one rehabilitation programme for sexual offenders and on a programme for perpetrators of intimate partner violence. The quality standards published by the Ministry of Justice require that information on programme work and customers are collected for the purpose of evaluation research.
223. In 2020, the national Barnahus-project published a compilation of existing treatment programmes for potential child sex offenders (*e.g.* programme location, operation logic, number of clients per year), reviewed the international scientific evidence on sex offender prevention and rehabilitation, and set out a solution for the coming years on how to make treatment programmes equally available in Finland, with expertise available from primary to specialist<sup>86</sup>.
224. The perpetrator programmes in social and health sector are primarily financed through the Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organizations, STEA.
225. In addition, the aim is to develop prevention and interruption services as well as multi professional rehabilitation services for perpetrators during the detention.
226. All other programmes dealing with intimate partner violence, except Prison and Probation Service of Finland (Rise) PREDOV, with a special focus on perpetrator's rehabilitation on prevention of domestic violence, are implemented by CSOs.
227. The Alternative to Violence (ATV) in Åland since 2002 is a therapeutic treatment programme for men with aggression and violence towards their female partners. The project was developed in cooperation with the Norwegian Alternative to Violence. The initiative for the project came from the highest levels outside the prison and probation service, *i.e.* the then Government of Åland, the Council for Gender Equality and the consultative group for Operation Kvinnofrid ('Peace for Women').
228. From its start, the ATV Project has had 74 client contacts of which 25 have completed, 10 dropped out of and 5 continue the Project. The Government of Åland regularly advertises ATV in local media and on the websites of the relevant authorities. The clients have contacted ATV mainly themselves or by referral from authorities (mainly social welfare authorities and child protection) or other bodies (such as Folkhälsan's family counselling). However, referrals from authorities and other bodies have decreased over time and can be considered non-existent today.
229. The ATV Project's method is tried and tested and follows the work carried out by the ATV in Norway. The Norwegian Alternative to Violence is also responsible for basic training, supervision of group leaders and competence development.
230. A study on the ATV was carried out in 2023 with a focus on the Government's collaboration with ATV as well as suggestions, requests and forms for future collaboration.

231. The Sámi Parliament underlines the need for creation, development and production of culturally appropriate Sámi-language preventive services and sufficient resources for making the methods culturally appropriate, training professionals and the necessary production of information, among other things.
232. CSOs underline that services for perpetrators lie mainly on their responsibility and only small proportion of perpetrators reach these services. On a positive side, they noted that programmes for perpetrators have been developed and should be developed in the future with sufficient resources as well.

## Article 18: General obligations



Several multi-professional and multi-agency cooperation mechanisms are functioning. These mechanisms are further developed in line with possible international and national best practices in order to further strengthen support to victims of all forms of violence and in mainstreaming intersectionality in these processes for better taking into consideration various needs of all women in an equal manner.

233. As a part of the implementation of the Action Plan by the Ministry of Justice, THL published a new guideline<sup>87</sup> in 2022 for municipalities and wellbeing services counties on local and regional coordination of violence prevention and recommendations on organizing these services. The guideline underlines the strategic planning and multi-sectoral co-operation in preventing violence against women and domestic violence. The wellbeing services counties are supported in violence prevention through a national network of violence prevention coordinators. The network was set up and became operational in March 2023 and all wellbeing services counties are represented in the network.
234. Implementation of the new THL guideline is monitored also through the national network. At the end of 2023, THL conducts a survey and will publish a report on the implementation of the guideline. The survey will be repeated in 2025. THL is coordinating the national network and has dedicated 1,3 personnel years to cover this work in 2023.
235. Regional violence prevention is coordinated by the multi-agency work as part of the violence prevention and regional multi-agency networks for violence prevention are recommended.
236. Some of the wellbeing services counties have already recommended multi-sectoral (social work, police, health care, etc.) networks for violence prevention and they have made regional action plans together.
237. Finland participates also in developing the European Barnahus and is a founding member of the PROMISE Barnahus Network<sup>88</sup>. The work has developed rapidly in recent years. Currently, Finland has five Child and Adolescent Forensic Psychology and Psychiatry Units (Barnahus-units) plus a satellite. The Barnahus-units conduct an examination on the basis of receiving an official request of assistance by the Police. There are annually about 1200 requests for assistance for physical or sexual abuse investigations and approximately half of all clients are girls. The majority of clients are minors aged between 4 and 15. The operation is permanently financed by the State, with an annual budget over EUR 7 million and with a workforce of over 50 persons, all with highly specialized training. So far, there has been little cooperation with women's rights organizations, apart from individual training sessions for professionals, for example on so called honor related violence<sup>89</sup>.
238. In some regions women's rights organizations and other CSOs are part of the networks and part of the regional multi-agency co-operation.

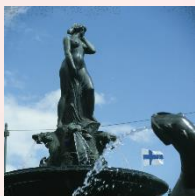
239. The national coordinators network also co-operates with CSOs in enhancing the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.
240. One multi-agency co-operation mechanisms used in Finland is MARAC. MARAC is a multi-agency method to assess and manage the risks on recurrent violence in cases of intimate partner violence and so called honor related violence.
241. At the beginning of 2023 there were over 40 local or regional MARAC groups in Finland. The members of the groups include representatives from social work, police, health care, child protection, shelter and Victim Support Finland. In some of the MARAC groups there is also a member from a women's rights organization.
242. The national coordination and further development of the MARAC method falls under THL. For the years 2023–2024 THL has dedicated 1.25 personnel per year for coordinating and developing work on a national level, with an overall budget around EUR 300 000. The budget has increased from previous period.
243. The shelter service also cooperates with other authorities and various organizations if necessary. As the shelter clients have very diverse backgrounds, the individual situation and needs of each client are assessed at the shelter, and actions taken accordingly.
244. A national steering group on the work against so called honor related violence has been appointed since 2021 with members from ministries (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs) and other authorities (National Police Board of Finland, Finnish Immigration Service, Finnish National Agency for Education) as well as other social and healthcare professionals and CSO's working with the theme.
245. Finland is part of the work of the Nordic Network on Work against Negative Social Control and Honor Related Violence, which is a ministerial-level cooperation aimed at sharing information on each member state's efforts to tackle so called honor related violence.
246. THL with the Finnish League for Human Rights are also members of the Nordic Practitioners' Network on Work against Negative Social Control and Honor Related Violence aiming also to share information on the work against so called honor related violence in each country and to cooperate.
247. The cooperation between various ministries, professionals, communities and CSOs at all levels in combatting FGM is actively promoted by separate networks and annual working meetings, which are organized by THL.
248. Finland has set-up a national network of Seri Support Centers. A nationwide network of 25 Seri Support Centers in Finland is expected to be completed in 2023. See also paras 6, 198-199, and 201.
249. The Police is one of the key-actors in the MARAC, which consists of a systematic risk assessment of violence. When the risk is elevated, a multidisciplinary team will help the victim with a multidisciplinary plan aiming at improving the safety of victims.
250. The Anchor Model is another multi professional cooperation model which is led by the Police. The Anchor Model is geared towards early intervention in juvenile delinquency and intimate partner violence, as well as preventive work within these areas. The model is based on multi-agency cooperation between different public authorities.



251. Furthermore, and in accordance with the EU Victims' Rights Directive, the Police refers victims to support providers. The main cooperation organization is Victim Support Finland, but in cases of, for instance, domestic violence or violence against women, other specialized organizations are involved, as well. In cases of human trafficking the main cooperation actor is the governmental THB Victims Assistance System.
252. In order to ensure seamless cooperation in all these multi professional mechanisms, representatives of other authorities and CSOs may be stationed in police premises.
253. The Police is also managing USEL - A Victim, Mediation and Restraining Order-Network, started in 2019. The objective of the USEL network is to develop the expertise of the Police in matters related to the rights of crime victims, mediation and guardianship in criminal cases, and restraining orders in cooperation with other authorities and organizations. The network does not deal with specific cases, but enables practitioners to come together to discuss about problems in cooperation, as well as to serve as a training platform. The idea behind all these models is to minimize the burden on the victim and the number of contacts with different actors, and to find a holistic solution to the problem. The main idea is a one-stop-shop approach where victims are guided through the process.
254. The victims of violence against women can get services from the Victim Support Finland (RIKU) in accordance with the Victims' Rights Directive, article 9:
- information, advice and support relevant to the rights of victims including on accessing national compensation schemes for criminal injuries, and on their role in criminal proceedings including preparation for attendance at the trial;
  - information about or direct referral to any relevant specialist support services in place;
  - emotional and, where available, psychological support;
  - advice relating to financial and practical issues arising from the crime;
  - unless otherwise provided by other public or private services, advice relating to the risk and prevention of secondary and repeat victimisation, of intimidation and of retaliation.
255. In 2022, 76% of RIKU's clients were women. This figure has remained stable for a very long time. The proportion of women is even higher in clients of domestic violence and sexual violence. For example, of clients which are registered in the category of "intimate partner violence" the portion of women is 94%. In rape cases the portion is 95%. These figures include all ages.
256. On the whole, victims of domestic violence (all categories) make up 22% of RIKU's clients and sexual crimes 16%. The overall number of clients in RIKU's different services was 28 300 in 2022.
257. RIKU also provides support and assistance to women victims of violence concerning restraining orders, including emergency barring orders. In 2022, 854 of RIKU's clients needed assistance in relation to a restraining order (including emergency barring orders) or due to breaches of a restraining order. Of these clients 90 % were women.
258. RIKU takes care of the services according to the Victims' Rights Directive and refers clients to specialized services when needed. RIKU cooperates closely with many specialized services in order to find the best services for its clients. RIKU has a comprehensive network of 31 local service points all over the country and a national helpline 116 006 as well as an online chat service.
259. CSOs are of the view that national coordination is still widely lacking except in shelter services.



## Article 20: General support services



Support services have been widely improved for victims of all forms of violence, including sexual violence, through availability of services and training of professionals and other personnel from the beginning of a service chain. The work on intersectionality in ongoing process and needs further focused incentives. However, various authorities do recognize nowadays better and in a more conceive way victims of various forms of violence in a more gendered and effective way.

260. Social services have a legal responsibility to provide support services for victims of intimate partner violence<sup>90</sup>, but national studies show that victims usually seek help primarily from health services. In addition efforts to enable services for all victims of violence in an equal manner has been improved.
261. For a large proportion of victims of intimate partner violence who do not need medical follow-up, their visit to emergency rooms is often the only opportunity for the health service to refer the victim for further help. These visits are mainly scheduled outside office when clear referral pathways often seem to be lacking and referral victims are easily left without help.
262. Regarding child sexual abuse, the Barnahus project, has collaborated with Seri Support Centers for four years. Based on this collaboration, psychosocial support from psychologist specialized in trauma care is now also available for young rape victims aged 13–16 in the largest centers linked to university hospitals. The work is based on evidence-based protocols on victim support<sup>91</sup>. This work has been reported nationally in 2023.<sup>92</sup>
263. The national FGM Action Plan includes also national guidelines for the care of FGM in child health clinics, maternity care, school and student health services also include guidelines for the care of FGM survivors<sup>93</sup>.
264. THL has several tools and forms on its website to help to identify intimate partner violence<sup>94</sup> and FGM<sup>95</sup> and recommends to use the domestic violence enquiry and assessment form in all social and health services as part of the basic assessment of each client's situation.
265. In addition, see paras 6, 198-199, 201, 248, and 262 on Seri Support Centers.
266. The need for additional legislation and guidance has been recognized especially in regard to forensic examination of alleged perpetrators of violence<sup>96</sup>.
267. All maternity clinic clients from FGM risk countries are asked about FGM, and the FGM status is recorded in the maternity card and sent to maternity hospital. Information about the FGM status is registered in the Medical Birth Register, maintained anonymously and reported on by THL.
268. There will be a separate diagnosis number for FGM in Finland in 2027, now FGM is tracked by a procedure code in the health care.
269. Asylum-seeking women, refugee women, migrant women, women from national or ethnic minorities, women with irregular residence status, women with disabilities, and LGBTI women have access to existing healthcare services and they are able to benefit from them.

270. Reception centers, where asylum seekers and refugees are initially accommodated, have healthcare staff and nurses, who act as primary points of contact for accessing healthcare services. These professionals provide essential care and also facilitate integration into the healthcare system.
271. While approximately 5-10% of clients in Detention Units are women, specific arrangements are made to ensure their safety and well-being. Upon entering the Detention Unit, women have the option to undergo voluntary health screenings. This screening process helps to identify any immediate health concerns or injuries, including those related to violence. Furthermore, women in the Detention Units have ongoing access to staff members, including nurses, who can provide support and assistance in order to ensure that their needs are being addressed.
272. To enhance the detection of possible trafficking victims, the staff members in Detention Units receive training on identifying signs of trafficking and responding appropriately. They have easy access to training materials, which further equip them with necessary knowledge and skills to detect and assist potential victims of trafficking among women in the units.
273. Additionally, there are separate housing arrangements in place for women in Detention Units, which aim to ensure their safety and privacy. These arrangements help to create a more secure environment for women who may have experienced violence or trauma.
274. Support services do exist in Finland to cater to the specific needs of migrant women and girls, including those belonging to national or ethnic minorities, who are victims of violence against women. However, the general availability of these specialized evidence-based support services varies regionally and can therefore affect the accessibility.
275. During the asylum interview process, if the case officer becomes aware of gender-based violence or the threat of it, they will provide guidance to the applicant. This guidance includes information about the prohibition of gender based violence in all its forms in Finland. If the applicant has been a victim of violence or other crimes in Finland, the applicant is informed about the possibility of reporting the offense to the Police.
276. In cases where applicants are unable to report the offense themselves, the case officer may make the report with the applicant's consent. Applicants are encouraged to disclose any experiences of violence to the social worker in the reception center. The case officer can also transmit this information to the reception center through a notification of concern.
277. During the asylum interview, if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the applicant is currently being exploited, or if the situation corresponds to a felony offense mentioned in chapter 15, section 10 (563/1998) of the Criminal Code (such as human trafficking, aggravated assault, or aggravated rape), the caseworker is obligated to immediately contact emergency services in urgent situations or the Police in less urgent situations. This allows the Police to take necessary preventative actions.
278. If there are cases of violence against children in Finland, the case officer will initiate child protection measures and report the offense.
279. In cases where potential victims of human trafficking or victims of forced marriage are identified during the asylum procedure (including Dublin procedure), they are referred to the Assistance System with their consent. Referrals can also be made by staff members at reception centers that house and provide services to asylum seekers.
280. Under Section 96 a (194/2015) of the Aliens Act, applicants with special needs arising from vulnerable situations as defined in the Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection (746/2011) or those identified during the asylum procedure, they are provided with support to ensure

they can fully access their rights connected with the asylum procedure as well as fulfill their related responsibilities.

281. Human trafficking may be related to sexual abuse, labor exploitation, forced marriage, begging or coercion into crime, for example. Women and girls are more often victims of human trafficking related to sexual exploitation than men.
282. In the reformed Act on Promotion of Integration (681/2023) the victims of human-trafficking are recognized to be a vulnerable group with special needs regarding recovering and integration. The municipality and wellbeing services counties may be reimbursed for the costs of measures and services related to the victim's status due to the special needs of the victim of trafficking in human beings, as well as other compensation in accordance with the Act on the Promotion of Integration.
283. The Centre of Expertise in Integration of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has published an instruction card<sup>97</sup> in 2022 with which persons engaged in integration work, for example, can identify victims of labor exploitation and human trafficking. The card also provides instructions on what to do if suspicions of abuse or human trafficking arise in a customer service situation.
284. In Åland, there are shelters, therapeutic support, guidance on contacting social welfare, healthcare and medical treatment services in the Kvinnofridslinjen helpline for the victims of violence against women.
285. In order to identify person in vulnerable situations, systematic screening by asking about violence has been introduced at selected clinics within Åland's healthcare service, which has also an action plan for violence in intimate partner relations, forms with questions for screening and a form for a safety plan. These are still being implemented.
286. In addition, there is an action plan on sexual offences in place, including material for documenting injuries. It includes encouraging victims of violence to file a police report and putting them into contact with a social worker.
287. Everyone has right to equal access by law to all services.
288. According to the Sámi Parliament, availability of services in the Sámi homeland is below the national level. The deficiencies in culturally appropriate services in their own language and the lack of such services make it more difficult for Sámi women to use the services.
289. There is no shelter for victims of violence in the Sámi homeland and the distances to the shelter may be as long as several hundreds of kilometers. The long distances, the geographical characteristics of the Sámi homeland and the poor public transport connections may prevent those living in the Sámi homeland from finding help and safety.
290. According to CSOs more needs to be done to better recognize violence while they acknowledges positive developments in general victim services and their availability.
291. CSOs also underline further need for improvements, including intersectionality, in victim support, including in seeking for services by persons with disabilities.

## Article 22: Specialist support services



There have been improvements in special support services for women victims of gender based violence. In general, also understanding of multiple and intersecting needs of victims are better recognized and also taken into consideration when further developing these services in a manner, where individual needs could be effectively addressed.

292. A reference is made to paras 182, 189, 204, 241, 253, and 251 about Victim Support Finland as well as paras 53-56, 84-92 and 243 on shelter services, above.
293. State-funded shelter service offer immediate crisis help, round-the-clock secured housing and psychosocial support, advice and counselling related to acute situations for those who have experienced violence in close relationships or are living under threat of it and their family members.
294. The size of shelters is described by the number of family places. The size of a family place varies, and different shelters have different amounts of family places. If one client arrives at the shelter, one family place is reserved for them. Similarly, if a client and children come to the shelter, one family place is reserved for them, but a larger family may need several family places. The number of clients that can be in one family place varies and is not defined in a binding manner.
295. Shelters have had National Quality Recommendations for the Services of Shelters for Victims of Domestic Violence from 2019 and quality recommendations for the work carried out with children in shelter services<sup>98</sup>. The quality recommendations is a way to ensure high-quality and comprehensive shelter services and practices nationally. During the shelter period, the child's close relationships are supported, considering the best interests of the child and the safety aspects.
296. In addition, THL has, together with the service providers, drafted a joint capacity development programme for shelter services for 2020–2023. The next programme is to be published by the end of 2023.
297. The shelters have uniform working models based on the national quality recommendations. The quality and effectiveness of the service is monitored, and necessary additional services are arranged for the client during the shelter services. Victims can go to a shelter either on their own initiative or on referral. About half of clients come to a shelter under the guidance of other services. An adult client can go to a shelter anonymously. Length of stay is always individual. In 2022, shelters totalled 89,394 housing days (84,462 in 2021), and the average stay per client was 17 days. Staying in a shelter is cost-free for the client.
298. Under the law, shelters are open to both women and men as well as to children arriving with an adult. In 2022, of the adult clients, 91% were female and 9% male. One shelter in Finland caters only women and is located in a secret address.
299. One shelter in the capital region works specifically with immigrant background women, but others also take in clients with an immigrant background. In 2022, for adult clients whose first language was recorded, this was Finnish or Swedish for 69%. Arabic was the most common among other languages with 6%, then Russian with 4%. These figures do not differ significantly from the previous years.
300. The accessibility of shelters has been significantly improved over the past few years and shelter employees have been trained on the special features of violence such as so called honor related violence, FGM, digital violence and violence experienced by persons with disabilities. Every shelter has at least one accessible family place. Also training and information on victims of persons with disabilities

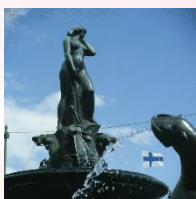


have been organised<sup>99</sup> and help is available for persons with disabilities who have experienced domestic violence<sup>100</sup>.

301. However, shelter services do not reach all victims, including persons using substances who often face violence in close relations. In 2024, a new form of service is tested, where a remote shelter with necessary services is established in supported accommodation for persons who aren't able to live in shelters due to active substance use.
302. There is still need to further strengthen shelter network in areas where such services are still completely lacking and in areas where the service is not yet sufficient. In addition, individual situations are also often such, that it is not reasonable to require to move to a shelter far from their residential area. A shelter is needed in the home region of the indigenous Sámi people, but there has not been a single service provider application.
303. All of the Barnahus-type units offer both forensic and therapeutic expertise. Over 100 new TF-CBT specialists and their supervisors are trained between 2019 and 2024.
304. Curative treatment for FGM victims has been developed during recent years with instructions from 2019 on medical treatment and other support<sup>101</sup>. In addition, various health care authorities, schools, and the Police has also instructions for treating FGM and so called honor related violence<sup>102</sup>.
305. Nollalinja is a free of charge helpline available for 24 hours a day for victims, family members of victims of violence, for professionals and officials who require advice in their work with customers. Nollalinja is staffed by trained and experienced health and social services professionals.
306. Nollalinja helpline is available in Finnish, Swedish and English and in eight foreign languages commonly spoken in Finland (Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Somali, Sorani, Russian, Thai, Spanish) through an interpretation service, which was launched in May 2020. Nollalinja has also had a chat service from March 2021. The average number of chat conversations is 90 per month. The chat service has increased the accessibility of the service and provided a safe and private way to contact the helpline. The chat service is available in Finnish, Swedish and English from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
307. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of calls rose as many other services closed. After the pandemic, call volumes returned to pre-pandemic levels. See Annex 4.
308. The Ombudsman for Equality provides instructions and guidance on sexual and gender-based harassment.
309. CSOs, in particular Monika, Multicultural Women's Association<sup>103</sup>, Sopus, Loisto Settlementti<sup>104</sup>, Didar, Tampere Settlementti<sup>105</sup>, Aurala Settlementti Sopus<sup>106</sup>, Finnish League for Human Rights<sup>107</sup>, Victim Support Finland<sup>108</sup> (RIKU) and Association of Iraqi women<sup>109</sup> provide support services that focus specifically on the migrant women and girls and are specialized in particular in the field of so called honor related violence.<sup>110</sup> The Pro Youth -project has developed a web-based tool for the youth, which enables them to find local support and help in the cases of so called honor related violence<sup>111</sup>.
310. Even if Victim Support Finland (RIKU) is not a specialist support service dedicated only for women victims of violence, all victims of all forms of gender-based violence receive support and assistance from RIKU's services. RIKU has also a specialist service for victims of human trafficking where victims of forced marriages are a typical group of clients.
311. In Åland there is a shelter, counselling on referral and the Kvinnofridslinjen helpline.

312. According to the Sámi Parliament culturally appropriate Sámi-language mental health services, which were established to support Truth and Reconciliation Commission's work, are provided by the Sámi psychosocial support unit Uvjj – Uvjâ – Uvja with a fixed-term agreement until the end of 2023. The mental health service unit is the only unit that provides advice and support and carries out crisis work in all of the three Sámi languages spoken in Finland.
313. Sufficient resources should be allocated to making the methods culturally appropriate, training professionals and the necessary production of information.
314. A new kind of shelter for victims of domestic violence in Pirkanmaa region is planned to be opened in 2024. It receives women facing domestic violence whose shelter period would otherwise end due to active substance use. The service is organized in cooperation between the wellbeing services county and the CSO.
315. CSOs are of a view that number of shelters for families is still insufficient and distributed unequally even though many aspects in combatting violence against women has been developed and improved. CSOs also underline strengthening intersectionality as a whole in this field.

## Article 25: Support to victims of sexual violence

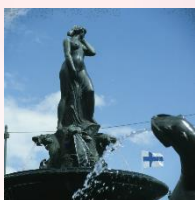


The special support services for victims of sexual violence are well placed in Finland with trained personnel. By the end of 2023 Seri Support Centers will have national coverage, with a total number amounting to 25 centers. Now further efforts would be focused in maintaining, coordination and development work. The preparatory work on support services for Sámi has also started. In addition, many CSOs organize efficient services and good practices for victims of sexual violence financed by various ministries.

316. On Seri Support Centers, see also paras 6, 198-199, 201, 248, and 262.
317. In addition, Seri Support Centers provides forensic examination, support for trauma, psychological help and, if needed, also therapy. Seri Support Centers provide services for patients who arrive to the Centre in a month from the violation with a monitoring time (including STDs) for following six months. Minimum requirements are documented in Guidelines on Carepathways for victims of sexual violence. In future, the Seri Support Centers are planning to provide services without any time limitations. More detailed information on number of visits in Annex 12.
318. The Barnahus-type units assess a proportion of all alleged child sexual abuse cases of which approximately half are girls, mostly between 4 to 15 years of age. The current client registration system does not allow for a more detailed analysis of the gender distribution of children referred for suspected physical and sexual abuse. The reporting and recording system of the units will be developed to enable analyzing gender breakdown.
319. In addition, the Police carry out technical investigations, for example by recording samples. Each police department has a police forensic investigation center whose staff specializes in technical investigations and demanding crime scene investigations. Every police officer in Finland has received basic training in basic crime scene investigation and sample recording.
320. Securing evidence is always a priority to the Police and has to be done without delay. In accordance with the Criminal Investigation Act (805/2011) the investigation has to be conducted without undue delay and crimes committed by or against minors are prioritized accordingly.

321. No timeframe for the analysis of forensic evidence nor the time of the whole pre-trial investigation can be given as there are so many influencing factors.
322. According to the Sámi Parliament, in addition to ensuring the availability and quality of culturally appropriate Sámi-language services, the geographical characteristics of the Sámi homeland should also be taken into account. Long distances and poor public transport connections put the victims' access to help at risk. According to THL, this work has already started in close cooperation with Sami representatives.
323. Information about support services for victims of sexual violence can be found on THL's website in two out of the three Sámi languages spoken in Finland. Developing the production of information is a positive trend, but THL as a communication channel is not accessible to the Sámi. Sufficient resources should be also allocated to the development and production of culturally appropriate Sámi-language services.

### Article 31: Custody, visitation rights and safety



**Violence against women and domestic violence is taken into consideration when deciding on child custody and visitation rights.**

324. The Child Custody and Rights of Access Act (361/1983) is increasingly based on the premise that the child must be protected from all forms of violence.
325. According to section 1(2) of the Act (190/2019), a child shall be ensured good care and upbringing as well as supervision and protection appropriate for his or her age and stage of development. A child should be brought up in a secure and stimulating environment, and he or she should receive an education that corresponds to his or her inclinations and wishes. A child shall be protected from all forms of physical and mental violence, maltreatment and exploitation. Under section 10 (1) (190/2019) a matter concerning child custody and right of access shall, first and foremost, be decided in accordance with the best interests of the child. To this end, special attention shall be paid to how the objectives of child custody and right of access specified in sections 1 and 2 can in future be met in the best possible way.
326. In a case concerning child custody and rights of access, the court shall obtain a report from the social welfare board in accordance with section 16 of the Act (190/2019). The purpose of the report is to provide the court with information about child's family's situation, living conditions, and other circumstances affecting the resolution of the case. In addition to this, the parties may voluntarily present documentation regarding risk assessment. The Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters has published a handbook to support work in demanding divorce situations. The handbook contains useful information and tools on risk assessment for professionals, including judges.
327. The understanding of the harm that witnessing violence in home may cause on the child has improved in Finland. Organizations and the Ombudsman for Children have had a central role in keeping the issue topical. Judges who act as mediators in family cases obtain deeper knowledge and expertise when working alongside their assisting experts in mediation processes. However, the understanding in this



area still relies on single judges' personal interests. The Judicial Training Board develops the planning of trainings for judges and this is likely to improve the situation over time.

328. Information and understanding on domestic violence is distributed to judges in training organized by the National Courts Administration and the Judicial Training Board.<sup>112</sup>
329. In a case concerning child custody or right of access, the court normally requests a report from the social welfare board under section 16 of the Act on Child Custody and Right of Access.
330. In November 2021, THL published a guide for conducting the report<sup>113</sup> including instructions for collecting data from different authorities and other relevant bodies. Notwithstanding secrecy provisions, the social welfare authorities have a statutory right to obtain from other authorities and bodies all information they need for the report. The social welfare authorities and the courts cooperate in each individual case so that all necessary information can be obtained. It should be noted, however, that the report is only one part of the, normally extensive, trial material on the basis of which the court makes its decision.
331. Expert-assisted mediation of custody disputes at the district court is a special mediation service that parents may use when the assistance provided within other divorce services has proved to be insufficient. The procedure is regulated in section 10 of the Act on Mediation in Civil Matters and Confirmation of Settlements in General Courts (394/2011). Matters that concern the status and rights of a child, maintenance payable to a child, and child custody and the right of access are amenable to court mediation. Court mediation shall by law be carried out so that the interests of the child are ensured, and the child's own wishes and opinion, taking into consideration the child's age and maturity, shall be taken into account. When considering whether a settlement can be confirmed, the court shall take due note of the provisions of the Act on Child Custody and Right of Access and the Act on Child Maintenance (704/1975).
332. The mediator is a judge acquainted with family matters, and he or she is assisted by an expert in parenting and child development matters, usually a psychologist or a social worker. This multi-professional pair is equipped to help parents discuss both legal and psycho-emotional issues that may have arisen during the separation and ensure that questions that are essential with regards to the best interests of the child are addressed in the course of mediation, and when a settlement is reached between the parents.
333. Under section 9b (190/2019) of the Act on Child Custody and Rights of Access, the social welfare board may confirm an agreement and a court may decide that meetings between a child and a parent shall take place as supported or supervised meetings or with supervised exchanges. According to the *travaux préparatoires* for the provisions the need for support or supervision should be assessed on a case-by-case basis on the basis of the evidence presented. For the case law see *e.g.* the Supreme Court KKO:2007:71 and KKO:2023:5. Provisions on the arrangement of supported and supervised meetings and supervised exchanges are laid down in the Social Welfare Act (1301/2014).
334. Finnish law does not provide for withdrawal of parental rights. The child protection authorities will take the necessary measures under the Child Welfare Act (417/2017) if the best interests of the child is at risk.
335. According to the Sámi Parliament, for Sámi children, attention should be paid to safeguarding the rights of the child. It would be important to assess the realization of the rights of the child especially when a Sámi child moves outside the Sámi homeland with one parent due to a divorce or separation.
336. According to the Bar Association, it should be noted that Finnish law does not explicitly list any factors as stipulated in Article 31. However, since the law requires the judge to assess custody and visitation



matters in accordance with the child's best interests, practically all the factors asked in questions 32-36 will be taken into account in court proceedings concerning custody and visitation matters.

337. In the context of enacting the law abolishing forced marriages, which came into effect on 1 October 2023, no changes have been made to the provisions regarding child custody based on marriage. The annulment of marriage thus does not have an immediate impact on child custody. As stated above about judges taking into account the best interests of a child, it is likely that courts will consider the significance of abolishing forced marriages in the general assessment of the child's best interests if the mother of a child born from a forced marriage requests sole custody.
338. CSOs underline the need to take violence into consideration in a more extensively manner and recognize the harmful effects of parental violence to children as well as limit parental and visitation rights in order to secure children's safety and best interests. Judges, court-appointed experts, and other legal professionals should have adequate knowledge and training on the special features of violence faced by persons with disabilities. As a positive side, the Supreme Court in its decision (KKO:2023:5) has recognized some of those before mentioned elements.

#### Article 48: Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing



In Finland, mandatory alternative dispute resolution process does not exist. According to Prime Minister Orpo's Government Programme, which was published in June 2023, mediation in family and intimate partner violence cases, as a general rule, will be abandoned.

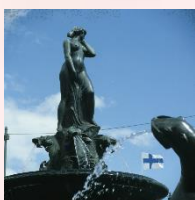
339. In criminal matters the Finnish legislation does not contain any compulsory alternative dispute resolution process such as conciliation or mediation. Conciliation process is always based on an agreement of all parties. Both participation in and making an agreement require a voluntary consent. The consent can be freely withdrawn, without the need to declare reasons, at any time of the process.
340. In addition, a new Finnish study<sup>114</sup> gives empirical evidence of voluntariness of mediation based on data from the nationwide mediation offices' database (SOPU). During the years 2020 and 2021, 43% of the mediation initiatives were not accepted into mediation process. The main reason (47%) was a party's refusal to mediation. 15% of mediation initiatives in mediation process in crimes in close relationships (including intimate partner violence and domestic violence) were interrupted.
341. Alternative dispute resolution (Act on Mediation in Criminal Matters and Certain Disputes; 1015/2005) can lead to decision to dismiss the case if parties reach agreement. Parties must give their consent to sending the matter to mediation and the consent can be cancelled during the mediation process.
342. A model on good practices for mediation of violence in close relationships has also been published<sup>115</sup>. The model includes tools for assessing the preconditions for mediation and for investigating possible repeated violence. So far, the model has been in pilot use.
343. Once the Police have sent an initiative involving violence in close relationship to mediation, all parties involved in the case are personally contacted by the mediation office's professional staff. First is to ensure victim's safety and confidentiality in the discussions. The first encounter can also be carried out in the mediation office.

344. The parties are briefed on details of the mediation process and its potential implications for the criminal process. Their wishes and needs to resolve the matter are also considered and they are assisted to assess whether they want to engage in the mediation process or not. At the same time, it is ensured whether the victim is already covered by support services and whether they receive support. The Legal Aid is also a key entity to which victims and suspects are directed to. The starting point for possible initiation of mediation is therefore the parties' own declaration of their voluntary willingness and that the other legal conditions for mediation are fulfilled.
345. If the mediation process starts, the parties are first met individually with possible support person. The separate meeting continues to discuss the victim's experience on safety, psychological resources, motivation and wishes for mediation. After the separate meetings, the mediation professional staff will re-evaluate the conditions for the mediation process and whether or not to proceed for the joint meeting. A joint meeting will take place about a week after the separate meetings if the victim is still willing to confront the other party. If any reasonable suspicion emerges in the discussions during the process that the consent is not voluntary, the mediation will be interrupted by the mediation office (section 19 of the Act on Mediation in Criminal Matters and Certain Disputes; 1015/2005).
346. THL collects anonymous feedback right after the mediation from customers by a new electronic form adopted in the beginning of 2022. By the end of June 2023, 2466 customers (986 women, 1384 men, 11 other genders, 85 unknown gender), 670 of whom had been in mediation due to intimate partner violence was collected. Based on the feedback, those taken part in mediation due to violence in close relationships are more satisfied than the average mediation customer with the service they received. Feedback is also analyzed by gender (only by men and women). Feedback shows for example that women have participated in mediation voluntarily (mean 4.9 on the Likert scale 1-5)<sup>116</sup>. Furthermore, no systematic differences prevail neither between male and female nor victim and perpetrator satisfaction rates.
347. The Finnish national law does not foresee mandatory participation in alternative dispute resolution in civil law matters. According to the Act on Mediation in Civil Matters and Confirmation of Settlements in General Courts (394/2011), a precondition for court mediation is that the matter is suitable to mediation and a settlement is appropriate in view of the claims of the parties. The commencement of court mediation requires the consent of all parties. Mediation can be terminated at any stage.
348. The expert-assisted court mediation in custody cases is not limited by the characteristic of the case or dispute. A wide range of family histories as well as parental issues can be brought up for negotiation between the parties. The facilitative technique of mediation aims to identify problems and disclose factors that hinder resolving the issues at stake. The mediator encourages disputants to reach their own voluntary solution by exploring each other's deeper interests. The expertise of the assisting mediator is of great importance in recognizing possible red flags. The parties may also be supported by their own lawyers.
349. The Police is particularly careful about suggesting mediation in domestic violence, but practice has shown that mediation can serve families with different root causes that underlie violence. The National Police Board has issued a directive to the police on mediation in criminal cases.
350. Mediation is an independent process separated from pre-trial investigation. The prosecutor may or may not take under consideration the outcome of the mediation process and the outcome has no automatic effect on the judicial process.
351. RIKU's experience of mediation in domestic violence cases is that the safeguards are not as comprehensive and exact as they should be. For example, it is not always clear how repeated violence is interpreted. RIKU is also worried about the rights of victims in mediation of their possibility to get

financial compensations on the same level as in the criminal process. In practice, the way in which the case continues in criminal investigation and in prosecution varies in different police districts and according to the prosecutor.

352. CSOs continue to criticize several elements in mediation. As a positive aspect, the CSOs support Prime Minister Orpo's Government Programme's commitment to abandon mediation in cases of intimate partner violence.

## Articles 49 and 50: General obligations and immediate response, prevention and protection



Crimes are investigated by the Police. However, the lack of adequate/sufficient human resources in the Police affect investigations. Digital preliminary investigation is also under-resourced. In addition, often various forms of violence against women and also domestic violence, in spite of increased reporting, can still be considered underreported.

353. Senior Specialised Prosecutors and Specialised District Prosecutors who prosecute cases of violence against women work in all five prosecution districts in Finland. However, since the number of cases is high, also District Prosecutors prosecute these cases.
354. On 1 October 2023, two legislative amendments entered into force to the Criminal Investigation Act concerning the urgent handling of offences against children (136/2023) and the urgent handling of cases concerning violations of restraining orders (204/2023).
355. A criminal investigation is to be conducted urgently if the injured party is under 18 years of age and the suspected offence is a sexual offence against the injured party or an offence against the injured party's life, health, liberty, privacy, peace or personal reputation. A decision to bring charges must also be made urgently. The main hearing in the court shall be initiated within 30 days of the initiation of the matter. It should however be noted that this does not target women (or girls) expressly.
356. In addition, all criminal cases concerning violations of restraining orders shall be handled urgently in all stages of the criminal proceedings, unless the violation is to be considered minor when assessed as a whole.
357. According to section 9 of the Act on the National Prosecution Authority (32/2019), prosecutors shall ensure that criminal liability is realized in cases being handled by them in an equal, prompt and economical manner as required to ensure the legal protection of the parties concerned and to serve the public interest. The Prosecutor General has issued prosecutors with general instructions on the urgency and order of priority of prosecutors' duties. According to the guidelines, factors requiring urgency and priority must be identified in the overall consideration of the matter on a case-by-case basis, which may take into account, among other things, the length of the judicial proceedings and the nature and significance of the matter for the party concerned. The nature of the matter refers to its difficulty and extent and the significance of the matter to the party, for example, to the fact that matters concerning a more serious act can be considered to have more significance to the parties in a criminal case than to less serious ones.
358. The Ministry of Justice has commissioned a study that examines how cases of violence against women proceed in the criminal justice system. The study will also include such information that explains why



the pre-trial investigation has not progressed and what kind of decisions have been made in the court. The study is carried out by Statistics Finland and will be published at the end of 2023.

359. Seri Support Centers encourage and help, but never press, to report an offence to the Police.
360. HUS Seri Support Center coordinated a research study to clarify Seri Support Center clients' factors on vulnerability, criminal proceedings and experiences of support received<sup>117, 118, 119, 120, 121</sup>, interrelated to reporting to the Police in order to provide more focused support to victims of violence against women. This also intensified multi-sectoral cooperation.
361. In addition, Nollalinja helps victims of violence in many ways, including advising in reporting to the Police and criminal processes.
362. With regard to the Police, it can be noted that Finland has in practice the lowest number of police officers per capita in the EU. During the previous government term, police appropriations and staff numbers were increased so that the number of police officers in Finland has risen to around 7,500. The increase in staff is targeted at all police activities and not just domestic violence.
363. As a result of the centralization of the operations of the Police, the quality of *e.g.* investigation of cases of violence against women, including domestic violence have developed favorably, especially with regard to the main police stations, but there are also large national variations, for example, in the case of long service journeys in remote areas.
364. The main rule is that police resources are not tied to a specific task or activity, but the National Police Board's allocates resources according to the resource allocation model drawn up for the departments. However, the Government may grant so-called "earmarked" funds for some prioritized activity. An example is the additional resources allocated by the previous and current governments to the fight against human trafficking.
365. Through various EU-funded or national projects, measures can also be focused, for example, on developing the prevention of domestic violence. An example is the MARAC project.
366. The Police has centralized operations strongly in recent years. Especially the main police stations (11) have appropriate facilities suitable for hearing children, for example. The same facilities can also be used during the pre-trial investigation in questioning other sensitive criminal cases.
367. An offence can be reported and person interviewed elsewhere than in police stations. The Police have also developed and modernized its electronic services. Today, about half of all crime reports made to the Police are done through the Police's e-service, which is available on the police's website.
368. All 11 operationally independent Police Departments under the National Police Board in Finland, follow the same division in broad terms; Crime Prevention Sector, Public Order and Security Sector, License Sector and administration.
369. The Crime Prevention Sectors of the Police Departments have been built by taking into account the size of the area and the number of police stations. Not all offences are necessarily investigated at all police stations. For example, investigations of organized crime, offences against children, economic crimes, human trafficking offences, sexual offences and domestic violence offences are among those that have been centralized in one or more particular stations. Domestic violence offences are most often investigated in Violent Crime Units, which may have separate groups specializing specifically in domestic violence investigations.



370. The Police has also developed multi-agency cooperation, including prosecutorial cooperation and the MARAC model. In spite of the low number of police officers, crimes of domestic violence has been prioritised.
371. The Police is constantly developing its operations and training to respond to all challenges. The amendment to the Criminal Investigation Act, which entered into force in autumn 2023, requires the Police to prioritize the investigation of crimes against persons in vulnerable situations, with special training for investigators. This will further increase specialization and, for example, the centralization of domestic violence investigations.
372. The Police continuously measures (barometer) the level of trust in Police in Finland. This level has been high. The preventive work of the Police also promotes trust with regard to minorities. The Police are also actively present in the social media. In addition, authorities and organizations have been working in Finland for years to increase reporting activity, as fear and shame have been dispelled by offering various support services.
373. A brochure entitled "What happens to me now"<sup>122</sup> has been produced advising young victims of sexual crimes with information on, among other things, different forms of support and contact information available as well as explaining the various concepts for young persons, like guardian, social welfare authority, lawyer, support person. The brochure also explains the purpose of the pre-trial investigation and questioning.
374. The Police University College and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) are involved in the EU-funded multinational IMPROVE project (Improving Access to Services for Victims of Domestic Violence by Accelerating Change in Frontline Responder Organizations), which aims to develop frontline actors in combatting and speeding up the implementation of policies against domestic violence. At the same time, the aim is to identify the reasons why domestic violence is not reported to the authorities. The project will also create an AI-based chatbot to support and provide information to victims of domestic violence. The chatbot acts as a gateway to the service network and lowers the threshold for contacting authorities. In addition, the project will improve the training material created in the previous IMPRODOVA project<sup>123</sup>.
375. In addition, reception centers in Finland provide support services, as referred to in paras 274-284.
376. In cases of suspected human trafficking, referrals are made to the Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking which provides advice on reporting offenses, navigating the criminal procedure, and accessing legal aid. With the client's consent, the system also supports them in reporting crimes and, if necessary, helps in obtaining legal counsel and a victim support person.
377. The website of the Finnish Immigration Service, Migri.fi is also planned to include dedicated pages about intimate partner violence and to provide information and resources on the topic.
378. In the asylum process, several measures are in place to address the specific needs and safety of individuals, particularly regarding gender-based violence, including
- Applicants are interviewed individually, even if their spouse or relative is present in the country. Minors seeking asylum with their parents are also interviewed alone, with parental consent.
  - Trained and professional interpreters are provided during asylum interviews, and family members are not used as interpreters.
  - Confidentiality is emphasized to the applicant during the asylum interview, covering both the case officer and the interpreter.
  - If there is information indicating gender based violence in the applicant's claims, a female interpreter and case officer are booked for the interview.

- If gender based violence is disclosed during the interview, the interview can be interrupted if the applicant requests a female interpreter or case officer.
- Free legal counsel during the asylum interview, which was temporarily abolished, has been reinstated through amendments to the Aliens Act in 2016.
- Written guidance is available on topics such as FGM, forced marriage, domestic violence, and individuals without a safety net. These guidelines also provide information on examining gender based violation claims during the asylum interview.

379. The Asylum Unit has specialized senior advisers who focus on gender based violence, human trafficking, LGBTIQ+ matters and vulnerability. They are responsible for drafting guidelines, providing training, offering advice on specific cases, monitoring case practices, and informing the entire unit about these subjects. The senior advisers ensure the quality of guidance, training, and consultation. Finnish Immigration Service has also actively participated in developing a common EUAA practical guide on the subject for reception and case-workers in the asylum procedure.

380. Guidance on vulnerability and LGBTIQ+ matters have also been updated as following:

- 9 July 2020: Update on the guidance regarding the granting of a residence permit for individual and humanitarian reasons (Aliens Act 52 §).
- 22 May 2023: New guidance and training on the comprehensive consideration of the child's best interests in the asylum process.
- 5 January 2023: Update on the Guidance on reporting crimes detected by the Finnish Immigration Service.

381. The Police University College is responsible for various levels training of police officers, including specialists' training on all aspects of policing.

382. The National Police Board has issued a broad number of directives and handbooks on specific areas of policing in order to ensure equal standard of policing throughout the country and to give support to every police officer in their work, available in the Police Intranet and are included in the curriculum of the Police University College and are implemented through in-service training.

383. For example, the National Police Board has issued a directive (POL-2018-26808) on restraining orders in 2019 to be updated in 2023 in accordance with the amendment to the Act on Restraining Orders which entered into force 1 October 2023, which expanded the scope of application and enabled, among other things, electronic surveillance. A related training will also be arranged.

384. Restraining orders have also been included in the National Police Board's directive of 1 July 2020 on police action in cases of domestic violence, intimate partner violence and violence against women (POL-2020-28566) and extensively in the Operational Handbook for Intervention and Prevention of Domestic Violence issued on 23 March 2022, MARAC Handbook, as well as the guidelines for first responders.

385. The National Police Board has issued a directive on Children in police and pre-trial investigations (POL-2019-34669) on 1 January 2020 and a handbook on investigating violent and sexual crimes against children.

386. Other directives include a directive on Addressing human trafficking and similar offences and assisting victims of human trafficking (POL-2020-38265) given on 1 October 2020 and on Referral of victims of crime and mediation in criminal cases (POL-2018-41886) given on 1 November 2019 as well as a working tool on Honor Related Crimes and a handbook for first responders in 2020-21.

387. In addition, several other directives on policing, specifically on investigation crimes also cover these subjects, like tactical and technical guidelines on investigation, forensic evidence, interviewing, etc.

388. According to the current practices, legislative measures have been taken in Finland to issue a renewable residence permit to migrant women who are victims of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention. These measures are taken under specific sections of the Aliens Act.
389. Section 52 a (1) (619/2006) of the Aliens Act allows a temporary residence permit specifically if a migrant woman is a victim of human trafficking. Additionally, if the victim of violence is involved in an ongoing investigation or court proceedings related to a crime, she may be granted a temporary residence permit based on this provision.
390. A victim of domestic violence or a victim of violence against women will qualify also for another type of residence permit, such as international protection or a permit based on an individual human reason.
391. Section 54 (7) (121/2018) of the Aliens Act is applied when the victim might be eligible for a permanent residence permit.
392. The Sámi Parliament underlines that the distrust caused by various existing factors may prevent from reporting the violence to the Police or seeking and receiving help from social welfare. Domestic violence and child welfare needs are often considered private matters, which may make circumstances for intervening even more due to the cultural difference. The resources allocated to culturally appropriate Sámi-language services should be sufficient so that they would ensure the realization of sufficient services.
393. CSOs, with a reference to a report by the Deputy Chancellor of Justice, underline several shortages in Police proceedings in investigations of sexual and domestic violence.

## Article 51: Risk assessment and risk management



There are several effectively coordinated risk assessment tools available to estimate violence against women in Finland. One of the main purposes for risk assessment tools is the prevention of violence. The methods and cooperation is constantly developed and professionals dealing with issues of violence receive also training and updates.

394. MARAC multi professional risk assessment method has been in use in Finland from 2010 onwards when assessing risks in violence against women, including so called honor related violence.<sup>124</sup> However, MARAC-method is not obligatory nor nationwide. MARAC has always victims' interest at the core and includes safety planning as well.
395. In 2023, all together 39 local MARAC working groups are functioning. In every wellbeing services county, there is at least one local MARAC working group functioning, except in Helsinki. National work on widening MARAC-method is ongoing with multiple training elements and intensifying coordination in order to achieve more unified methods for all MARAC working groups.
396. Shelters and social care are main actors to send persons to MARAC-assessment.
397. In addition, shelters use Suojassa -method in assessing needs for children who have faced or witnessed violence. This method enables to recognize children's needs, including protective factors. The method has been developed from a Swedish model called iRiSk<sup>125</sup>.



398. Suojassa -method includes several phases, namely fact finding on facts and initial estimations on all forms and length of violence, including witnessed violence with separate interviews for children and adults. Risk assessment relies on five sectors: acute risk a child faces, perpetrators dangerousness, child's activities in violent situations, child's risk and safety factors as well as risks factors endangering child's development.
399. Suojassa -method includes as well MARAC multi-professional risk assessment formula and if needed, AUDIT (Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test) –formula. Children between 9 and 17 are questioned on possible involvement in adults' conflicts, which is then mirrored to the family's situation.
400. A model for assessing threats of FGM<sup>126</sup> is not standardized nor obligatory, but it enables to map risks for FGM. The use of this method will be assessed in 2023 as part of the midterm evaluation of the FGM Action Plan.
401. In recent years, the number of migrants has increased and partly because of that, so called honor related violence, FGM and forced marriages have not only increased in reporting but also received more attention in national policies, CSOs activities and in the media. Cases have begun to come to light more frequently and national action programmes<sup>127, 128, 129</sup> are to tackle these more effectively.
402. There have also been several prevalence studies on FGM<sup>130</sup>. According to those and national estimates there can be around 10 000 women living with FGM in Finland. According to the School Health Promotion Study there are also under-aged girls who have undergone FGM but there is no research evidence nor court cases on the actual pursuit of FGM in Finland.
403. There are no comprehensive prevalence studies on the cases of so called honor related violence or forced marriage in Finland yet. According to statistics of the shelters<sup>131, 132, 133</sup> number of customers admitted at shelters for victims of so called honor related violence was 211 in 2020, 162 in 2021 and 101 in 2022. Also, the Assistance system for victims of human trafficking reports of cases related to forced marriage in the system. In 2021 there were 176 cases and in 2022 there were 221 cases<sup>134</sup>. See also paras 78 and 79.
404. Also, CSOs working on violence against women have reported over 400 cases of so called honor related violence in 2021<sup>135</sup>. So called honor related violence has begun to be better recognized among native Finnish communities, for example in old conservative Christian religious communities and among ethnic minorities who have lived in Finland for a long time.
405. Digital dimensions of violence against women have been given more attention in Finland in the past few years. Latest research<sup>136</sup> shows, for example, that digital violence is the most common form of violence in young persons (dating/intimate partner) relationships. There is also better understanding of the digital dimensions of violence partly because the media and CSOs have given more attention to it. Professionals in social and health care sector are offered more training and tools related to digital violence, for example, a mapping tool concerning digital violence and coercive control. This is created especially for the shelter services, but it is available online for anyone to use<sup>137</sup>.
406. In 2022, THL published an online training on digital violence, which is openly available to the public. In particular, it is aimed at professionals and students in the social and health sectors as well as in education and security. Digital violence online training raises awareness of digital violence, stalking and coercive control in close relationships. The online training is intended to help to identify different forms of digital violence and its complexity with increased capacity for professionals to address it<sup>138</sup>.



407. In recent years, coercive control has been given more attention at least amongst professionals, policymakers and researchers. According to Prime Minister Orpo's Government Programme<sup>139</sup>, published in June 2023, the Government will examine the need to criminalize coercive control in Finland.
408. As regards to violence against children, the mid-term evaluation of the Non-Violent Childhoods Action Plan<sup>140</sup> added new measures specifically on (1) violence between children in educational institutions; (2) violence in young persons' intimate relationships; and (3) prevention, intervention and consequences of street violence among minors.
409. According to a recent study, 45% of girls (aged 16-17) who had been in a relationship at least once had experienced violence by their partner<sup>141</sup>. Psychological violence was the most common form of intimate partner violence experienced by young persons, but more than one in ten girls in a relationship had also experienced physical or sexual violence by their partner.
410. The Ministry of Justice published a memorandum on the punishability of forcing a person into marriage at the end of 2021<sup>142</sup> and written statements on the memorandum has been received. The Government has already started preparing the next steps in accordance with the Prime Minister Orpo's Government Programme.
411. A working group of the Ministry of Justice examined different regulatory options to clarify the punishability of FGM in the Criminal Code. FGM is currently punishable as assault or aggravated assault. The working group assessed a number of different regulatory options, all of which included problematic aspects in the working group's opinion. The working group did not end up proposing any amendments to the Criminal Code in order to clarify the punishability of FGM<sup>143</sup>. The Government is preparing the next steps on this.
412. Funding for so called honor related violence has recently increased. FGM is seen nowadays more closely as a form of violence against women than as a SRHR issue, which has also brought more funding for the national level to FGM prevention and response. THL has had permanent funding to tackle so called honor related violence at national level since 2021.
413. In 2023, one of the Nollalinja helpline marketing campaigns was targeted at young persons aged 15–25, using the Jodel application as a new tool. The campaigns aimed to raise awareness among young on dating violence and they reached young well.
414. CSOs from Finland, Italy and Jordan have developed an Erasmus+ -funded "The Pro Youth" –project, which is a web-based tool and application to enable youth to find local support and help in the cases of so called honor related violence.<sup>144</sup>
415. The asylum processes give now also more attention to risks of FGM, so called honor related violence and forced marriage. The risk of reinfibulation can also be considered as a ground for international protection.
416. The Police uses different assessment methods, such as a protection needs assessment that is carried out in all cases in line with the EU Victims' Rights Directive and a Manual issued by the Ministry of Interior. An individual assessment for protection needs is made in cooperation with the victim taking under consideration all stages during the judicial process.
417. In addition, see paras 62-63, 240-242, 249, 365, 370, 394-396 and 399 on MARAC.
418. MARAC enables the Police to prevent recurrent intimate partner violence and target actions to improve victim's safety in cases where the risk of violence is high. It is essential that the risk assessment combine

the assessment of the situation by different actors, its severity and the measures that can be taken to help the victim.

419. The various cooperation mechanisms and protocols steering the work are described in detail in paras 249-253.
420. The National Police Board has issued several directives for police operations in investigating cases of violence against women. All these are followed in cases of domestic violence, intimate partner violence and violence against women. In addition, the following guidelines by the National Police Board must be taken into account on a case-by-case and comprehensive basis: Directive of victims of crime and mediation in criminal matters, Children in police activities and pre-trial investigations, Restraining orders, Intervention in human trafficking and similar crimes, and assistance to victims of human trafficking. They all outline how the cooperation is carried out to ensure the protection of the victim.
421. In 2021, the National Police Board issued instructions, a Field Memorandum on Monitoring and Emergency Operations (KEMU), for emergency tasks concerning domestic violence. The purpose is to support both intervention in domestic violence and risk assessment, which are binding measures for the authorities. The guidelines also clarify that domestic violence, even if it is misdemeanor, is an offence subject to official prosecution and must be reported as a crime. The guidelines emphasize the comprehensive assessment of cases of domestic violence and the guidance of the victim to support and assistance.
422. In criminal cases, especially cases of domestic violence, the Police register a child welfare notification to child welfare authorities whenever underage children are involved. This leads always to assess child's needs by the child welfare authorities, as well as family's overall situation.
423. Follow-up research on homicides has been carried out in Finland for years, and data collection expanded by the Police at the University of Helsinki (KRIMO)<sup>145</sup>.
424. The Governments reporting and research activity project was carried out in 2021-2023 on chains of events in intimate partner killings against women. Partnerships covered current or completed marriage, co-habitation and dating relationship and included violence directed at a former or current partner resulting in the death of the victim.
425. CSOs underline that MARAC risk assessment should also cover perpetrator angle as is done in "Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination" (MATAC), where attention is given to the dangerousness of the perpetrator in order to concentrate on elements that aim at ending violence perpetrated by the perpetrator, and for further training on dynamism of domestic violence. In addition, disability should be included in risk assessments as persons with disabilities face more violence. Intersectionality should also be considered in risk assessments.

## Article 52: Emergency barring orders



Legislation on restraining orders was amended in 2023. The threshold for imposing a restraining order *ex officio* and to promote the use of a temporary restraining order to protect the victim in situations where the victim is in immediate danger to his or her life or health is now lower. Electric monitoring focuses on strengthening and intensifying the supervision of the implementation of the restraining orders. These amendments are measures developed to answer effectively to the requirements of the Istanbul Convention.

426. In 2022, the government passed a legislative reform that aims to enhance the effectiveness of restraining orders, reduce violations of restraining orders and, in particular, increase the safety of victims of intimate partner violence.<sup>146</sup>
427. According to section 11 (711/2004) of the Act on Restraining Orders (898/1998)<sup>147</sup>, a restraining order may be imposed as temporary. A temporary restraining order is imposed by an official with powers of arrest. A temporary restraining order may also be imposed by a court. An official with powers of arrest shall, *ex officio*, impose a temporary restraining order if the apparent need for protection of a person at risk to life or health requires that the restraining order be issued immediately.
428. Section 11 (202/2023) of the Act was amended in connection with the abovementioned legislative reform. The wording of the Section was modified in order to lower the threshold for imposing a restraining order *ex officio* and to promote the use of a temporary restraining order to protect the victim in situations where the victim is in immediate danger to his or her life or health. Before the reform, it was required that the person in need of protection due to his or her fear or some other reason is unable to apply for a restraining order himself or herself. An official with the powers of arrest should impose a temporary restraining order on his or her own initiative in a situation where, on the basis of a risk assessment, it is clear that the person is at risk of serious violence from which the restraining order may protect him or her.
429. According to section 12 of the Act on Restraining Orders, the officials with powers of arrest must, without delay and at the latest within three days, bring their decision to impose a temporary restraining order up for consideration in the competent district court. The court must take the matter up for consideration at the latest within seven days of the date of the imposition of the temporary restraining order. The temporary restraining order shall be complied with immediate effect unless otherwise ordered by the court handling the matter.
430. According to section 12 of the Act, if an official with powers of arrest has imposed a temporary inside-the-family restraining order, the district court must hold the main hearing within a week of the date when the official with powers of arrest brought his decision to impose a temporary inside-the-family restraining order up for consideration in the district court. If the main hearing is cancelled, it must be rescheduled to be held at the latest within two weeks of the date when the main hearing was intended to be held.
431. In the reform mentioned above, a new section to the Act on Restraining Orders was added. According to section 11 a of the Act (202/2023), the police or the prosecutor shall ask the person protected by a temporary restraining order whether he or she consents to forwarding his or her contact information to the provider of support services and, if the person protected by the restraining order consents to it, forward the contact information without undue delay. The police or the prosecutor shall also inform the person on whom a temporary restraining order has been imposed of the available support services.



432. In addition, a new section 14 a (202/2023) concerning legal aid was added to the Act. According to this section, a court may appoint a counsel for an applicant of a restraining order or for a person whom the restraining order is intended to protect, if the grounds for the application are a suspicion of an offence against the life, health or liberty of the person to be protected by the restraining order, and the seriousness of the offence suspected thereof, taking into consideration the personal circumstances and other circumstances of the person to be protected by the restraining order.
433. The aim of the new sections is to improve referrals to support services in restraining order matters, to improve the provision of information on available services and to expand the right of persons protected by restraining orders to receive legal aid.
434. According to section 3 (711/2004) of the Act on Restraining Orders, in accordance with what is ordered in the decision in the matter, the person on whom a restraining order has been imposed, may not meet the person being protected or otherwise contact or try to contact this person. It is also forbidden to follow and observe the person being protected. In addition, a person on whom an inside-the family restraining order has been imposed must leave the residence where he or she and the person protected permanently live together, and he or she may not return there.
435. According to section 3 of the Act, the restraining order does not apply to contacts for which there is an appropriate reason and that are manifestly necessary for a specific reason. This section was amended in connection of the reform mentioned above. According to the amended section, the contact must be, in addition to be appropriately reasoned, necessary for a specific reason in order to be allowed. The purpose of the clarification of the wording is to emphasize that a necessary and appropriate communication is permitted only in exceptional circumstances that could not be taken into account in a restraining order decision. The aim of the amended wording was to improve the safety of a person protected by the order.
436. If a restraining order is imposed on a parent to protect his or her child, the parent on whom the restraining order has been imposed is not, as a rule, entitled to meet the child or otherwise keep in touch with the child during the period of validity of the restraining order. When considering the content of a restraining order, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration.
437. A restraining order imposed for the protection of a parent has no legal effect on the custody or right of access of the common children of the person protected by the restraining order and the person subject to the restraining order. The prohibition to contact the protected person applies only to the person for whose protection the restraining order has been imposed. However, a restraining order must be taken into account as one factor when assessing the arrangement of child custody and right of access in the best interests of the child. According to section 10 of the Act on Child Custody and Right of Access (361/1983)<sup>148</sup>, a matter concerning child custody and right of access shall, first and foremost, be decided in accordance with the best interests of the child. When making the decision, the obligation to protect the child from violence laid down in section 1 of the Act, including the obligation to protect the child against violence between spouses that is not directly directed at the child, must be taken into account (Government proposal 88/2018 vp, pp. 35 and 56).
438. As mentioned above, a restraining order does not apply to contacts for which there is an appropriate reason and that are manifestly necessary for a specific reason (Act on Restraining Orders, section 3).
439. According to the Act on Restraining Orders, section 8, in a restraining order matter, the court must issue a written decision stating (1) the name of the authority that decided the matter, (2) the date of the decision, (3) the name of the applicant of the restraining order, (4) the name of the person against whom the restraining order has been applied for and the name of the person protected by the restraining order, (5) a short account of the matter, (6) the decision and the reasons for the decision and (7) the legal provisions applied.



440. If a restraining order is imposed, the decision must include a specification of the contents of and possible exceptions in the restraining order and a notification of the threat of penalty for breach of the restraining order. An exception may be, for example, the realization of the right of access to the child with precise terms and conditions (see Government proposal 41/1998 vp, pp. 22).
441. One of the main amendments of the abovementioned reformation was the introduction of an electronically monitored restraining order. This type of restraining order is intended to be used to protect a person at risk to life or health. Electronic monitoring may be linked to an extended restraining order, in which case it also applies to being in the vicinity of the permanent residence, holiday residence or workplace of the person being protected or of another comparable place specified separately. The electronic monitoring is intended to be used in the most serious cases, if the monitoring is necessary to prevent a threat of an offence against life, health or liberty and it is not unreasonable considering the seriousness of the threatening offence, the circumstances of the person subject to supervision and other circumstances in the matter (Act on Restraining Orders, section 3 a; 202/2023). A court decides on the monitoring and the Prison and Probation Services is responsible for its technical supervision. An electronically monitored restraining order may be imposed for a maximum of six months. When renewing an electronically monitored restraining order, it may be imposed for a maximum of three months (Act on Restraining Orders, section 7; 202/2023).
442. Electronic monitoring is carried out by means of a device installed over the supervised person, such as an ankle tag. The device will send an alarm in case the person enters the prohibited area defined in the court order. The rough estimate of a number of electronically monitored orders is 50 per year.
443. In addition, one of the goals of the reform mentioned above was to speed up the handling of criminal cases concerning a violation of a restraining order. Therefore, according to the amended legislation, these criminal cases shall be handled urgently in all stages of the criminal proceedings, unless the violation is to be considered minor when assessed as a whole.
444. It is noteworthy that, in practice, the Police are only responsible for issuing temporary restraining orders, and follow-up in its various forms is the responsibility of other authorities, with all of whom cooperation is also developed in these matters by arranging joint training and through the USEL - A Victim, Mediation and Restraining Order-Network started in 2019. The objective of the USEL network is to develop the Police's expertise in matters related to the rights of crime victims, mediation and guardianship in criminal cases, and restraining orders in cooperation with other authorities and organizations. The network is not dealing with specific cases, but enables practitioners to come together and discuss about problems in cooperating as well as to serve as a training platform.
445. Legislation allowing electronic monitoring of restraining orders entered into force on 1 October 2023. The Police have already given a directive to its staff on measures to be taken with respect to emergency restraining orders and cooperate closely with other authorities on the matter.
446. CSOs welcome the amendments in restraining order legislation. However, they have some concerns in cases, where courts consider visiting rights in cases where violence has occurred.

## Article 53: Restraining or protection orders



Several legislative and other measures have been taken to strengthen the effective impact of restraining orders and protection orders.

447. In 2022, the Government passed a legislative reform that aims to enhance the effectiveness and reduce violations of restraining orders and, in particular, increase the safety of victims of intimate partner violence.<sup>149</sup>
448. The prerequisites for imposing a restraining order are set out in the Act on Restraining Orders. A restraining order can be imposed in various different threatening situations. A restraining order may be imposed due to a threat of any kind of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention.
449. According to section 2 of the Act, a restraining order may be imposed if there are reasonable grounds to assume that the person against whom the order is applied for is likely to commit an offence against the life, health, liberty or privacy of the person who feels threatened or in some other way severely harass this person.
450. An inside-family restraining order may be imposed, if the person against whom the restraining order is applied for, judged by the threats he or she has made, his or her previous offences or other behavior, is likely to commit an offence against the life, health or liberty of the person who feels threatened, and the imposition of a restraining order is not unreasonable with regard to the severity of the impending offence, the circumstances of the persons living in the same household and other facts presented in the case.
451. A restraining order or a protection order may be used in order to protect anybody from an offence against life, health, liberty or privacy or a threat of such an offence or some other kind of severe harassment. Thus, children may also be protected through a restraining order.
452. In addition, see paras 434-437.

## Article 56: Measures of protection



Measures of protection have been further developed with a focus on protection of privacy, and related to victims, perpetrators and witnesses' rights. Protection of privacy and information to the victims on certain issues related to perpetrators have been developed and increased, including also support services.

453. According to subsection 1 of section 19 of chapter 4 of the Criminal Investigation Act (805/2011), the criminal investigation authority shall inform the victim without undue delay of the victim's right to receive a notification of release of a prisoner or remand prisoner and of leave of prison or other detention as provided in subsection 2 of section 4 of chapter 19 of the Imprisonment Act (767/2005), subsection 2 of section 1 of chapter 16 of the Remand Imprisonment Act (768/2005) and subsection 2 of section 2 of chapter 16 of the Act on the Treatment of Persons in Police Custody (841/2006), when the investigation involves rape, aggravated rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, sexual abuse, rape of a child, aggravated rape of a child, sexual assault on a child, aggravated sexual assault on a child,

sexual abuse of a child, manslaughter, murder, killing, aggravated assault, preparation of an aggravated crime against life or health, aggravated breach of domestic peace, aggravated deprivation of liberty, human trafficking, aggravated human trafficking, hostage-taking, preparation for hostage-taking, stalking, aggravated robbery or preparation of aggravated robbery, or attempting or participating in such an offence. Making the notification requires that it is not estimated to endanger the life or health of the prisoner or remand prisoner.

454. According to subsection 2 of section 19 of chapter 4 of the Criminal Investigation Act, if the victim wishes to receive the notification referred to in subsection 1, the victim must notify the criminal investigation authority or the prosecutor and provide necessary contact details for filing the notification. The criminal investigation authority or the prosecutor must notify the court of the victim's request.
455. In addition, the Imprisonment Act, the Remand Imprisonment Act, and the Act on the Treatment of Persons in Police Custody contain discretionary provisions on a notification that is given to victims who have not requested a notification and persons other than the victim. According to these provisions, the victim or any other person may be notified of the release and the departure of a prisoner or remand prisoner if there are reasonable grounds to suspect, due to the behavior of the prisoner or remand prisoner or the threats presented by the prisoner or remand prisoner, that he or she will commit an offence against the life, health or liberty of the victim, a person other than the victim, or a person close to them.
456. The notification shall be made with discretion. The notification may not be made against the will expressed by the victim or the other person at risk.
457. The Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999) applies to criminal investigations and the consideration of charges. According to section 24 of the Act, secret official documents include documents containing information on sensitive matters related to the private life of the victim, as well as documents containing information on the victim, if access would violate the rights of the victim or victim's memory or family members, unless access is necessary for the performance of an official duty.
458. Section 7 of chapter 11 of the Criminal investigation Act (805/2011) contains the provision of information on the criminal investigation. According to the section, the name or picture of a person may be publicized only if it is necessary in order to solve the offence, apprehend the person suspected of the offence, prevent a new offence or prevent harm caused by the offence.
459. According to section 6 of the Act on the Publicity of Court Proceedings in General Courts (370/2007), the court may order that the identity of the victim be kept secret in a criminal case, or in an application matter related to such a criminal case, concerning a particularly sensitive aspect of victim's private life.
460. Under Section 9 of the Act, a trial document shall be kept secret in so far as it contains sensitive information on matters related to a person's private life, health, disability or social welfare, or information on the victim, if access would violate the rights of the victim or the victim's memory or family members. Under section 15 of the Act, the court may decide that an oral hearing shall be conducted in full or to the extent necessary without the presence of the public, if sensitive information is presented on matters relating to the private life, health, disability or social welfare of a person.
461. The Criminal Investigation Act, the Act on the Openness of Government Activities, the Criminal Procedure Act (689/1997) and the Act on the Publicity of Court Proceedings in General Courts contain provisions that limit the publicity of the victim's contact details. The Police administration has issued accordingly a directive on amending explicitly gender as one of the motives of hate crimes. This will enter into force on 1 November 2023.

462. According to paragraph 6 of section 15 and section 20 of the Act on the Publicity of Court Proceedings in General Courts (370/2007), the court may restrict the presence of the public during open proceedings if this is necessary to protect a witness, another person to be heard or a party or a person related to such person, against a threat to his or her life or health or if the person to be heard is in need of special protection measures. If special protection needs are required, the victim may also be heard in a trial behind a screen or via video connection. The questioning of a victim may also in some cases be video-recorded and the recording then be used as evidence in a trial, for example if the victim is under 18 years of age or a victim of a sexual offence or human trafficking if the hearing in court would endanger the victim's health or cause other similar significant harm (section 24, 51 and 52 of chapter 17 of the Code of Judicial Procedure; 4/1734).
463. A party heard for evidentiary purposes, a witness or an expert witness may be heard in the main hearing without the presence of a party or another person if the court deems that this is appropriate and such hearing is necessary in order to protect the person being heard or a person related to said person from a threat directed at life or health or if the person to be heard is in need of special protection measures (subsection 1 of section 51 of chapter 17 of the Code of Judicial Procedure).
464. In addition to the above-mentioned, there are separate waiting areas for victims in some courthouses so the victim and the accused person will not have to wait in the same space.
465. The Police refer all victims of crime to support services in accordance with law. The Victim Support Finland (RIKU) has nationwide presence. The government-run THB Victim Assistance System is the prime support provider in cases of human trafficking. The Police work closely with both actors and RIKU is widely represented in police premises to ensure swift support.
466. The National Police Board has issued directives on referral to victim support. Victims are occasionally referred to other organizations catering for victim support on a local level. Only RIKU and the human trafficking Victim Assistance System have nation-wide coverage.
467. On Victim Support Finland's (RIKU) general role in providing support services for victims. See also paras 189, 254-258, 309-311, 351 and 465. One of the main tasks of RIKU is to make sure that the victim understands her rights and can use her rights in practice. RIKU refers clients to legal services when a lawyer is needed and helps the clients in minimizing possible costs of getting legal assistance.



### Part III: Emerging trends on violence against women and domestic violence

468. Hate speech online and even misogyny have increased. As a response, the Criminal Code was amended in early 2023 to add gender as one of the "hate motives" (1129/2022). An offence committed for reasons such as "misogyny" can therefore be a legal aggravating circumstance. In 2023, the National Police Board is to issue a new hate crime directive that takes the amendment into account.
469. Since the adoption of GREVIO's baseline evaluation report, Finland has made progress regarding access to asylum and international protection for women victims of violence against women.
470. Written guidance specifically addressing issues such as FGM, forced marriages, domestic violence, and individuals without a safety net, has been developed. These guidelines provide case officers with comprehensive information on examining claims related to gender-based violence during the asylum interview. Regular updates to these guidelines are made based on the needs of case workers, evolving legal practices, and feedback from legality control processes.
471. Special attention is given to gender of case officers and interpreters assigned to cases where the applicants' claims refer to gender based violence or human trafficking. This ensures a sensitive and supportive environment during the asylum process.
472. The importance of considering cumulative claims and vulnerability factors when assessing claims related to violence against women in an intersectional manner is recognised.
473. Finland has focused training efforts on the identification of references to gender based violence and human trafficking in asylum cases. The objective is to ensure that case officers have the necessary knowledge and skills to identify such claims, allowing for their proper assessment and consideration during the asylum process.
474. As an example, CSOs have underlined that there is increasing awareness of domestic violence experienced by older adults at home. Ageing in place policy means, that more and more older adults are residing at home, and the stringent resourcing of care services means that more of them are not receiving the care they need.<sup>150</sup> Neglect and violence can occur also in professional side, when not enough information, services or care are not given.<sup>151</sup>
475. In addition, CSOs underline the importance of considering variously occurring situations in the concept of violence, especially when the victim is a person with disability. Persons with disabilities are often more dependent on other individuals. The violator can for example be a personal assistant, a relative or another assisting person, which makes it harder for the victim to break free. This involves neglect of assistance, economic abuse, physical, and psychological violence. It is also important to further strengthen the accessibility to shelter.

## Part IV: Administrative data and statistics

476. Statistics are annexed to this report.

477. CSOs underline the need to further develop intersectionality in statistics, including disability and hate crimes.

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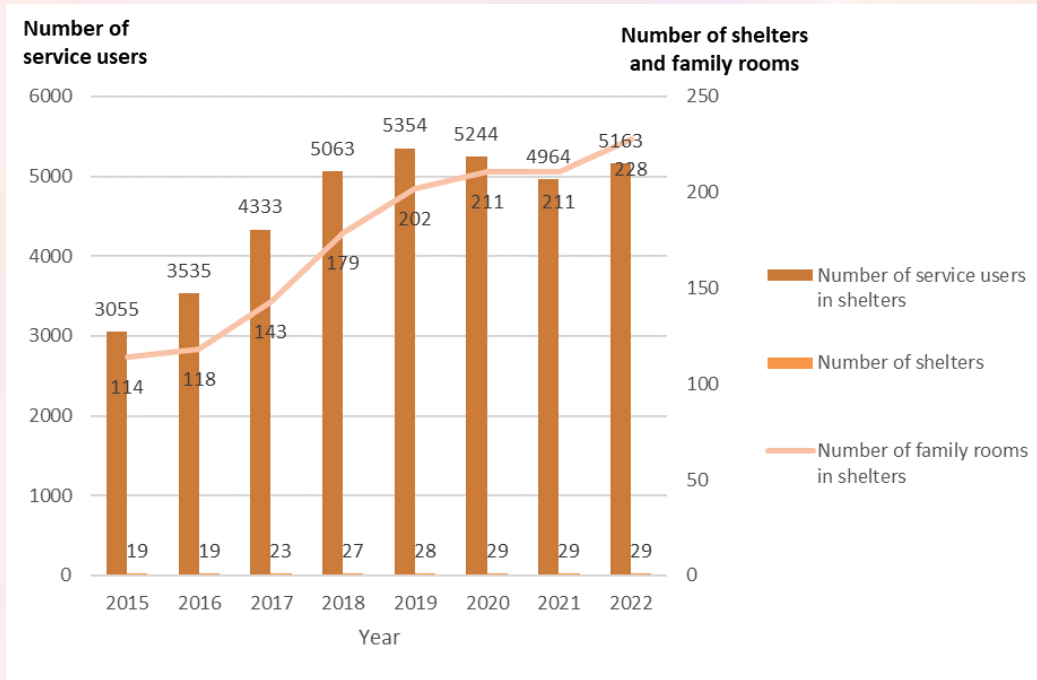
## APPENDIX

ANNEX 1: Personnel of public legal aid offices					
Professionals	Number of professionals trained	Is this training mandatory?	Frequency	Training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols	Please describe the content and duration of the training
Personnel of public legal aid offices (public legal aid attorneys & legal aid secretaries)	54 persons	No	2 training days in 2021		Themes: violence against women as a phenomenon, recognizing violence against women, status and rights of victims, guidelines for work – 4 h per training
Personnel of public legal aid offices (public legal aid attorneys & legal aid secretaries)	10 persons	No	2 training days in 2023		Themes: Violence against women as a phenomenon, status and rights of victims, recognizing violence against women, encountering the victim, taking violence against women into account in the work of an attorney – 2,5 h per training
Public legal aid and guardianship offices' personnel	approx. 45 persons	No	one training day in 2023, which was recorded and the recording of the training can be viewed during 2023		Theme: Narcissism and domestic abuse. The objective of the training was to increase understanding of narcissism and intimate partner violence as phenomena. The objective was also to strengthen the ability to identify the appearance in customer work and provide tools for working with a violent/narcissistic customer – 3,5 h per training day
Public legal aid attorneys	100 persons	No	one training day in 2023, which was recorded		Theme: Reform of the Act on sexual offences. The purpose of the training was to study the comprehensive reform of Chapter 20 of the Criminal Code concerning sexual offences – 3,5 h

### ANNEX: 2

Year	€	Number of family places
2023	24 550 000	230
2022	24 550 000	228
2021	25 550 000	211
2020	22 550 000	211
2019	19 550 000	202

**ANNEX 3: Number of service users, shelters, and family rooms 2015–2022.**



**ANNEX 4: Nollalinja's incoming and answered calls 2019–2022**

Year	Incoming calls	Answered calls
2019	14 753	10 801
2020	19 349	13 000
2021	17 427	11 803
2022	15 368	10 420

**ANNEX 5: Role of the contact-taker**

Year	Victim	Perpetrator
2019	84,8 %	4,6 %
2020	85,3 %	4,9 %
2021	86,6 %	3,5 %
2022	88,1 %	3,7 %

**ANNEX 6: Gender of the victim of the violence**

Year	Woman	Man
2019	85,2 %	12,5 %
2020	81,3 %	12,6 %
2021	81,9 %	12%
2022	82,3 %	10,7%



**ANNEX 7: Gender of the perpetrator**

Year	Woman	Man
2019	14,4 %	75,9 %
2020	13,5 %	73,4 %
2021	13,6 %	75,7 %
2022	12,2 %	75,4 %

**ANNEX 8: Percentage of intimate partner violence of all contacts about violence**

Year	Intimate partner violence % of contacts concerning violence (Experienced by current spouse, former spouse, current partner, former partner)
2019	80.10%
2020	77,5 %
2021	79,5 %
2022	78%

**ANNEX 9: Gender of a victim of intimate partner violence**

Year	Woman	Man
2019	N/A	N/A
2020	83,7 %	12%
2021	83,8 %	11,9 %
2022	84,7 %	10,5 %

**ANNEX 10: Percentages of reported forms of violence in contacts**

Year	Psychological violence	Physical violence	Threat of violence	Sexual violence	Economic violence
2019	75%	42%	30,9 %	8,3 %	8,3 %
2020	76,2 %	43,6 %	30,5 %	10.60%	9,7 %
2021	74,7 %	42,4 %	30,1 %	11,2 %	9,4 %
2022	77,7 %	45,2 %	26,8 %	12,7 %	12,4 %

**ANNEX 11: Experienced physical, mental and sexual violence and harassment among Finnish School Health Promotion Study (2019-2023)**

Indicators	Age group	2019			2021			2023		
		%	n	R <sup>3</sup>	%	n	R <sup>3</sup>	%	n	R <sup>3</sup>
<b>Experienced physical violence by parents or other caregiving adults during the previous year</b>	Boys, grades 4–5	15	7073	48665	17	8375	50756	18	8108	46424
	Girls, grades 4–5	11	5171	49055	14	7020	51464	14	6761	47780
	Boys, grades 8–9	9	3611	40582	9	3923	42448	9	3517	40567
	Girls, grades 8–9	15	6285	43209	15	7081	45914	16	6740	43263
	Boys, upper <sup>1</sup>	5	910	17890	5	942	18828	5	837	18242
	Girls, upper <sup>1</sup>	9	2318	26074	10	2781	28015	10	2505	26020
	Boys, vocational <sup>2</sup>	5	661	13210	5	599	12237	5	508	10589
	Girls, vocational <sup>2</sup>	9	860	9194	9	824	8963	10	776	7983
<b>Experienced mental violence by parents or other caregiving adults during the previous year</b>	Boys, grades 4–5	17	8364	49002	24	11965	50918	26	11882	46488
	Girls, grades 4–5	17	8397	49147	27	14144	51578	30	14215	47824
	Boys, grades 8–9	19	7654	40998	19	8206	42557	17	6987	40633
	Girls, grades 8–9	37	15855	43437	43	19527	45966	42	18368	43328
	Boys, upper <sup>1</sup>	19	3475	17962	21	3860	18834	17	3171	18257
	Girls, upper <sup>1</sup>	34	8974	26125	41	11555	28033	40	10423	26032
	Boys, vocational <sup>2</sup>	14	1909	13328	14	1739	12251	12	1312	10594
	Girls, vocational <sup>2</sup>	33	3006	9226	38	3368	8983	37	2948	7995
<b>Experienced sexual comments, propositions, messages or displaying of graphic materials during the previous year</b>	Boys, grades 4–5	4	2137	49171	6	3218	50835	9	3899	46016
	Girls, grades 4–5	5	2207	49264	10	5217	51509	13	6226	47403
<b>Experienced disturbing sexual proposals or harassment during the previous year</b>	Boys, grades 8–9	8	3386	41510	11	4481	42668	12	4787	40740
	Girls, grades 8–9	32	14096	43597	48	22256	46013	45	19536	43396
	Boys, upper <sup>1</sup>	6	1061	18039	8	1553	18869	8	1473	18259
	Girls, upper <sup>1</sup>	33	8624	26161	51	14176	28052	48	12377	26041
	Boys, vocational <sup>2</sup>	6	867	13510	8	939	12276	9	947	10617
	Girls, vocational <sup>2</sup>	34	3119	9265	50	4469	8993	49	3925	8002
<b>Experienced sexual touching or pressure to touch during the previous year</b>	Boys, grades 4–5	2	762	49120	2	969	50766	3	1475	45955
	Girls, grades 4–5	2	842	49226	3	1382	51473	4	1704	47361
<b>Experienced sexual violence during the previous year</b>	Boys, grades 8–9	4	1685	39382	5	2139	42576	6	2574	40695
	Girls, grades 8–9	10	4073	42137	13	6145	45939	12	5076	43327
	Boys, upper <sup>1</sup>	3	482	17528	3	538	18855	3	544	18255
	Girls, upper <sup>1</sup>	10	2615	25579	15	4062	28028	12	3005	26022
	Boys, vocational <sup>2</sup>	4	480	12777	4	486	12263	5	551	10612
	Girls, vocational <sup>2</sup>	13	1172	8935	19	1702	8971	17	1347	7995

<sup>1</sup> secondary schools, <sup>2</sup>institutions, <sup>3</sup>R=Respondents

ANNEX 12

	HUS, Helsinki	Lappeenranta	Lahti	Kotka
	action started 29.5.2017	action started 6.4.2021	action started 1.1.2023	action started 5.9.2022
year				
2019	444			
2020	440			
2021	543	11		
2022	581	22		20

	TYKS, Turku	Pori	Vaasa	Maarianhamina
	action started 6.5.2019	action started 1.6.2020	action started 1.12.2021	action starts 2023
year				
2019	87			
2020	129	16		
2021	157	24		
2022	161	44	29	

	TAYS, Tampere	Seinäjoki	Hämeenlinna
	action started 10.6.2019	action started 1.10.2019	action started 1.9.2022
year			
2019	58	8	
2020	107	28	
2021	144	32	
2022	146	41	23

	KYS, Kuopio	Jyväskylä	Joensuu	Mikkeli	Savonlinna
	action started 7.10.2019	action started 7.3.2022	action started 1.2.2022	action started 1.10.2022	action started 7.6.2023
year					
2019	14				
2020	48				
2021	65				
2022	71	47	17	5	

	OYS, Oulu	Rovaniemi	Kokkola	Ivalo	Kajaani	Kuusamo	Kemi	Oulas kangas	Raahe
	action started 3.2.2020	action started 7.12.2020	action started 1.6.2021	action started 25.5.2022	action started 1.1.2022	action started 25.11.2022	action started 17.1.2022	action started Jun-23	action starts 2023
year									
2019									
2020	59	4							
2021	88	26	9						
2022	72	24	21	3	13	3	16		

#### ANNEX 13: In-service training

Professionals	Number of professionals trained	Is this training mandatory?	Frequency	Training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols	Please describe the content and duration of the training
Professionals at city guidance and advisory points and centres of expertise	560 in 2021	No			The trainings covered general sexual rights, methods of communication, and couple and family disputes

#### ANNEX 14

<b>Professionals</b>	Asylum and Migration
<b>Do they benefit from initial training on violence against women and domestic violence?</b>	Yes.
<b>Is this training mandatory? Are training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols?</b>	Yes.
<b>Who funds the training?</b>	The Finnish Immigration Service.



<p><b>Please describe the content and the duration of the training</b></p>	<p>A basic training on GBV, THB, LGBTIQA+ and vulnerability matters are given to all new caseworkers in the asylum unit of the Finnish Immigration Service. Basic training now includes also the newly developed EUAA foundation module on vulnerability. EUAA modules include: EUAA Gender, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation -training module; EUAA Trafficking Human Beings -training module; EUAA Interviewing Vulnerable Persons -training module; EUAA Interviewing Children -module and a written guidance's and instructions (about FGM, forced marriages, domestic violence and person's without safety net are available to all case workers.</p> <p>A new, asylum interview related training module for case officers was created together with The Finnish Immigration Service and academic researches, who also conduct the training. It addresses e.g. matters related to vulnerability, trauma and memory functions.</p>
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<p><b>Professionals</b></p>	<p>Police</p>
<p><b>Do they benefit from initial training on violence against women and domestic violence?</b></p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>Is this training mandatory? Are training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols?</b></p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>Who funds the training?</b></p>	<p>The Police</p>
<p><b>Please describe the content and the duration of the training</b></p>	<p>The Police University College is responsible for the basic training of the police. It offers a Bachelor degree (Bachelor of Police Services) and Masters degree (Master of Police Services), as well as specialists' training on all aspects of policing. Domestic violence and violence against women and children are widely included in the curricula, both as specific subjects as well as cutting-through themes throughout the 3-year-long (180 ECTS) Bachelor degree and the 2-year-long (120 ECTS) Master degree. This is why it is not possible to give a full account of the time involved. The subjects including domestic violence and violence against women and children in the Bachelor degree are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In communication education: Preventive work for children and young people project. The communication teacher gives the students the task of making the desired presentation of the topic and tells what teaching related to the theme of children (jurisprudence and psychology) is coming up. Those who have just started their studies familiarize themselves with literature on the subject, interview different actors (schools, forensic psychiatric units, social services, etc.) etc., prepare a short presentation (1/2</li> </ul>

h) on a topic of their choice for their group and a learning diary about the project.

- In period of Interview course Investigation of crimes against children. The topic is approached by a psychologist – Lawyer as co-education is done. With pre-assignments and real-time teaching, students form a reasonable picture of how the child is encountered, for example, when subjected to domestic violence and what special features are involved, for example, in the investigation of this type of crime.
- In basic police training, there has long been a theme called children in policing, which deals with investigation of crimes against children. In addition, device searches etc. are dealt by in connection with teaching about coercive measures and information retrieval and information gathering, the themes of which also prepare the student for investigating crimes against children online and in the real world. Similarly, the teaching of criminal law deals with the constituent elements of sexual offences and online sexual offences through an online training.
- English language teaching addresses this theme through videos and essays on the topic, as well as through discussions and learning assignments. In addition, students are offered the opportunity to familiarize themselves with this subject matter in English Improdova training material.
- In the Public Order and Safety operations study module, the theme of alarms to homes deals with:
  - o in the Intervening theme, cases of domestic violence are dealt in a multiprofessional manner as joint teaching by a lawyer and a psychologist (discussions about the topic through examples of real-life cases handled by Parliamentary Ombudsman or Chancellor of Justice concerning referral to services, mediation and restraining orders).
    - o Encountering older people and referring them to support services.
    - o Encountering the child by the first patrol and preliminary interview and recording it.
    - o Identification of situations of trafficking in human beings.
    - o Identifying different forms of violence and gathering evidence.
    - o Encountering a person with a mental disorder.
    - o Autism spectrum disorders (more details below interrogations)
    - o Dealing with strong emotions and challenging interactions
    - o Emotional reactions and shock during emergency tasks – the police's own emotions and the customer's feelings.

- The Housing Alarm study module includes an online course on domestic violence before contact teaching identification and intervention training. Students create a learning diary from which they receive personal feedback.
- Exercise in Public Order and Safety operations
  - o The exercise will be carried out in accordance with the above after teaching and other monitoring and alarm activities.
    - o Students carry out various cases from the area of Public Order and Safety operations.
    - o They plan the cases themselves, one case is almost as a rule. A case related to domestic violence.
- The teaching of Public Law teaches the importance of secrecy provisions for the protection of crime victims – as procedural provisions when a case concerning an injured party is heard in criminal proceedings, and protection of suspects when the presumption of innocence may not be infringed.
- The measures required to determine the injured party's need for protection are taught in accordance with the Victims' Directive as required. Determining the injured party's need for protection, civil law filling in forms for making claims and ordering a medical report, and the importance of first patrol activities in obtaining evidence. The aim is for the student to be aware of the content of the minimum rights of the injured party and the right to a fair trial realization.
- In general, the teaching of coercive measures emphasizes the means of intervening in domestic violence.
- In connection with restraining orders, the effectiveness of issuing a temporary restraining order is emphasized domestic violence. Then the police officer will know when he should make an arrest a proposal to a legitimate official to issue a temporary restraining order.
- Presentation of official activities related to trafficking in human beings, online administration training to be completed on human trafficking to pre-trial investigation authorities. In addition, the theme is briefly discussed in the housing alarm connection, as one of the things that the first patrol must take into account in its own operations.
- In the teaching of Public Order and Safety operations, the exercise "case".
  - o Students plan the cases themselves, where they demonstrate their competence in making an announcement until the pre-trial investigation report is drawn up.
- The trial seminar discusses, among other things, cases related to domestic violence. Seminar prepared for each course based on the litigation followed by the students. The view of the student on the significance of pre-trial investigations as part of criminal proceedings is emphasised.
- Fair trial for parties and special issues in public law matters among other things, the fair trial of both the injured party and the suspect will be discussed.

- o Meeting the suspect and referring one to support services
- o Experience of fairness as a party to one's own case
- o Special issues related to legislation on openness from the point of view of interested parties.
- o Trafficking in human beings and honor-related violence
- o The importance of communality behind violence, such as faith communities and Roma communities
- Special issues related to coercive measures – intervening with coercive measures in situations of domestic violence.
- Optional course for Bachelor students Recognition of honor-related violence and intervening o Joint training with Masters education.

#### ANNEX 15

Type of notification: criminal offence Domestic violence case				
Amount of cases	2021	2022	2023	Year of notification
Abroad	22	34	11	<b>67</b>
5500 Helsinki	1183	1280	474	<b>2937</b>
5530 Länsi-Uusimaa	340	447	198	<b>985</b>
5560 Itä-Uusimaa	326	577	234	<b>1137</b>
5590 Häme	260	265	83	<b>608</b>
5620 Kaakkois-Suomi	184	268	132	<b>584</b>
5650 Lounais-Suomi	684	711	306	<b>1701</b>
5680 Sisä-Suomi	679	753	366	<b>1798</b>
5710 Pohjanmaa	231	283	109	<b>623</b>
5740 Itä-Suomi	330	496	159	<b>985</b>
5770 Oulu	489	468	151	<b>1108</b>
5800 Lappi	186	193	85	<b>464</b>
5830 Ahvenanmaa	24	22	4	<b>50</b>
<b>Area</b>	<b>4938</b>	<b>5 797</b>	<b>2 312</b>	<b>13 047</b>

type of notification: criminal offence				
<b>BREACH OF RESTRAINING ORDER</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>1595*</b>

\* See para 133.



## ANNEX 16

Amount of restraining orders		2021	2022	Total
RESTRAINING ORDER	BASIC	509	454	<b>963</b>
	EXTENDED	363	382	<b>745</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>1708</b>
TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER	BASIC	161	114	<b>275</b>
	EXTENDED	65	88	<b>153</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>428</b>
TEMPORARY INSIDE-THE-FAMILY RESTRAINING ORDER	BASIC	31	18	<b>49</b>
	EXTENDED	17	9	<b>26</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>75</b>
INSIDE-THE-FAMILY RESTRAINING ORDER	BASIC	18	24	<b>42</b>
	EXTENDED	14	19	<b>33</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>BASIC</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>1329</b>
	<b>EXTENDED</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>957</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1178</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>2286</b>

Amount of cases		2021	2022	Total
BREACH OF RESTRAINING ORDER		694	861	1555*

\* See para 133.

## ANNEX 17

Number of protection orders issued*		
	2021	2022
	1134	1084
*includes also emergency barring orders		
Breach of protection order		
	2021	2022
	666	860*
Convicted persons of breach of protection order		
	2020	2021
	309	303
includes also convictions where breach of protection order is not the principal offence		

\* See para 133.

## ANNEX 18

Victim Support Finland (RIKU) is a general victim support organization. However, 76 % of its clients (2022) are women. For more statistics, see also question 17. RIKU's financial support from the Ministry of Justice has been the following in years 2019–2023 (€):

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
4072000	4105000	4605000	4675000	4675000

## ANNEX 19

**Table 1: Initial training (education or professional training)**

Please fill in the table and list the professionals (in the area of healthcare, law enforcement, criminal justice, social welfare, education, asylum and migration, media/journalism and support services) which have received initial training

Professionals	Do they benefit from initial training on violence against women and domestic violence?	Is this training mandatory?	Are training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols?	Who funds the training?	Please describe the content and the duration of the training

**Table 2: In-service training**

Please fill in the table and list the professionals (in the area of healthcare, law enforcement, criminal justice, social welfare, education, asylum and migration, media/journalism and support services) which receive in-service training on violence against women. Please place each category of professional in a separate line.

Professionals	Number of professionals trained	Is this training mandatory?	Frequency	Training efforts supported by guidelines and protocols	Please describe the content and the duration of the training
Barnahus-webschool	Between 01/2021 and 06/2023, more than 5300 professionals working with children have completed at least one module of the Barnahus-schools.	Training is not mandatory, but the content is available to be used in university courses and some municipalities have made it a mandatory part of their training packages.	Freely available on the webschool-platform	No	The Barnahus online school is a free learning platform suitable for all professionals who may encounter violence against children in their work. It is available in Finnish, English and Swedish. The online school is research-based and is updated regularly to, for example, present the latest statistics. The material takes approx. 27 hours to complete (comparable to 1 ECTS university credit). Four narrative-based training modules consists of reading material, videos, and other interactive and audience-engaging tools. A test must be passed after each module to proceed onto the next. Modules focus on 1) building an understanding of violence against children, 2) setting out the consequences of violence against children, 3) introducing the skills to respond to and report an incident, and 4) on how to support

					a child who has experienced sexual or physical violence.
Shelter professionals	295 shelter workers have been trained in the period 2019-2022	Yes	Annual	Yes	<b>Crisis and trauma interventions training for shelter of domestic violence professionals:</b> The three-day training includes how trauma affects body and mind, how childhood trauma affects adulthood, how childhood attachment trauma due to domestic abuse leads abusive relationships in adulthood, impact of trauma and domestic violence and planning appropriate care in shelter context, trauma stabilisation in shelter context, how to encounter a client who is in crisis (crisis interventions and psychological first aid). THL organizes the training once a year.
Shelter professionals	272 shelter workers have been trained in the period 2019-2023	Yes	Annual	Yes	<b>Working with children in the shelter of domestic violence:</b> The three-day training includes impact of trauma and domestic violence on child development, how to encounter a child who has experienced domestic violence, how to rebuild child's sense of safety and security, understanding parent's and child's reactions to trauma, working with parents and supporting parenthood, legislation, co-operation with other parties. THL organises the training once a year. Expertise of specialist support services is integrated in the design and/or implementation of the training.
Shelter professionals	Since 2019, 30 workers have attended the training day each year. (30 people can be admitted at a time)150 people have been trained in the period 2019-2023	No	Annual	Yes	<b>Methods of working with children in the shelter context:</b> One day training. The purpose of the training is to provide shelter workers methods working with child clients. THL organizes the training once a year. Expertise of specialist support services is integrated in the design and/or implementation of the training.
Shelter professionals	400 shelter workers have been trained in the period 2019-2023	Yes	Annual	Yes	<b>Orientation for the shelter work:</b> The two-day training for new shelter workers. Training includes basic knowledge on domestic violence and violence against women, information about the legislation and Istanbul Convention, working in the shelter, the importance of risk assessment and risk management and basic knowledge about crisis and trauma. Before the training days, everyone completes an web-based comprehensive training package on domestic violence. THL organizes the training once a year.

Shelter professionals	Between 01/2019 and 06/2023, a total of 1300 participants in various training events.	No	Annual	No	THL organises <b>training sessions related to different forms of domestic violence and violence against women</b> (for example digital violence, sexual violence, honor related violence, FGM, human trafficking, persons with disabilities as victims of domestic violence). The training meet the training needs of shelter staff regarding the phenomenon of domestic violence and violence against women. The content of the training takes into account the feedback and wishes received from the shelter staff. The duration of the trainings varies from two hours to full day trainings. THL's shelter services organize such trainings about 3-5 times a year. Expertise of women's rights organizations or specialist support services is integrated in the design and/or implementation of the training.
Nollalinja help-line professionals	Since 2019, an average of 10-15 employees have attended each training annually.	The training is not mandatory, but all help-line workers are encouraged to attend the training.	Annual	Yes	During 2019-2023 THL has organised annual training days related to different forms of domestic violence and violence against women (for example crisis work, digital violence, stalking, coercive control, honor related violence, FGM, sexual violence, demanding break-ups and divorces). Trainings meet the training needs of Nollalinja help-line workers regarding the phenomenon of domestic violence and violence against women. The content of the training takes into account the feedback and wishes received from the help-line staff. The duration of the trainings varies from few hours to full day trainings. THL organize such trainings about 1-2 times a year. Expertise of women's rights organizations or specialist support services is integrated in the design and/or implementation of the training. Nollalinja help-line professionals can also attend to all trainings which are organized by THL's shelter services.



Mediation office professionals and volunteer mediators	During 2022-2023, a total of 112 volunteers and 24 professionals have participated in the training. There are no national statistics about training participants in previous years.	The training is mandatory for the new volunteer mediators (since 2015) but not for the mediation professionals . Still, most of the new professionals attends to the training.	Annual	Yes	<b>Mediator training. Working with cases related to violence in close relationships (including intimate partner violence and domestic violence):</b> 135 hours training (approximately 18 days, 7,5 hours per day) provided by THL, the local mediation office or by co-operation with THL and the local offices. In 2015 published, nationwide training plan consists 3 modules within 6 thematic parts which includes 15 lectures, rehearsals in small groups, independent studying and individual development task (based on one real case). Thematic parts are divided by themes such as phenomenon of violence in close relationships (including intimate partner violence and domestic violence) and restorative mediation; regulation, process and work approach of mediation of intimate partner violence; separate meetings and evaluation of the conditions for mediation; joint meeting and dialogue; development task; well-being and coping as a volunteer mediator and co-operation with professionals. The lecturers have been THL professionals, mediation professionals, victims and perpetrator services professionals and authorities. Training also includes "Stop the Violence" - online training.
Mediation office professionals	Since 2019, an average of 70 people have attended the training and development day each year.	The training is not mandatory, but all mediation professionals who are handling cases related to violence in close relationships are attending this voluntarily.	Annual	Yes	<b>Developing the work of mediation office professionals in cases of violence in close relationships (including intimate partner violence and domestic violence):</b> annual, one-day training organized by THL. A training day has been held every year since 2019. Themes to be trained are selected according to current topics. To date, the event has covered, for example, the evaluation work of mediation advisors (how to identify voluntarism and manipulation), how mediation should be developed and what kind of services are available for victims and perpetrators of intimate partner violence. In addition, THL's online schools is promoted at the event.

Members of the MARAC groups	During the 2019-2023: each year one full-day seminar/webinar on VAW and IPV related topics. Each year approximately 200 participants	No	Each year in November	No	THL organises one full day (7-8 hours) seminar each year for exclusively to the members of the MARAC groups (so participants are from police, social work, health care professionals, shelters social workers, NGO's working with the victims etc.). Examples of the covered themes during the past years: new guidelines for police related to the violence in close relationships, new guidelines for the new wellbeing services counties and municipalities on violence prevention and how to organize the services related to the VAW and DV, honor-related violence related topics, FGM, digital violence related topics, GDPR and IPV, Intimate partner homicides against women in Finland: Preceding events, risk factors and prevention, how to help the children exposed to violence etc. THL has also organised a shorter webinars on some very specific themes for example on the Finlands revised legislation on sexual offences. Some of these webinars have been open for any professionals and some of the webinars have been exclusive for some specific groups.
Social and health care professionals (and police)	The training was published 02/2019 and over 10 000 professionals have completed at least one module of the Stop the violence training. In 2022 two new sections/packages were published as a new parts of the Stop the violence training. The section/package on honor related violence has had over 600 professionals who have completed at least one of the honor related violence modules and on digital violence section/package has had over 500 professionals have completed at least one of the modules.	No	Freely available on the webschool-platform	Yes	<b>Online training Stop the violence in especially designed for the social and health care professionals and police.</b> Training is encouraged to be completed in a group-format but it can be also studied solo. Training helps professionals to identify and intervene DV and it increases professionals understanding of the phenomenon. Training increases professionals' competence in dealing with the cases of DV and gives information on human rights, legislation, methods to help and provided services related to DV and VAW. It also increases understanding on why intervening the DV needs cooperation between different professionals and agencies. Training is published in Finnish and in Swedish. <b>Digital violence online training module</b> raises awareness of digital violence, stalking and coercive control in close relationships. The online training will help to identify the different forms of digital violence and the complexity of the phenomenon and increase the capacity of professionals to address digital violence. <b>The Module on Honor related violence</b> The training develops understanding of the phenomenon of honor-related violence, FGM and forced marriage. It helps to recognize its different forms and increases professionals' ability to intervene, provides information on professionals' responsibilities, legislation, human rights and

					services for victims of violence, and strengthens violence prevention, multidisciplinary and cultural sensitivity.
Social and health care professionals	Published in May 2023. Between May 2023 and July 2023 180 professionals have completed at least one module of the training	No	Freely available on the webschool-platform	No	Online training for the social and health care professionals on <b>Human Trafficking</b> . The online training offers information about human trafficking, structures and legislation related to helping victims of human trafficking, as well as tools for situations where suspicion of human trafficking arises. The training concerns work with adults.
Designed for the teaching, education, social welfare and health care sectors.	The training was published 10/2021 and since then over 1 600 professionals have completed at least one module of the training.	No	Freely available on the webschool-platform	No	The purpose of the training is to raise awareness of <b>gender-based violence faced by young people</b> as a phenomenon and provide tools for identifying, preventing and addressing violence. The training consists of seven sections that deal with gender-based violence from the perspectives of the victim, the person committing the violent act and the person witnessing the act. The training consist information about gender-based violence, legislative framework, gender stereotypes and the dynamics of violence, tools for identification and intervention, tools for discussing violence, practices for processing violence, prevention work. This online training was created in a EU funded project ERASE GBV, THL was an associate partner of the project.
Professionals in the fields of social and healthcare, education, law enforcement, criminal justice, asylum and migration, police, media/journalism, support services, students of these fields, NGO's and decision makers	Annually approximately 100-200 participants, in 2019: 116, in 2020: 196, in 2021: 127, in 2022: 119	No	Annual	Yes	Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) and the Ministry of Social Affairs have since 2012 organised an annual FGM meeting and training day for key actors. The issues covered lately are such as the legislative reform concerning FGM, FGM as a form of honor related violence, practical operating models from different regions and municipalities, results of current research, information on the care of FGM survivors etc. In addition, the voices of community representatives have also been brought up at the trainings.

Professionals in the fields of social and healthcare, education, law enforcement, criminal justice, asylum and migration, police, media/journalism, support services, students of these fields, NGO's and decision makers	Annually since 2022. Participants in 2022:100, in 2023: 199	No	Annual	Yes	THL organises an annual training day on honor related violence for all professionals and students who encounter the phenomenon in their work. Topics have included for example different forms of honor related violence, forced marriage, legislation, victim support and services.
High-level policy-makers and professionals		No	Annually since 2022	No	Annual seminar organized by the Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE Committee).
SERI training	Number of professionals trained has not been systematically collected.	Yes	Seri Support Centers while starting their work.	Yes	<b>For all Seri Support Centers, which start their work as well as for Seri Support teams are offered the following basic training, that includes:</b> - hands on-training for taking forensic samples (obligatory, min 2 h /person), - training for facing victims for sexual violence (non mandatory, in practice everyone participates in), -training on knowledge on trauma (non mandatory, in practice everyone participates in). CSOs working in the region participate in organizing the training, for example, Victim Support Finland, Victim Support Center Tukinainen (Raiskauskriisikeskus Tukinainen), Setlementti – tyttö- ja poikasensitiivistä työtä and MIELI ry.



SERI training	Number of professionals trained has not been systematically collected.	No		Yes	<p><b>The frame work for basic and continuing/maintaining training for Seri Support Centers:</b></p> <p>1) About Seri Support Centres; what it is, request for establishment, Istanbul Convention and related legislation,</p> <p>2) What is sexual violence and what are the consequences of it,</p> <p>3) Facing client in acute situations, psychological education? and tools for coping in everyday situations.</p> <p><b>An example of a programme for facing victims of sexual violence:</b></p> <p>1) Sexual violence and how to face a victim of sexual violence,</p> <p>2) Criminal proceedings, a representative from local Victims Support Services,</p> <p>3) Trauma – Psychologist or a representative from CSOs,</p> <p>4) Sample taking and examinations, specialist in forensic medicine or gynecologist from a Seri Support Center.</p>
SERI training	Number of professionals trained has not been systematically collected.	Yes		Yes	<p><b>Training on the process of taking samples on a face-to-face training: cooperation with one of the university hospitals Seri Support Center's gynecologists and midwives who offer a whole day information/demos for 1,5 h each, preferably in a room where the process of done. Additional trainings for updates min once or twice for new personnel. In addition Seri Support Centers organize regularly training for new personnel.</b></p>
SERI training	Number of professionals trained has not been systematically collected.	No	Annual	Yes	<p>Additional and further training annually organized by THL.</p> <p>- Seri Support Center webinar/seminar annually in the end of November organized by THL.</p> <p>- Additional training on crises and trauma work in accordance with requests. In addition THL organizes on a regular basis, from five to six times a year, training on acute issues. THL organizes as well additional training on topical issues in connection with local steering group work.</p>

Social- and health services, police, researchers	Participants in 2022: 320.	No	Annually since 2022.	No	<p>Annual seminar covering a wide range of research on violence, carried out in different disciplines in Finland.</p> <p>2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- War, violence and traumatisation</li> <li>- Prevention of intimate partner violence through a cost-effective rehabilitation method based on virtual reality</li> <li>- Application of violence risk assessment methods in Finland</li> <li>- Pedophile communities in the dark web</li> <li>- Violence and the development of multidisciplinary cooperation in difficult divorce and custody disputes</li> <li>- Effectiveness of the “New Direction” program based on perpetrator and offender profiles</li> <li>- Validation of the new Adverse Childhood Experiences Survey with interview and survey data</li> <li>- Experiences and practices of Finnish oral health professionals in cases of suspected child abuse</li> <li>- Exploring the causes and consequences of violence with linked registry data</li> <li>- Crisis in historical homicide research</li> <li>- Prevalence of violence among children and young people</li> </ul>
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- <sup>1</sup> Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2017): Action plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2018–2021. Publications of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2017:18. (<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-3972-1>)
- <sup>2</sup> Nikulainen, E. & Perttu, S. (2022): Vankka jäsenetelmän pohja: Istanbulin sopimuksen toimeenpanosuunnitelman 2018–2021 arviointi. [Evaluation report of the Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2018–2021] Raportteja ja muistioita 2022:7. Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö. (<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-8663-3>)
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- <sup>4</sup> Selvitys henkisen väkivallan rangaistavuudesta ja vainoamisen oikeuskäytännöstä Suomessa. Oikeusministeriön julkaisuja, Selvityksiä ja ohjeita 2023:20. <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/164912>
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- <sup>7</sup> Koukkula, M. & Klemetti, R. (2019): Action plan for the prevention of female genital mutilation (FGM). Publications of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2019:7. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-4065-9>
- <sup>8</sup> October, M. & Laitinen, H.-L. (2022): Ohjeet kunnille ja hyvinvointialueille lähisuhdeväkivallan ehkäisyn koordinaattorakenteiden ja lähisuhdeväkivallan vastaisen toiminnan järjestämiseksi. Ohjaus 10/2022. Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos. <https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/144538>
- <sup>9</sup> Non-Violent Childhoods Action Plan. <https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/research-and-development/research-and-projects/non-violent-childhoods-action-plan>
- <sup>10</sup> Non-Violent Childhoods - Action Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Children 2020–2025. Publications of the Ministry Of Social Affairs And Health 2020:34. [https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162554/STM\\_2020\\_34\\_J.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162554/STM_2020_34_J.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
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- <sup>12</sup> Non-Violent Childhoods Action Plan. Specific issues. <https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/research-and-development/research-and-projects/non-violent-childhoods-action-plan/specific-issues>
- <sup>13</sup> WHO Regional Office for Europe (2021): European regional status report on preventing violence against children 2020. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/341048>
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- <sup>17</sup> Finnish Government (2022): National Child Strategy. Committee Report. Publications of the Finnish Government 2022:16. [https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163977/VN\\_2022\\_16.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163977/VN_2022_16.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- <sup>18</sup> The national youth work and youth policy programme (VANUPO) is a statutory cross-administrative programme adopted by the Government every four years with the aim of improving the conditions in which young people live and grow. <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/162381>
- <sup>19</sup> Nollalinja 24/7 helpline. <https://nollalinja.fi/en/>
- <sup>20</sup> TASE –projects.
- <sup>21</sup> Toolkit on sexual rights and integration: <https://www.vaestoliitto.fi/maahanmuuttajat/sekuaalioikeuksista-kotoutujalle/tasa-arvo-ja-seksuaalioikeudet-tase-hanke/sekuaalioikeudet-ja-kotoutuminen/>
- <sup>22</sup> The total costs of the survey project were 325,484 euros. EU grant covered 80% of the costs, that is 260,387 euros. The rest was covered by national contributions from Statistics Finland and three Finnish ministries: the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.
- <sup>23</sup> [https://stat.fi/media/uploads/sukupuolistunut\\_vakivalta\\_teemasivu/sukupuolistunut\\_v%C3%A4kivalta\\_ja\\_l%C3%A4hisuhdev%C3%A4ki\\_valta\\_suomessa\\_2021\\_loppuraportti.pdf](https://stat.fi/media/uploads/sukupuolistunut_vakivalta_teemasivu/sukupuolistunut_v%C3%A4kivalta_ja_l%C3%A4hisuhdev%C3%A4ki_valta_suomessa_2021_loppuraportti.pdf)
- <sup>24</sup> Laki valtion varoista maksettavasta korvauksesta turvakotipalvelun tuottajalle (2014/1354) [Act on reimbursement out of State funds for providers of shelters for victims of domestic violence] <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2014/20141354>
- <sup>25</sup> Shelters for victims of domestic violence <https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/services/special-government-services-in-social-welfare-and-health-care/shelters-for-victims-of-domestic-violence>
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