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Information about ongoing capacity building and co-operation projects

The Council of Europe implements targeted capacity building and co-operation projects on gender equality and combating violence against women and domestic violence to provide national authorities with information about relevant standards, as well as with the tools and the expertise necessary to comply with them. Projects support countries to implement Council of Europe standards as well as to comply with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

These projects contribute towards making gender equality a reality in both the member States and within the organisation.

Ongoing projects

Council of Europe's co-operation with the EEA and Norway Grants

Since 2011, the Council of Europe has worked in partnership with the [EEA and Norway Grants Financial Mechanism](#) under Programme Area 22 – domestic and gender-based violence.

The co-operation builds on the extensive expertise of the Council of Europe and its human rights standards on gender equality and violence against women and domestic violence, in particular, [the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#) (Istanbul Convention).

Within the current [EEA and Norway Grants cycle 2014-2021](#), the Council of Europe provides strategic advice through five programmes on domestic and gender-based violence in the following countries:

- Bulgaria
- Lithuania
- Romania
- Slovakia

The Council of Europe also takes a leading role in the EEA/Norway Grant SYNERGY violence against women and Gender based violence network including Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The SYNERGY meetings and conferences facilitate cooperation across countries as regards violence against women and domestic violence, and has proven to be a promising space for advocacy for ratification of the Istanbul Convention, providing concrete and verifiable examples of the benefits of ratification, and

concrete examples of implementation of the Convention. Co-operation activities under EEA/Norway Grants programmes aim at bringing about substantive changes on the ground in benefit of victims and building up and strengthening the countries' capacity to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.

Selection of publications:

- [Improving the effectiveness of law-enforcement and justice officers in combating violence against women and domestic violence](#)
- [Enhancing the professional capacity of the Bulgarian Police to deal with cases of domestic violence and violence against women](#)
- [Implementing Article 10 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – establishing national co-ordinating bodies](#)
- [Implementing a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach - An assessment of Poland's response to prevent and combat gender-based violence](#)
- [Training of Trainers Manual: Effective Multi-agency Co-operation for Preventing and Combatting Domestic Violence](#)
- [Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence against Women: A learning resource for training law enforcement and justice officers](#)

PGG II: Women's Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards in the Eastern Partnership countries (2019-2021)

Member states of the Council of Europe have a legal obligation to ensure that all individuals in their jurisdiction have effective, available and efficient access to justice, that there is a system of remedies for victims and that the justice system is held accountable for any violation. Effective justice systems based on human rights standards, the rule of law and democratic values are central to enabling women to become equal partners in decision-making and development and to be informed participants in their societies.

The project, implemented under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG), a joint programme of the European Union and the Council of Europe, aims at strengthening access to justice for women, especially women victims of violence in line with the Council of Europe gender equality standards and contributing towards the Eastern Partnership countries ratification of the [Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#).

The project objectives :

- Authorities, justice sector professionals, and civil society apply new competences on the standards on access to justice of the Istanbul Convention, in order to remove obstacles to access to justice.
- Authorities, justice sector professionals and civil society introduce measures, including on training, to ensure that the justice chain is gender responsive, particularly for women victims of violence in line with the Istanbul Convention and other European standards.

The project complements other Council of Europe projects in the region by contributing to the development of a gender sensitive justice system.

Selection of publications (PGG I and PGG II):

- [Guide for developing a mentoring programme on Women's Access to Justice for legal professionals](#)
- [Guidance Note - Framework for measuring access to justice including specific challenges facing women - UN Women - Council of Europe \(2016\)](#)
- [Women's access to justice: a Guide for Legal Practitioners](#)
- [Training Manual for Judges and Prosecutors on Ensuring Women's Access to Justice consists of a general part, and is accompanied by four country chapters](#)
 - Country Chapter for Armenia [ENG](#)
 - Country Chapter for Georgia [ENG](#)
 - Country Chapter for the Republic of Moldova [ENG](#)
 - Country Chapter for Ukraine [ENG](#)
- Country Studies on Barriers, Remedies and Good Practices for Women's Access to Justice in [Armenia](#), in [Azerbaijan](#), in [Georgia](#), in [Moldova](#) and [Ukraine](#)
- [Feasibility Study on Equal Access of Women to Justice](#)

[More information about the project](#)

Duration: 1 January 2019 - 31 December 2021

ARMENIA

The Path towards Armenia's Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

The Council of Europe project aims at strengthening the capacity of key stakeholders involved in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, protecting the victims and prosecuting the perpetrators of violence as well as advancing gender equality.

The project builds on the achievements of the [previous project "Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Armenia"](#). The Council of Europe focuses on providing information and knowledge about relevant European standards, in particular the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) and its implications for national policy and legal frameworks. The project gives timely support for the implementation of the recently adopted law on domestic violence in Armenia and paves the way for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in Armenia.

The project will contribute to the following specific outcomes outlined in the Council of Europe's Action Plan for Armenia for 2019–2022:

- Armenia is better prepared for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention

- The Armenian legal and policy framework on preventing and combating domestic violence is in line with Council of Europe standards
- Women victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence, including the most disadvantaged, have better access to justice and support services

The project's long-term impact aims that women in Armenia benefit from gender equality and protection against all forms of violence against women.

The project aims to:

- Enhance the knowledge of law enforcement and legal professionals, as well as journalists and other stakeholders on the law on domestic violence and European standards, notably the Istanbul Convention, as they deal with the cases of domestic violence and violence against women
- Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, public officials and social workers to apply European standards (notably the Istanbul Convention) as they implement the law on domestic violence and provide support for women victims of violence against women
- Support gender sensitivity in education by assisting in the development of curricula, courses and materials for primary and secondary schools

Duration: April 2019 – August 2021

[More information about the project](#)

AZERBAIJAN

Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan

The project “Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan” is a joint action under the European Union and Council of Europe’s programme [Partnership for Good Governance II](#) (PGG II).

This project aims to raise awareness on the [Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#) (Istanbul Convention) and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan, in order to strengthen domestic legislation and policies to align them with European standards. The Istanbul Convention is widely recognised as one of the main legal standards and the most comprehensive international treaty to tackle violence against women and domestic violence (VAW/DV), which is a serious violation of the human rights of women. It is implemented by the Council of Europe.

To achieve that, the project co-operates with the Azerbaijani authorities through three main fields of action: legislative and policy frameworks, awareness-raising activities and capacity-building of government officials.

The project aims to:

To raise awareness on the content of the Istanbul Convention, provide a better understanding of its aim and provisions, and increase the capacity of national actors to align legislation and

policies with European gender equality standards and deal with VAW/DV, the project foresees the following activities:

- a gap analysis with recommendations of the current legislative and policy framework of Azerbaijan in line with Council of Europe gender equality standards, including the Istanbul Convention;
- a roundtable with relevant public officials to present the report and its recommendations, and discuss the follow-up;
- development of a national campaign under the umbrella of the 16 Days of Activism to stop VAW/DV, in line with the Istanbul Convention and other CoE standards;
- training sessions of relevant state authorities on VAW/DV, including through the [CoE HELP Programme](#) (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals);
- a study visit for selected state authorities and other stakeholders to promote the transfer of knowledge and experience on policies to combat VAW/DV and multi-agency co-operation;
- production of materials to raise awareness on VAW/DV and gender equality standards.

In addition, this project will aim to provide support to the Azerbaijani authorities in their path towards signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

Duration: 1 July 2020 – 31 December 2021

[More information about the project](#)

GEORGIA

Promoting an Integrated Approach to End Violence against Women and Enhancing Gender Equality in Georgia (2020-2022)

The project aims at supporting the efforts of state authorities in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, protecting the victims and prosecuting the perpetrators of violence as well as advancing gender equality.

The Council of Europe focuses on providing the latest information and knowledge about the relevant European standards, in particular [the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#) (the Istanbul Convention), and its implications for national laws, policies and practices to ensure better support, protection and access to justice for victims and survivors of violence against women.

The project will focus on capacity and knowledge building on the Istanbul Convention and will ensure that an exchange of promising practices is promoted. The project will provide support for analyzing gaps in policies and practices, developing modules and materials and practical tools, such as guidebooks and awareness raising materials, as well as conducting trainings, online courses and a study visit to exchange experiences with other Council of Europe member States.

The project aims to:

- Strengthening policy and institutional framework for the effective application of European standards, notably the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards
- Reinforcing the capacities of public officials (legal professionals, social workers, etc.) to deal with cases of violence against women and domestic violence;
- Raising awareness of the general public and authorities on the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence, including gender equality.

Duration: 1 January 2020 - 31 December 2022

[More information about the project](#)

KOSOVO*

Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo* (Phase II), 2019 -2021

The project is built on the findings and recommendations of the research [Mapping of services for victims of violence against women in Kosovo*](#) developed in the framework of the first phase in 2017.

The Council of Europe project focuses on strengthening the capacities of local institutions to counter violence against women and domestic violence. Thus, the project will use the standards set in [the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#), to enhance local knowledge and capacities of professionals and practitioners on addressing issues related to prevention and protection pillars as indicated in this Convention.

The project aims to:

- increase the knowledge of legal professionals in fostering reporting, support for victims during proceedings, compensation and accountability of perpetrators, through targeted trainings under HELP programme, peer to peer exchanges and expert support to develop training curriculum for the Academy of Justice
- strengthen capacities of relevant institutions to effectively provide support services to victims of violence against women and domestic violence and encourage development of quality Guidelines for Shelters
- explore the needs and quality standards on perpetrators programmes
- raise awareness among relevant stakeholders on undertaking effective campaigns for combating violence against women and domestic violence through knowledge-based approach to Council of Europe Istanbul Convention standards and provisions

Duration: April 2019 - March 2021

[More information about the project](#)

* All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

MOLDOVA

Awareness-raising Activities on the Istanbul Convention in the Republic of Moldova (2020)

This project aims to raise awareness on the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) in the Republic of Moldova.

The Istanbul Convention is widely recognized as one of the main legal standards and the most comprehensive international treaty to tackle violence against women and domestic violence, which is a serious violation of the human rights of women.

Through co-operation work with the Moldovan authorities the activities implemented will contribute to bringing clarity to the aim and provisions set out in the Istanbul Convention, and will provide tools to the Moldovan authorities to set standards in the field of violence against women and domestic violence. The activities will therefore contribute to paving the way towards the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Republic of Moldova.

Duration: 13 January 2020 – 12 October 2020

[More information about the project](#)

LATVIA

Violence against Women project 2020-2021. Establishing specialised support services for victims of violence against women and domestic violence

The Action was designed at the request of the Latvian authorities and is implemented in the framework of the project Violence against Women project 2020-2021. The aim of the Action is to provide technical assistance to the Latvian authorities in their efforts in establishing a specialist support service for victims of violence against women and domestic violence in the Republic of Latvia in line with the Istanbul Convention.

The report “A roadmap for the establishing of specialised support services for victims of violence against women and domestic violence in line with the Council of Europe standards and good practices” is under preparation and is planned to be issued by the end of 2020. The report will be underpinned throughout by two overarching principles, based on the Istanbul Convention:

- The value and importance of integrated/networked *Specialist* services for victims of VAW and DV
- The need to centre the voices, experiences and needs of victims of VAW within this network.

The Action will contribute to raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and therefore to paving the way towards its ratification by the Republic of Latvia.

Duration: July 2020 – December 2020

TURKEY

Fostering a comprehensive institutional response to violence against women and domestic violence in Turkey

The project is implemented under the Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey ([Horizontal Facility II](#)) 2019-2022, a joint programme of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

The project aims to strengthen local authorities' capacity to respond to cases of violence against women and domestic violence in compliance with European standards on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, especially with [the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#) (Istanbul Convention).

The project promotes a comprehensive and right-based approach to end violence against women in accordance with the Istanbul Convention, which Turkey ratified in 2012.

Building on recommendations of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), the [monitoring mechanism](#) of the Istanbul Convention, the project focuses on increasing the knowledge and skills of key authorities to prevent all forms of violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence, to effectively protect victims and prosecute perpetrators.

More specifically, the project aims to:

- strengthen in-service training for legal and law enforcement professionals, including judges, prosecutors, police and gendarmerie, and for support service providers and other public officials through revision and development of training programmes and curricula and through conducting training of trainers, cascade trainings and a tutored [HELP online training course](#)
- enhance coordination and multi-agency cooperation through peer-to-peer exchanges, sharing promising practices and development of guidelines and practical tools
- increase awareness of relevant stakeholders on judicial support services for women victims of violence through provincial seminars and publications
- increase awareness of the need for data collection on cases of violence against women, including sexual violence, among public officials through a study visit and an international seminar

Duration: 24 November 2019 - 23 May 2022

[More information about the project](#)

UKRAINE

The Istanbul Convention: a tool to advance in fighting violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine (2018-2020)

This project aims to support ratification and implementation of the [Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#), better known as the Istanbul Convention. The project seeks to further develop the knowledge base for Ukraine to sustain its preventive and protective mechanisms addressing violence against women and domestic violence through technical assistance, and also works to assess gaps between Ukraine's current policies and those recommended by CoE guidance on European standards. A key consideration in project activities is professional capacity development, focused on three areas; providing concrete and useful work tools, conducting trainings for legal professionals, and raising awareness to support effective assistance provided to victims.

The project is focused on the prevention and support pillars of the Istanbul Convention and addresses implementation of ten articles of the Istanbul Convention:

- supporting the development of comprehensive and coordinated policies through reports and roundtables (Articles 7 and 10).
- conducting research to provide guidance and promising practice to strengthen Ukraine's collection of data in cases of VAW/DV (Article 11).
- strengthening the governments' capacities for Awareness Raising campaigns, focusing on the Ministry of Social Policy (Article 13).
- strengthening the knowledge and skills of those in charge of supporting victims at national and local level by training legal, social and law enforcement professionals (Article 15) in order to realise the victims' right to specialised services (Article 22) and their right to free legal aid (Article 57).
- conducting research on promising practice as regards Risk Assessment and risk management as compared to current practice in Ukraine, providing both recommendations and checklists to key professionals working directly with victims of violence against women and domestic violence (Article 51).
- researching restraining, emergency barring and protection orders, analysing court considerations and comparing to international standards (Articles 52 and 53).

Selected publications:

- [Risk assessment standards and methodologies for diverse stakeholders in Ukraine: Next Steps in implementing international standards to ensure the safety of victims of violence against women and domestic violence](#)

Duration: 1 September 2018 - 31 December 2020

[More information about the project](#)