

The Istanbul Convention - for a world safe from violence

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating
Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

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What is the Istanbul Convention?

The Council of Europe (CoE) Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

The most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights.

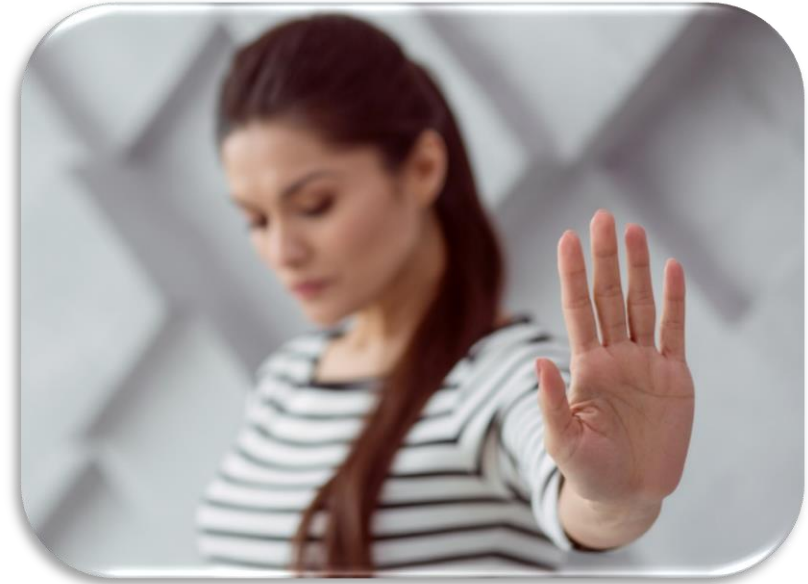
Aims at zero tolerance and is a major step forward in making Europe and beyond safer.



Groundbreaking features

Recognizes violence against women as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination.

First international treaty to contain a definition of *domestic violence* and of *gender*.



Celebrating 10th Anniversary

Who has acceded to the Istanbul Convention?

- Signed on 11 May 2011 in Turkey by 13 Council of Europe member states.
- Came into force on 1 August 2014.
- Signatures by 44 Council of Europe member states, Ratifications by 35 member states. Turkey withdrew from it.
- **Not yet ratified:** Armenia, Bulgaria, Czech Rep., Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Ukraine, UK.
- Azerbaijan and Russian Federation have/had not yet signed.
- Accessions: Kazakhstan and Tunisia
- Applies at all times – in times of freedom as in times of crisis.



What does the Istanbul Convention criminalize?

Domestic
violence

Stalking

Sexual
violence,
including rape

Sexual
harassment

Forced
marriage

Female
genital
mutilation

Forced
abortion or
forced
sterilization

Psychological
harm



Who is covered by the Convention?

All women and girls

- From any background
- Regardless of age, race, religion, social origin, migrant status or sexual orientation

Special groups

- Women and girls at greater risk of violence
- States need to ensure their specific needs are taken into account



The Core Values of the Convention

The Istanbul Convention

- Is based on recognizing violence against women as a human rights violation, based on her gender.
- **Requires states to implement gender equality policies and to empower women.**
- To make sure they can rebuild their own lives.

By accepting the Convention

- **Governments are obliged to change their laws to correspond the obligations of the Convention.**
- To introduce practical measures.
- To allocate sufficient resources and create a zero tolerance zone for violence.
- Preventing and combating such violence is no longer a matter of goodwill but a legally binding obligation.

For the first time in history

- **The Convention makes it clear that violence against women can no longer be considered a private matter.**
- States have an obligation to prevent violence, protect victims and punish the perpetrators.



Changing attitudes – a conditio sine qua non

“Seeks to change the hearts and minds of individuals”

Calls on all members of society, particularly men and boys, to change their attitudes.

Renews call for greater equality between women and men.

Recognizes violence against women is deeply rooted in inequality in society.

Recognizes violence against women is perpetuated by a culture of intolerance and denial.



The Cornerstones of the Convention



1. Preventing violence

2. Protecting victims

3. Prosecuting perpetrators

4. Integrated Policies



Prevention involves

Changing attitudes, gender roles and stereotypes

Training professionals working with victims

Raising awareness

Providing teaching material on equality at all levels of education

Cooperation with NGOs and reaching out to the public



Protection includes

Ensuring that the needs and safety of victims are placed at the heart of all measures.

Setting up specialized support services.

Setting up shelters.



Prosecution ensures

Violence against women is criminalized and punished.

Excuses on the grounds of culture, custom, religion or so-called “honour” are unacceptable. To do away with impunity!

Victims have access to special protection measures.

Law enforcement agencies respond immediately.



Integrated policies

- Ensure that all of the aforementioned measures form part of a **state-wide effective, comprehensive and coordinated set** of policies and offer a **holistic response** to violence against women and domestic violence.



The Istanbul Convention – A role model



The Istanbul Convention is a “**role model**” for:

- The comprehensive approach of the 4 P's
- The most far reaching international treaty to combat VAW
- The first international treaty to contain a definition of „domestic violence“
- The first international treaty to define „gender-based“ violence
- Codifying established standards and jurisprudence



The Monitoring Mechanism - a chance for civil society

CoE International Instruments	Monitoring Mechanisms
CoE Istanbul Convention	The Group of Experts GREVIO (+ civil society shadow report) + Committee of the Parties (political body)
CoE Anti-Trafficking Convention	The Group of Experts GRETA (+ civil society shadow report) + Committee of the Parties (political body)



Thank you very much for promoting the Istanbul Convention!

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



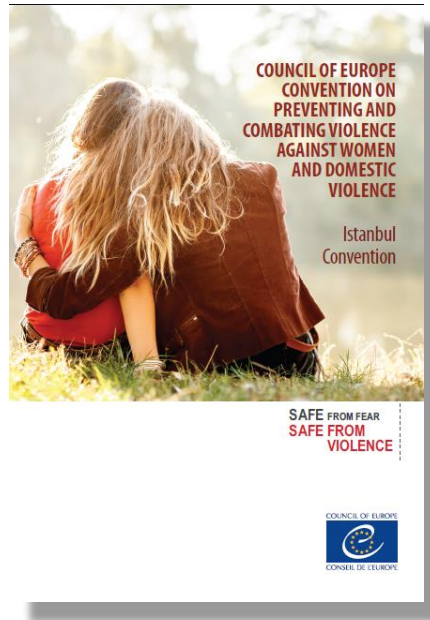
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



Equality between women and men
can only be achieved if women
do not experience gender-based
violence
and can live to their full potential.



Leaflet available in 23 languages



<https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/leaflets1>

