

HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DROITS HUMAINS
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT

*Guaranteeing equal access of women
ju*

Anca Sandescu
Gender Equality
anca.sandescu@

Guaranteeing women's equal access to justice

-short history-

Feasibility study (2012-2013)

Hearing (women victims of violence, 2013)

Seminar (gaps in data and research, 2014)

Conferences in Bern (2015), Chisinau (2016),
Strasbourg (2018)

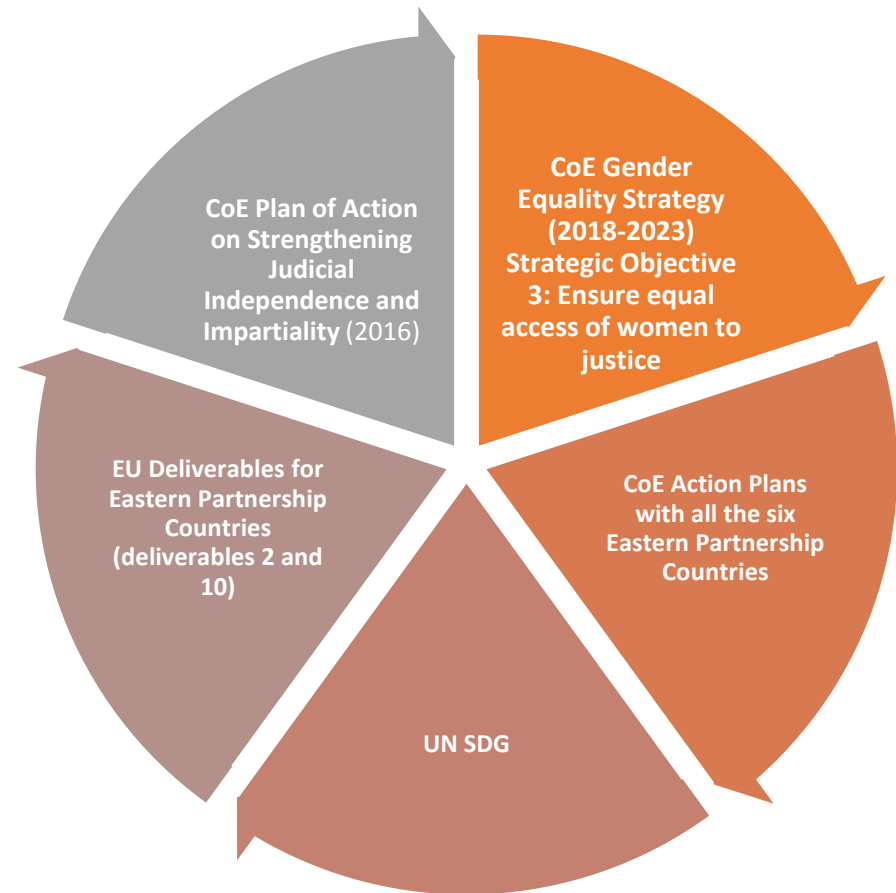
With UN Women: Framework for measuring
A2J, including women's (indicators), 2016

Regional projects to improve women's
access to justice in ARM, AZE, BY, GEO, MD,
UA (2015- 2021)

Compilation of good practices from Member States

- Available and accessible **information**
- Free **counselling and legal assistance**
- **Specialised** centres/courts/prosecutors/police/social workers
- Access to **legal aid**
- **Training** for the judiciary
- **Support litigation** in discrimination cases (maternity-related, sexual harassment..)
- **Data collection** + access to relevant case-law

Cooperation Projects strategic relevance





Projects objectives

- **Identify and support removal** of obstacles to women's access to justice in the Eastern Partnership countries
- **Improve gender-responsiveness of the justice systems** in the Eastern Partnership countries including in cases of violence against women
- **Increase application of CoE standards among justice sector professionals**, especially the Istanbul Convention and the European Court of Human Rights
- Contributes towards the Eastern Partnership countries **ratification of the Istanbul Convention**.
- **Enhanced regional dialogue and exchange** among national authorities, national training institutions and legal professionals on improving women's access to justice and the ratification of Istanbul Convention



Results of the project

[Country studies](#) on Barriers, Remedies and Good Practices for Women's Access to Justice

[Training Manual](#) Women's Access to Justice for legal practitioners and 4 country specific chapters

Online e-learning course on [HELP Women's Access to Justice](#)

[Factsheet](#) on Women's Access to Justice: a guide for legal practitioners

[Mentoring Programme](#) for legal practitioners

[Translations](#) of tools for legal professionals



Legal & institutional barriers

Discriminatory legal frameworks

Gender insensitive interpretation or implementation of the law

Ineffective or problematic laws and procedures

Gender stereotyping and gender bias in the legal system

Cultural & social barriers

Women are not aware of their legal rights or procedures to protect their rights

Women lack financial resources

Unequal distribution of household duties/ gender roles

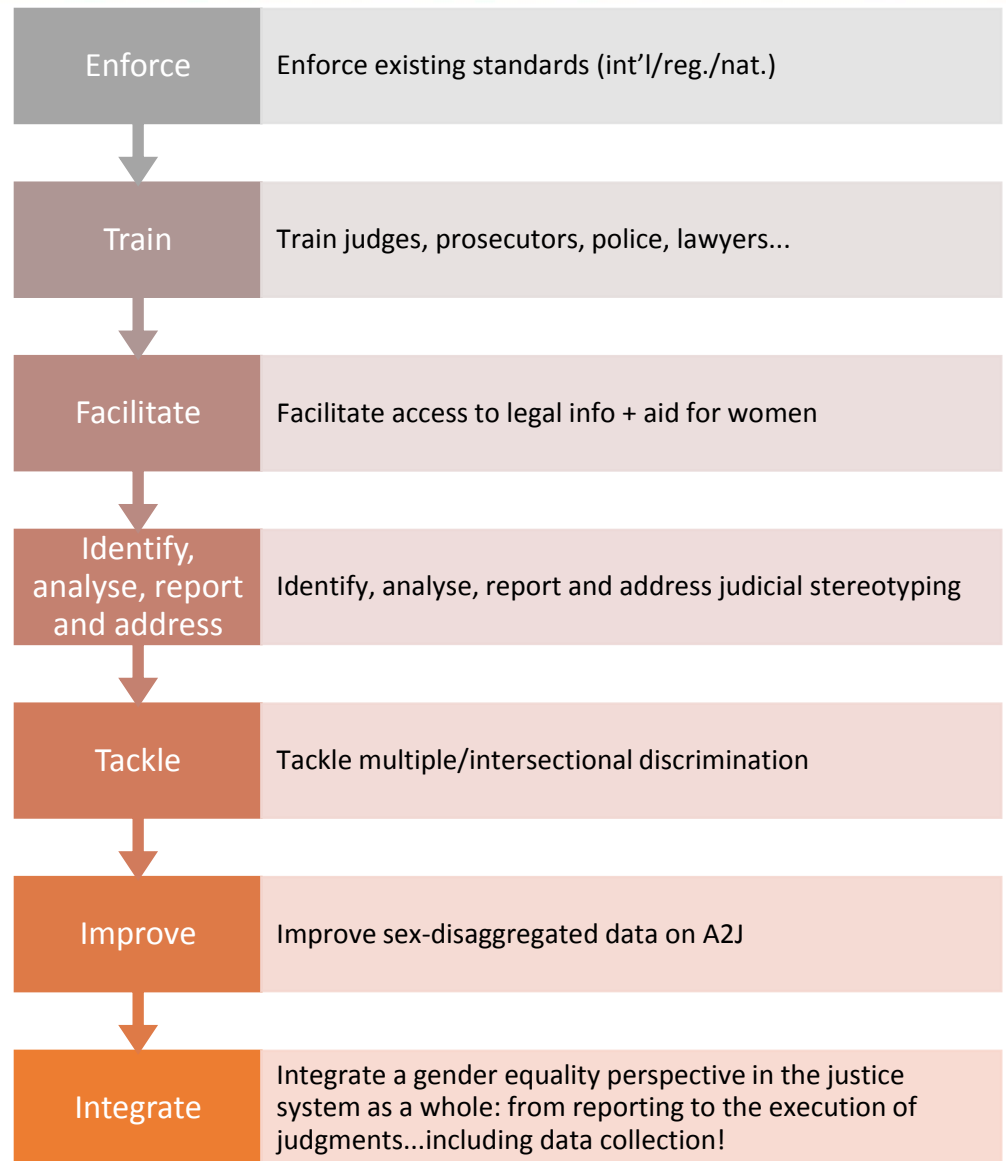
Gender stereotypes and cultural attitudes



Preliminary observations on the impact of
Covid 19 on women's access to justice

1. WAJ is a means of implementation of women's rights
2. WAJ is central to sustaining peace and the rule of law
3. WAJ contributes to the fight against impunity towards women
4. WAJ combats poverty and exclusion
5. WAJ protects from economic exploitation and abuse

Lessons learned



Future Plans

Enhanced capacity building with a focus on the legal sector

Continuous efforts towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention

Fostering exchanges among relevant stakeholders on advancing gender equality

Strengthening structures for continuity and sustainability

Advancing an interdisciplinary human rights approach to women's access to justice

THANK YOU!



"Can you be more specific?"