

Resolution on the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women

2016/2966(RSP) - 24/11/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 516 votes to 54, with 52 abstentions, a resolution on the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women.

The text adopted was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, GUE/NGL and Greens/EFA groups.

Members recalled that violence against women and gender-based violence are still widespread phenomena within the EU. According to the 2014 Fundamental Rights Agency survey on violence against women estimates that **one-third of all women in Europe have experienced physical or sexual acts of violence at least once during their adult lives.**

This survey explains also that most incidents of violence are not reported to any authorities.

Members also stated that the annual cost to the EU of violence against women and gender-based violence was estimated at EUR 228 billion in 2011 (i.e. 1.8 % of EU GDP), of which EUR 45 billion a year was in the form of spending on public and state services and EUR 24 billion in lost economic output.

Violence against women is too often considered as a private issue and too easily tolerated. But it is in fact a violation of fundamental rights and a serious crime that must be punished as such.

Members also stressed that no single intervention will eliminate violence against women and gender-based violence, but a combination of infrastructural, legal, judicial, enforcement, cultural, educational, social, health, and other service-related actions can significantly raise awareness and reduce violence and its consequences.

In parallel, Members welcomed the [Commission's proposal](#) to **sign and conclude the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention** but deplored the fact that negotiations in Council are not proceeding at the same speed. They emphasised that the EU accession will guarantee a coherent European legal framework to prevent and combat violence against women and gender-based violence and to protect the victims of violence. It will provide greater coherence and efficiency in the EU's internal and external policies.

Members called on the Council and the Commission to speed up negotiations on the signing and conclusion of the Istanbul Convention, while giving its support with reservations. They also called on the Commission and the Council to ensure that **Parliament will be fully engaged** in the Convention's monitoring process following the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention.

Member States are called upon to ensure proper enforcement of the Convention and to allocate adequate financial and human resources to preventing and combatting violence against women.

The Commission is called upon to **submit a legal act providing a coherent system for collecting statistical data as well as a strengthened approach by Member States** to the prevention and suppression of all forms of violence against women and girls.

Passerelle clause: Members called on the Council to activate the passerelle clause, by adopting a unanimous decision identifying violence against women and girls (and other forms of gender-based violence) as an area of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU. They called on the Commission and the Council to cooperate with the Parliament to identify progress made on gender equality, and asks the Trio Presidency to make substantial efforts to achieve its commitments in this regard.

To conclude, Members called for **an EU Summit on gender equality and women's and girls' rights** to make renewed commitments.