

Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence

2016/0062A(NLE) - 12/09/2017 - Interim resolution adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted by 489 votes to 114, with 69 abstentions, a resolution on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion, by the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Members recalled that gender-based violence should be treated as a serious and urgent issue as it concerns more than **250 million women** and girls in the EU alone.

Some groups of women and girls, such as migrant women, women refugees and asylum seekers, women and girls with disabilities, LBTI women and Roma women, are at risk of multiple discrimination and are therefore even more vulnerable to violence.

Condemning all forms of violence against women, Parliament welcomed the signing of the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention on 13 June 2017. It urged the Estonian Presidency to **speed up the EU's ratification of the Convention**, the first comprehensive legally binding international instrument on preventing and combating violence against women and gender-based violence, including domestic violence.

Members stressed that the EU's accession to the Convention will ensure a coherent European legal framework to prevent and combat violence against women and gender-based violence and to protect and support victims in the EU's internal and external policies.

Parliament invited the Council, the Commission and the Member States to take account of a series of recommendations, including:

- initiating a constructive dialogue with the Council and Member States, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, so as to address reservations, objections and concerns expressed by Member States, and in particular to clarify misleading interpretations of the Istanbul Convention;
- keeping Parliament fully informed at all stages of the negotiations and ensuring that it is involved in the monitoring process of the Convention;
- ensuring that Member States ensure the proper application of the Convention and allocate adequate financial resources to preventing and combating violence against women;
- drawing up a holistic EU strategy on combating violence against women and gender-based violence;
- designating an EU Coordinator to act as representative of the EU to the Committee of the Parties at the Council of Europe once the Istanbul Convention is ratified by the EU;
- producing practical guidelines and strategies for the application of the Istanbul Convention;
- taking the necessary measures pursuant to Articles 60 and 61 of the Convention on migration and asylum, taking into account the fact that migrant women and girls have the right to live free from violence.

The Commission was also called upon to:

- present a **legal act** to support Member States in their efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women;
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revise the [EU framework decision](#) currently in force on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, in order to include sexism, bias crime and incitement to hatred on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics.

Lastly, Parliament called for the creation of a **European Monitoring Observatory** on gender-based violence.