

# Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence - EU accession: judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement

2016/0062B(NLE) - 02/06/2023 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2023/1076 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement.

CONTENT: under this Decision, **the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence is hereby approved on behalf of the Union with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters and to asylum and non-refoulement, insofar as they fall within the exclusive competence of the Union.** The Union's accession to the Convention shall be without prejudice to the Member States' competence as regards the ratification of the Convention on matters falling within their national competences.

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence is the **first international instrument aiming to eliminate violence against women**, including girls under the age of 18, as a root cause of persisting inequality between men and women, by setting up a comprehensive framework of legal and policy measures to prevent violence against women and protect and assist victims of such violence. The Convention entered into force on 1 April 2014.

The Convention was signed on 13 June 2017 on behalf of the Union with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters and with regard to asylum and non-refoulement, subject to its conclusion at a later date.

The Convention creates a comprehensive and multifaceted legal framework to protect women against all forms of violence. It seeks to prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and girls and domestic violence. It covers a broad range of measures, from data collection and awareness-raising to legal measures on criminalising different forms of violence against women. It includes measures for the protection of victims and the provision of support services, and addresses the gender based violence dimension in matters of asylum and migration. The Convention establishes a specific monitoring mechanism in order to ensure effective implementation of its provisions by the Parties.

Violence against women is not only a criminal offence but also a violation of their human rights and an extreme form of discrimination, entrenched in gender inequalities and contributing to maintaining and reinforcing them. By committing to the implementation of the Convention, **the Union confirms its engagement in combating violence against women within its territory and globally** and reinforces its current political action and existing substantial legal framework in the area of criminal procedural law, which is of particular relevance for women and girls. This Decision concerns only the provisions of the Convention on judicial cooperation in criminal matters and asylum and non-refoulement insofar as those

provisions may affect common rules or alter their scope. It does not concern the institutions or public administration of the Union, which are addressed by a [separate Council decision](#) to be adopted in parallel with this Decision.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 22.6.2023.