



# THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

ZONTA INTERNATIONAL

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

How to use the Istanbul Convention as a concrete tool to put advocacy into action.



## EDUCATE OURSELVES

Raise awareness of the Convention and of violence against women as a severe human rights violation. Club boards and advocacy committees are advised to organize education/discussion at club meetings. Make Zonta members familiar with the specifics of the Istanbul Convention. District boards are encouraged to take the lead and include training on the Istanbul Convention at area meetings and district conferences.

Excellent materials and ready-to-use documents are available on the ZI website/CoE Tools and Advocacy Tools pages. Print out CoE information leaflets in applicable language.

Get informed on the situation in your own country - then decide what advocacy activities your club wants to become engaged in.



## SIGNING AND RATIFYING

### EUROPEAN ZONTA DISTRICTS/AREAS

Check if your country has signed and ratified the Istanbul Convention. If not, advocate to make this happen. Get informed about the laws against violence. See the country list on the CoE site: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty>

### NON-EUROPEAN ZONTA DISTRICTS/AREAS

Discuss how your country can accede to the Convention. Advocate to make your country request accession.

Utilize the expertise of district advocacy committees, and of other Zontians with legal knowledge, in planning your advocacy actions. Note that national procedures before ratification differ depending on legal systems. Letters/petitions must be sent to people who are in the right positions to handle the matter; otherwise they are likely to be ignored.



## HOW TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION

**Organize** advocacy activities like seminars, panel discussions, etc. with experts and speakers to involve the public.

**Publish** statements in important media to inform the public.

**Cooperate** and join forces with like-minded organizations for a broader audience when effective.

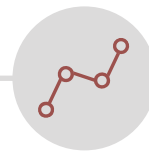


## ADVOCATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Making the Istanbul Convention a reality requires a sustained effort to implement its provisions. Governments need not only to change laws and to strengthen law enforcement agencies. They also need to design and implement the policies required by the Convention, and tackle social and cultural patterns of behavior that tolerate and deny violence against women.

Be informed on the three P's in your own country: How your government is **preventing** violence against women, is **protecting** victims and is **prosecuting** perpetrators.

Note that important parts of implementation take place at community level – a good way for clubs to become engaged.



## FOLLOW THE MONITORING PROCESS

The Monitoring Mechanism is one of the main strengths of the Convention. It evaluates how well the provisions are put into practice by states parties to the Convention. The monitoring process consists of two pillars: GREVIO (The Group of Experts) and the Committee of the Parties (the political body). Their findings and recommendations will help to ensure states' compliance with the Convention and guarantee its long-term effectiveness.

Follow the reports of your government and of GREVIO and note the successes, failures and shortcomings. The Group of Experts may also receive information from NGOs as a complement. A country visit by GREVIO will be known in advance and is a good time for Zontians to be active. Ask the ZI CoE Committee for information and advice needed.

To find out about the monitoring process go to: [http://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/new\\_sroom](http://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/new_sroom)



## DISTRICTS AND AREAS ACT AT NATIONAL LEVEL

To enhance impact-oriented advocacy action, unite with Zontians across district borders and act at national level. Use communication channels to governments and point out the national problems and needs they must address. Use the power of civil society by sending letters to government or setting up petitions to urge your government to sign and/or ratify the Istanbul Convention. Make your voice heard about violence against women and domestic violence as one of the most severe human rights violations based on gender.

For more detailed information on the Istanbul Convention please see the PPTs "Zonta International and the Istanbul Convention" and "The Istanbul Convention" at: <https://membership.zonta.org/Tools/Council-of-Europe-Tools>.

For more information on advocacy, visit [www.zonta.org](http://www.zonta.org) or [www.zontasaysno.com](http://www.zontasaysno.com)