**The Istanbul Convention - Nordic-Baltic cooperation**

It is proposed to establish a Nordic-Baltic cooperation and exchange of experience related to the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention). With the exception of Lithuania, all the Nordic-Baltic countries have ratified the convention.

In the first instance, it is proposed to organize a seminar/mmeting in Oslo on 23-24. September 2024 with participation at official level from bodies that coordinate the work on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

**Background:**

Initiatives have been taken at regular intervals for Nordic and/or Nordic-Baltic cooperation in the work against violence against women and violence in intimate relationships. In 2017, the Nordic countries, including the autonomous territories of Åland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, collaborated on a project that mapped how the individual countries followed up on specific sections of the Istanbul Convention, including Article 10 on coordinating bodies and several articles under the Convention's prevention chapter. The project resulted in the report "The Istanbul Convention. The Nordic Way" (KUN 2018). The project received funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers.

In 2014 a project between Finland, Sweden and Norway has been carried out, also with funds from the Nordic Council of Ministers, where the use of and experiences with risk assessment tools were particularly looked at. The project published the report "Risk assessment of partner violence". Experiences and challenges in the Nordic countries' (Nordic Council of Ministers 2014).

All the Nordic countries, as well as Latvia and Estonia, have ratified the Istanbul Convention and thereby committed themselves to implementing a number of concrete measures to prevent and combat violence against women and violence in close relationships. Exchange of experiences and closer cooperation between the Nordic-Baltic countries on issues and solutions linked to the convention will contribute to a strengthened implementation of the convention in the respective countries.

**Topics suggested for the seminar in Oslo in September 2024:**

It will be particularly relevant to address the following topics during the seminar/meeting in Oslo in September, based on the previous collaboration:

***Article 51 of the Istanbul Convention on risk assessment and risk management***

Article 51 of the Istanbul Convention states that the parties, through legislation or other means, take the measures necessary to ensure that all relevant governing authorities carry out an assessment of the risk of death, of the seriousness of the situation and the risk of repeated violence, with a view to manage the risk and, if necessary, provide coordinated security and support.

Both Denmark, Norway and Sweden have adopted the risk assessment tool SARA in cases of intimate partner violence and Patriark in cases of honour-related violence. Finland uses the tool MARAC. In addition, Denmark has established the InfoHus model, particularly linked to the work against radicalization and violent extremism, while in Norway the RISK model is to be spread to all the country's police districts.

What experiences the countries have gained with the various risk assessment and risk management tools, and in particular how several sectors can be involved in the work and cooperate, will be useful issues to discuss.

***Intimate partner homicide/femicide***

Risk assessment and risk management must help prevent serious violence and intimate partner homicide. In Sweden, there has been an "intimate partner homicide commission" for several years and in Norway a commission is being established. What other measures have the countries implemented to prevent intimate partner homicide and what can the countries learn from each other?

***Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention on Coordinating Body***

It appears from Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention that the parties must designate or establish one or more official bodies responsible for the coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures implemented with the aim of preventing and combating all forms of violence that fall under the Convention.

It would be useful to exchange experiences related to how the individual Nordic-Baltic countries have followed through on this obligation. It will be of particular interest how the obligation to have a monitoring body has been resolved.

***Establishment of a fixed cooperation structure***

One of the purposes of the Istanbul Convention (cf. Article 1) is to promote international cooperation with the aim of abolishing violence against women and domestic violence Is it desirable to have a fixed structure for Nordic-Baltic cooperation around work against violence against women and domestic violence? How can this collaboration be structured and which topics will be important to raise?