



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 26 February 2016  
(OR. en)

6351/16

SOC 88  
GENDER 16

**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Violence against women - Istanbul Convention  
- Information from the Commission

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Delegations will find attached the explanatory note of the European Commission on the above subject, with a view to the meeting of the EPSCO Council on 7 March 2016 (Any Other Business).

## Fight against violence against women

The Commission would like to raise the important issue of combating violence against women as an AOB point of the EPSCO. Combating violence against women is a priority for the Commission also reaffirmed in its Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019. It is also now the top of the political agenda in the Member States.

The Commission expects to adopt, in the coming weeks, two legislative proposals for Council Decisions on signing and concluding the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, the Istanbul Convention, which the Commission considers as a powerful multifaceted tool that has the potential to improve the situation of millions of women and girls in the European Union<sup>1</sup>.

The Commission also believes it is important to share with Member States the concrete set of actions that are being implemented: legislation, awareness raising, funding. The Commission has ensured cohesive action among Member States by putting into place a number of measures which include: legislative measures, which prohibit some forms of gender-based violence, protect victims and provide support<sup>2</sup>; awareness-raising and funding of projects that aim to prevent violence against women and/or support victims; and improving knowledge and data collection.

The EPSCO Council will provide a timely opportunity for the Commission to raise awareness of the issue and look at how we can reinforce the Union's commitment to tackling violence against women, as well as supporting the efforts that are being made by Member States at national level.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015\\_just\\_010\\_istanbul\\_convention\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015_just_010_istanbul_convention_en.pdf)  
<sup>2</sup> Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA; Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council framework Decision 2004/68/JHA; Directive 2011/99/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the European protection order; Regulation (EU) no 606/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters; Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council framework Decision 2001/220/JHA