



THE TRUTHS AND MYTHS OF THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

Learn the basics to understand and advocate the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The Istanbul Convention is about Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Co-ordinated Policies to protect women.

ZOOM WEBINAR

- Moderated by Anna Wszelaczyńska, SIE President 2019-2021
- Q&A by Regine van Tomme, SIE Communication Officer

May 27th, 2021, 19:00 – 21:00CET

ZOOM link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81878021050>

SPEAKERS

In this three-presenter session, first part will start off with learning more about what the Istanbul Convention is about. You will listen to an expert, Criminal Lawyer **ELEONORA ROMANI**, founder of Studio Legale Avv. Eleonora Romani in Lucca (Italy). She will demystify the document, understand that domestic violence is a violence of human rights, and Gender as "the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men". Eleonora's Criminal Law practice is always in accordance with the most modern requirements of legal activity and handles cases dealing with human rights, in addition to examining and drafting appeals to the European Court of Human Rights, as well as assistance with judicial proceedings at the ECHR in Strasbourg. She is also member of UCPI (Italian Penal Law Chambers Union) and AIAF (Family Law Italian Association).



GENOVEVA TISHEVA will talk about the difficulties and challenges of what the Istanbul Convention gives to women. Is it the gamechanger for women and girls or a dangerous tool to demoralize women? Why are there so many myths and vile opinions around it? Why is it so controversial in some countries? In many countries, especially ruled by rightist populists who aim to a close control over societies, a concept of gender is not to be accepted. Genoveva is a top lawyer, and one of the initiators and authors of the Bulgarian law on Protections Against Domestic Violence (2000-2005). The law is in force since 2005 and Genoveva is among the most active lawyers to monitor its implementation and to propose and endorse relevant changes to it. She helped with and organised legal counselling for over 700 women victims of violence in Sofia and other towns in Bulgaria. She is an initiator and Director of the Women's Human Rights Training Institute (WHRTI) for young lawyers from Eastern Europe. About 60 lawyers were trained to date and the third round of the Institute is currently underway. Since 2004 she has been a member of the Network of Independent Legal Experts on Gender Equality to the European Commission. In the last two years she has prepared reports for the European Commission on topics such as: social security and social protection - gender aspects, trafficking in women, VAW and Violence against children - feasibility study.

And the final part of the three-part session, **Zuzanna Krz̄at̄ala** will unpack and explain the situation of women in countries like Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia and Turkey. In many countries domestic violence is treated as a family private matter not something that should be prosecuted by the state. Some signatories have trouble with combating gender stereotypes and sexism as their patriarchal societies do not accept gender equality. Women's rights are being violated in many forms, from commercials objectifying women's bodies in advertisement to fundamental elements like depriving women of deciding about their own health and future. The situation is worsened by the pandemic. There is a need for educating activities across all strata of societies. Zuzanna is an activist and feminist involved in advocacy for women and excluded people. Graduate of the New School for Social Research in New York and researcher at the Zolberg Institute for Migration and Mobility. She gained experience working in the third sector at the International Rescue Committee (IRC), an international humanitarian NGO, where she worked directly for David Miliband, former UK Foreign Secretary and current President of the IRC. She is an author of the feminist humanitarian policy on sexual and gender-based violence in international conflict and humanitarian settings. She has worked with refugee women in Jordan, Rwanda and on Lesbos focusing on women's empowerment initiatives. She lived and worked in New York, where she advocated with the Model Alliance for models' labour rights and protection from sexual harassment in the workplace, resulting in the Sexual Harassment Prohibition Act, signed by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio in 2018. She was involved in an investigation by Pulitzer Prize-winning Boston Globe journalists that emerged from the wave of the #MeToo movement, which exposed sexual misconduct in the fashion industry. As an activist and she speaks out on topics of sexual violence, reproductive rights and gender equality. She is currently Projects Coordinator at Humanity in Action Poland, where she facilitates an international Fellowship on women's activism and their rights.

