



Home Office

Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on
Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic
Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2019 Report on Progress

October 2019



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Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2019 Report on Progress

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 2 of the Preventing and
Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification
of Convention) Act 2017

October 2019



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Introduction

This is the third annual report laid before Parliament in accordance with the requirements of section 2 of the Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017.¹ It follows the second Report on progress, which was laid in Parliament on 30 October 2018 and sets out progress toward ratification since the UK signed the Convention in 2012.

This report provides an overview of the UK's progress toward ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence ("the Istanbul Convention"), including measures taken forward since the second Report on Progress. The Convention covers both reserved and devolved areas, and this report therefore covers the whole of the UK.

In line with the requirements of the 2017 Act, this report sets out:

- the administrative measures taken by the Government to enable the UK to ratify the Istanbul Convention;
- the legislative proposals brought forward, including those in the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales, to enable the UK to ratify the Convention; and
- the measures to be taken and legislation required to enable the UK to ratify the Convention.

It is set out in line with the Istanbul Convention's key objectives of:

- Integrated policy
- Prevention
- Protection
- Prosecution

The information contained in this report is accurate as at the time of going to print (4:00pm on 30 October 2019). This includes references to legislation which was before Parliament at that time.

¹ *Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017*

Section (2) Reports on progress:

- (1) The Secretary of State shall each year until ratification lay before each House of Parliament a report on the following—
- (a) if a report has been laid under section 1(1), any alteration in the timescale specified in that report in accordance with subsection (1)(b) and the reasons for its alteration;
 - (b) the administrative measures taken by Her Majesty's Government to enable the United Kingdom to ratify the Istanbul Convention;
 - (c) the legislative proposals brought forward, including those in the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly, to enable the United Kingdom to ratify the Istanbul Convention;
 - (d) the measures to be taken and legislation required to enable the United Kingdom to ratify the Istanbul Convention.
- (2) The first annual report shall be laid no later than 1 November 2017.
- (3) Subsequent annual reports shall be laid no later than 1 November each year.

Executive Summary

Protecting women and girls from violence and abuse, and supporting victims and survivors, remain key priorities for this Government. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) crimes are extremely serious and have a huge impact both for those subjected to such violence and more broadly on our economy, health services, and the criminal justice system. In January the Government published research which estimates the social and economic cost for victims of domestic abuse in England and Wales for the year ending March 2017 to be approximately £66 billion.²

The Government signed the Istanbul Convention in 2012 to reaffirm the UK's strong commitment to tackling VAWG. The Convention consists of 81 articles aimed at tackling VAWG which focus on prevention, protection of victims, prosecution, and integrated policies. The UK already complies with, or goes further than, almost all the Convention's articles. A key element of the Convention is making sure that ratifying states can use their national law to prosecute offences required by the Convention when those offences are committed by their nationals or residents overseas (Article 44). The legal term for powers to allow prosecution in the UK of offences committed overseas is 'extraterritorial jurisdiction'. Taking extraterritorial jurisdiction over offences required by the Convention that are not currently subject to such jurisdiction requires primary legislation.

In July 2019 we introduced a landmark Domestic Abuse Bill in Parliament, which includes the necessary legislative measures on extraterritorial jurisdiction for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland required by Article 44, and a new offence relating to domestic abuse in Northern Ireland which will enable Northern Ireland to be compliant with Article 33.

The Domestic Abuse Bill followed a public consultation which attracted more than 3,200 responses. A draft Bill was published in January together with a consultation response which set out a comprehensive package of measures, both legislative and non-legislative, to transform our response to domestic abuse. Following extensive scrutiny of the draft Bill by a Joint Committee of cross party MPs and Peers, the Government introduced the Domestic Abuse Bill in Parliament alongside a response to the Joint Committee's report.

The issue of support for migrant victims of domestic abuse was one of those raised by the Joint Committee. In its response, the Government said that it would:

“review the overall response to migrant victims of domestic abuse, taking careful account of evidence provided by stakeholders on this issue. The review will specifically consider the Committee's recommendation to extend the period of time that support is offered for and how this relates to a victim's ability to access refuge accommodation. In considering our response to those who are eligible for the DDVC, we will take into account any obligations we may have under the Istanbul Convention to ensure we are compliant.”³

This relates to Articles 4(3) (to the extent that it relates to non-discrimination on the grounds of migrant or refugee status) and 59 of the Convention in particular. In previous reports we have indicated compliance with these Articles, but in light of the concerns raised by the Joint Committee and in view of the review which we are undertaking, we have recorded them as 'under review'.

In addition to the provisions on extraterritorial jurisdiction and the new offence in Northern Ireland referred to above, the Domestic Abuse Bill also contains provisions to:

- define domestic abuse in law to underpin other measures in the bill;

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/772180/horr107.pdf

³ Paragraph 150, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817556/CCS0619467038-001_Domestic_Abuse_Bill_Print_WEb_Accessible.pdf

- establish a Domestic Abuse Commissioner, to stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of local authorities, the justice system and other statutory agencies, and hold them to account in tackling domestic abuse;
- provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order;
- prohibit perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the family courts;
- create a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link);
- enable domestic abuse offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody;
- place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing; and
- ensure that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an assured shorthold tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy.

The Government’s response to the domestic abuse consultation sets out 123 commitments designed to promote awareness of domestic abuse; protect and support victims and their families; transform the justice process to prioritise victim safety and provide an effective response to perpetrators; and drive consistency and better performance in the response to domestic abuse across all local areas, agencies and sectors.

Non-legislative commitments include:

- introducing regulations and statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education;
- investing in domestic abuse training for responding agencies and professionals;
- developing national guidance for police on serial and repeat perpetrators;
- improving awareness and understanding of the controlling and coercive behaviour offence and reviewing the effectiveness of that offence; and
- continuing to develop means to collect, report and track domestic abuse data.

Since the 2018 Report on Progress we have also continued to step up our efforts to combat other forms of VAWG. In March 2016 we published our cross-Government VAWG Strategy, which sets out our approach to tackling all forms of VAWG, including domestic abuse, so called ‘honour-based’ abuse, stalking and sexual violence. The Strategy recognises the gendered nature of these crimes, and commits to continuing to challenge deep-rooted social norms, attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against and limit women and girls across all communities. The Strategy is underpinned by £100m of funding. This year, we published a refreshed Strategy to ensure that we are doing all that we can to tackle these crimes which disproportionately affect women. The refresh reaffirms the Government’s commitment to tackling all forms of VAWG, captures new programmes of work, including the Domestic Abuse Bill, and sets out 54 new actions that the Government has committed to take to drive forward this agenda. We remain committed to the 2016 Strategy, and our overarching strategic approach remains the same: to prevent VAWG, ensure that provision of services is as effective as possible, build partnerships across the statutory and non-statutory sectors, and pursue perpetrators. Alongside the refreshed Strategy we published an Action Plan Delivery Update, which sets out our progress against the 95 actions committed to in 2016. Of these 95 actions, 54 have been completed, 29 are on track to be delivered by the date set out in 2016, and 12 remain a work in progress, due to be delivered by 2020. In addition, we published the first cross-Government Male Victims Position Statement to strengthen and clarify our response to male victims of crimes covered by the VAWG Strategy.

One of the key commitments in the VAWG Strategy Refresh was the establishment of an end-to-end review into the criminal justice response to rape. Over the last few years we have seen reductions in the volumes of police referrals, charges, prosecutions and convictions for rape and serious sexual offences. The review seeks to establish why this has happened and identify any issues within the system that have contributed to the fall in outcomes. Using this key evidence, we will develop and publish an Action Plan to address any issues identified. The review will consider the process from the point of police report through to final outcome in court to identify where issues exist, so that we can take steps to improve our response, and we are working closely with the police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), courts, and specialist victim

services. The review is being jointly led by the Home Office, Ministry of Justice, Crown Prosecution Service and Attorney General's Office and will report in March 2020.

In September 2018, we also published the first ever cross-Government Victims Strategy, which sets out our vision for a justice system that supports even more victims to speak up with the certainty that they will be understood, that they will be protected, and that they will be supported whether or not they report a crime, and regardless of their circumstances or background.

Devolved administrations

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's '*Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy*' 2016 defines 'domestic violence and abuse' and 'sexual violence and abuse' in line with the Istanbul Convention and acknowledges that anyone can be a victim irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability. The Strategy identifies the need to raise awareness and to promote a zero tolerance approach to domestic and sexual violence and abuse. An Information and Communication Plan has been developed to support the Strategy and promote the delivery of the initiatives under it.

Scotland

The Scottish Government is implementing '*Equally Safe, Scotland's Strategy to tackle all forms of VAWG*' - working with stakeholders to prevent violence from occurring in the first place, build the capability and capacity of mainstream and specialist services to support survivors and those at risk, and strengthen the justice response to victims and perpetrators. Scotland has invested significant levels of funding to prevent and eradicate VAWG: an additional £20 million over 2015-18 from justice budgets, which continued into 2018/19 and 2019/20, primarily to support a number of existing funding allocations committed over the initial three-year period and around £12 million in 2019/20 from the equality budget to support a range of projects and initiatives.

Wales

The Welsh Government has taken forward a range of measures to tackle Violence Against Women, including a '*National Strategy on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) (2016-21)*' and the appointment of two national advisers. In addition, the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 ("the 2015 Act") aims to improve the public-sector response in Wales to these crimes.

The Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities and third sector organisations to deliver direct service provision to support and protect victims; strategic coordination of services at a local level; and training. The funding is directed towards delivering the objectives of the 2015 Act. The total VAWDASV budget for 2019/20 is £5 million. The Welsh Government also offers a £969,000 *per annum* capital fund to support the VAWDASV sector in Wales by acquiring or maintaining/upgrading fixed assets such as buildings and equipment for those organisations working within the VAWDASV sector. Other funding includes a Housing Support Grant (HSG). Approximately £9.5 million is specifically directed towards supporting victims fleeing domestic abuse to obtain and retain housing.

Integrated policy

Tackling VAWG requires an effectively co-ordinated multi-agency response. The Convention places a strong emphasis on the importance of multi-agency working and having national strategies in place to ensure a co-ordinated approach. As set out in the 2018 Report, since signing the Convention in 2012, the UK has continued to put measures in place to encourage agencies to work across boundaries and ensure greater consistency. These include:

- the publication of our cross-Government VAWG Strategy in March 2016 and the publication of the refreshed Strategy in March 2019 which set out our ambition to drive a transformation in service provision and ensure that VAWG is ‘everyone’s business’;
- a National Statement of Expectations (NSE), published in December 2016, which sets out a clear blueprint for local action, including what local commissioners need to put in place to ensure their response to VAWG is collaborative, robust and effective, and the importance of considering how services will be accessible to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), disabled, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT), and older, victims and survivors. This is currently being reviewed, in partnership with expert stakeholders, to ensure it remains robust, effective, and as up to date as possible;
- increased funding of £100 million (this includes: the £17 million VAWG transformation fund and £40m for two tranches of the Domestic Abuse Accommodation Fund, the first of which (2016/18) has supported 80 projects creating 2,200 new bed spaces in refuges);
- the publication of the first cross-government Male Victims’ Position Statement, in March 2019. This will sit alongside our cross-Government VAWG Strategy, to recognise the needs of male victims and clarify and strengthen our response;
- the publication of the Government’s response to the domestic abuse consultation which includes 123 cross-government commitments including action to be taken relating to education, health and social care, employment, and housing;
- the announcement of the appointment of a designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner, who will stand up for victims, raise awareness of domestic abuse, and hold both government and local agencies to account. Through the Domestic Abuse Bill, they will be furnished with legal powers to strengthen this role and drive forward progress nationally. These powers will mean that public bodies have a duty to cooperate with the Commissioner, and to respond to any recommendations made to them.

Since last year’s Report on Progress, we have taken a range of further action to build on this.

The Tampon Tax Fund allocates £15 million each year to projects supporting vulnerable women and girls, including projects specifically focused on supporting victims of domestic abuse. Successful projects from the 2017/18 round, announced in March 2017, included £6.8million of funding for 30 projects supporting victims of domestic abuse including £125,000 for the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance and £94,000 for Surviving Economic Abuse. The 2018/19 successful projects, announced in March 2018, allocated £5.2 million to four projects supporting victims of domestic abuse. These included £1.5 million for Women’s Aid to deliver the Ask Me Plus project to create community peer support for victims of domestic abuse and £1.4 million for Rape Crisis to deliver a new digital approach to tackling sexual violence through Rape Crisis Centres in England. Successful applicants for the most recent round of funding, announced in March 2019, included Southall Black Sisters, who were awarded £1.09 million to support women with no recourse to public funds who have experienced violence and abuse, and Changing Lives, who were granted £1 million to support vulnerable women who have been sexually exploited. In addition, Sacro were awarded £1.09 million to support online sex workers in Scotland, and Comic Relief was allocated £1.3 million to make

onward grants to small specialist women's organisations, across the UK, supporting victims of domestic abuse.

The Home Office also provided £150,000 to the University of Bristol to carry out research on the current nature and prevalence of sex work in England and Wales.

To improve understanding of the prevalence of so called 'honour-based' abuse, from April 2019, the Annual Data Requirement (ADR) has required police forces to record where a crime has been committed in the context of preserving the 'honour' of a family or community. This includes, but is not limited to, crimes of forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

The Home Office also hosted an international conference on 15-16 November 2018 in London on tackling forced marriage and FGM, in partnership with the Council of Europe. The conference demonstrated the UK's global leadership in our work to tackle these crimes and brought together survivors, policy officials and international experts from various countries to share best practice on effective interventions.

International work

The UK is proud to be demonstrating international leadership in our commitment to ending VAWG. Since 2012, we have increased our resources and expanded our programmes to tackle VAWG in more than 30 countries. For example, we support the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (£21 million, 2014-2020), which provides grants to women's rights organisations and other small grassroots organisations to support innovative approaches to tackling violence. The UN Trust Fund has funded 493 initiatives in 139 countries since 1996. In 2018 alone, almost 8 million people, including women and girls, men and boys, government officials and the general public, were reached by UN Trust Fund grantee projects.

Evidence from DFID's ground-breaking £25 million flagship *What Works to Prevent Violence* programme (*What Works*) research and innovation programme has shown that VAWG is preventable. Attitudes and behaviours can, do and must change so that violence against women and girls is no longer accepted as normal. *What Works* has rigorously tested interventions in a variety of countries, including Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Afghanistan. This research has demonstrated that interventions tackling values and behaviours – in homes, schools, and communities – can achieve significant reductions of around 50% in just a few years. The evidence being generated is a global public good, intended to help DFID, developing country governments and international partners everywhere to improve the effectiveness of their efforts to prevent VAWG.

The UK also leads the world in our support to the Africa-led movement to end FGM. In 2018 we announced a further £50 million UK aid package - the biggest single investment worldwide to date by any international donor – to tackle this issue across the most-affected countries in Africa. The funding will help:

- change attitudes to FGM through direct work with communities;
- support grassroots activists to lead change in their own countries;
- put in place laws, policies and systems banning FGM; and
- support doctors, nurses and midwives to end FGM and care for survivors.

This builds on the significant action we have already taken to help end FGM, which includes:

- A £35m UK aid package to help end FGM across 17 countries in Africa;
- A dedicated £12m UK aid programme in Sudan: the largest ever single-country investment in ending FGM anywhere in the world;
- A £7.5m UK aid/Norad programme to prevent harmful practices in Somalia;
- £3m of UK aid to support grassroots organisations ending FGM across Africa;
- Co-hosting the 2014 Girl Summit, which helped to galvanise global commitment to end FGM and child marriage in a generation.

Devolved administrations

Scotland

Equally Safe, Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls, was jointly produced by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. A delivery plan for *Equally Safe* was published in November 2017.

Data is collected in relation to domestic abuse, rape, sexual abuse/assault, and forms of 'honour-based' abuse. Analysts draw data from a range of sources including Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey is the regular, population-based survey for assessing the prevalence of different forms of violence against women. It covers domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault and stalking/harassment.

Wales

The Welsh Government published its Strategy for tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in 2016, as required by section 3 of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. Welsh Ministers are required by the Act to publish annual reports on the progress on both the Strategy and the measures in the Act.

In addition, section 11 of the Act requires Welsh Ministers to publish national indicators that may be applied to measure progress towards the achievement of the purpose of this Act. Following a public consultation exercise, the Welsh Government published, in June 2019, a set of national indicators for measuring progress against the Strategy. The proposed measures are currently being reviewed, with a view to agreeing and developing any amendments by summer 2020.

Northern Ireland

The '*Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy*' was published jointly by the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department of Justice (DoJ) in 2016. It highlights an overarching strategic vision for addressing domestic and sexual violence and abuse and is being delivered through a series of Action Plans. A communication plan has also been fully implemented to support the Strategy.

In terms of data collection, since 2001 a self-completion module focusing on domestic abuse has been included within the Northern Ireland Crime Survey (renamed the Northern Ireland Safe Community Survey from April 2018 onwards). Officials have worked with Department of Justice statisticians to ensure the survey is updated to reflect, going forward, the modern understanding of both domestic and sexual violence and abuse. A new self-completion module on sexual violence and abuse will also be included within the survey, with the domestic and sexual violence and abuse modules being rotated biennially. The domestic violence module was asked in the 2018/19 survey while sexual violence and abuse will be included for the first time in the 2019/20 survey.

Prevention

Preventing these crimes from happening in the first place is central to the Government's approach. To help achieve this, the Convention emphasises the importance of ensuring professionals are appropriately trained to support victims, raising awareness, and providing treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse and sexual abuse. Since signing the Convention in 2012, we have taken forward a range of measures, including:

- running several communication campaigns to raise public and professional awareness and understanding of VAWG, including the 'Disrespect NoBody' campaign targeted at raising awareness of teenage relationship abuse. At the end of 2018, the Home Office also launched two campaigns to raise awareness of forced marriage and FGM in particular, which highlighted these crimes and signposted the support available;
- the Home Office's FGM Unit and the joint Home Office and Foreign & Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit have continued to carry out extensive outreach programmes which deliver awareness raising events across the country. In addition, during the summer period, Operation Limelight, a joint police and Border Force operation to raise awareness of FGM and forced marriage has taken place at airports across the country and at Eurostar St Pancras;
- the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) also supports work with community organisations and survivors to drive awareness of FGM and efforts to end the practice. In March 2019, £375,000 was allocated to 37 local authority areas to fund locally-driven outreach, engagement and communications on the practice of FGM. This funding has enabled local authorities to build the capacity of FGM-focused outreach workers, promote and disseminate relevant resources and raise awareness of the range of support services available to victims;
- the Troubled Families Programme, funded by MHCLG, continues to support this area and has been extended for a further year to March 2021 in the recent 2019 Spending Round. The programme's national eligibility criteria include all forms of VAWG and children in need of help, so local areas can bring families onto the programme where there is a VAWG concern. Early identification and intervention allow a keyworker to be appointed to support and work with the family to overcome multiple and complex problems including domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- £8m of funding has been allocated for new services designed to support children affected by domestic abuse. As part of this we are funding a number of innovative projects in England and Wales, including a project spanning several local authorities in the Black Country to ensure there is a school-based support service for children affected by domestic abuse. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the fund and use the findings to inform the design of future funding models;
- the Police Transformation Fund (PTF) has awarded £5.3m in 2019/20 to projects that tackle VAWG. The funds have gone to the following projects: £1.1m for "Domestic Abuse a Whole System Approach: the Next Steps", £600,000 to the Early Intervention Response to Domestic Abuse, £2.1m to the Multi-Agency Stalking Intervention Programme and £1.5m to the "Drive" project;
- over £819,000 of the £8.6m million Building a Stronger Britain Together grant fund has, since its launch, supported VAWG projects by offering opportunities to hard to reach communities and creating networks that challenge so called 'honour-based' abuse. Community Coordinators are also embedded within up to 40 local authorities across England and Wales and deliver the Counter Extremism Strategy in their local areas; this includes tackling the root causes of harmful practices such as 'honour-based' abuse, FGM and forced marriage.

Furthermore, the Domestic Abuse Bill and consultation response include a range of measures focused on prevention, including commitments to:

- improve the availability of high quality domestic abuse perpetrator interventions both in prison and in the community;
- provide national guidance for police on the management of serial and dangerous perpetrators; and
- introduce new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders which will allow courts to place positive requirements on perpetrators, such as attending a perpetrator intervention or drug or alcohol treatment programme.

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) also delivers a range of interventions to address the needs of convicted men who have committed domestic abuse related offences. These include domestic abuse programmes and programmes which address needs related to domestic abuse, including: attitudes and thinking, emotion management, alcohol related violence and sexual offending.

Education has a vital role to play in encouraging young people to build healthy relationships, and to identify those relationships which are unhealthy. From September 2020 it will be compulsory for all primary schools in England to teach Relationships Education and all secondary schools in England to teach Relationships and Sex Education. Health Education will be compulsory in all state-funded schools. These subjects directly support the Government's ambitions to end discrimination against women and girls.

Pupils will be taught in an age-appropriate way about stereotypes, consent, mutual respect, management of conflict, sexual violence and laws relating to sex, relationships and young people. High quality teaching of these subjects will ensure that children understand that violence and abuse are never acceptable and that it is important to report abuse and concerns about themselves and others on and offline.

The Department for Education is committed to investing in the development of a programme of support for schools which will focus on tools that improve schools' practice, such as an implementation guide, easy access to high-quality resources, and support for staff training.

Devolved administrations

Wales

The Welsh Government has taken several steps since the publication of the National Training Framework in 2016 to provide training for professionals. These include the development of e-learning on how to recognise and help tackle VAWDASV, training for 158,500 professionals in the public sector, the development of “Ask and Act” (targeted enquiry for VAWDASV across the Welsh relevant authorities) and funding nationwide training for specialist professionals.

In Wales, Sex and Relationships Education will be renamed as Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). This will be made a statutory part of the new curriculum for all learners between the ages of 3 and 16 and updated guidance will be produced for the current curriculum. Updated guidance for RSE in the current curriculum in Wales has recently been published for public consultation. The new guidance takes account of the evidence presented by the Sex and Education Expert Panel and aims to give schools up to date information and support regarding this often sensitive and fast-moving area of study.

The Spectrum Project is an all Wales programme funded by the Welsh Government and delivered by experienced teachers in primary and secondary schools. The free, bilingual workshops are closely linked to the curriculum and promote the importance of healthy relationships whilst raising the awareness of children, young people and adults about the issues of domestic abuse, sexual violence and violence against women.

The Welsh Government has also published VAWDASV ‘Guidance for Governors’ and a ‘Good Practice Guide’ on the educational approach to VAWDASV in Wales.

The National Strategy on VAWDASV (2016-21) includes a dedicated objective on communications. A National Communications Framework 2017-2020 was developed in consultation with stakeholders and survivors to ensure a coherent, long-term approach to engagement and communication. In the latest series of campaigns, *This is Me* sought to challenge the gender stereotypes that are often a cause of abuse, and *Don't be a Bystander* encouraged people who are concerned that someone they know is a victim of domestic abuse to offer support. Four campaign phases are planned for 2019/20. In January 2019 ‘This is not love. This is Control’ was launched; a national year-long campaign to raise awareness of coercive control, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Welsh Government continues to work with expert partners to develop and implement VAWDASV perpetrator policy and has published a Government Social Research report on ‘what works with domestic abuse perpetrators’ to encourage evidence-based and effective practice as well as standards for specialist services working with perpetrators of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. These emphasise the importance of integrated support services.⁴

Northern Ireland

A range of educational programmes are in place in Northern Ireland to promote pupils’ mental health and wellbeing. In educational institutions, there are also pastoral care arrangements and access to an external counselling service, ‘Inspire Workplaces’, for students. In 2018/19, the Department of Education provided additional earmarked funding to the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to carry out a review of existing Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) resources. CCEA was commissioned particularly to identify, signpost and develop guidance and resources in a number of priority areas, including healthy, positive sexual expression and relationships; and domestic and sexual violence and

⁴ <https://gwedhill.gov.wales/docs/caecd/research/2018/181204-rapid-evidence-assessment-what-works-domestic-abuse-perpetrators-en.pdf>, <https://gwedhill.gov.wales/docs/dsijg/publications/commsafety/181206-vawda-perpetrator-service-standards-en.pdf>

abuse. CCEA has now created an online RSE Hub to facilitate easy access to these new resources. The Department has allocated additional funding to CCEA in 2019/20 to take forward the further development of teaching materials and pupil resources in these areas.

The Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme (DVADS) is now in its second year. The aim of the scheme is to ensure the safety of potential domestic abuse victims. It allows the provision of relevant information relating to the abusive past of a partner - which would allow a potential victim to make an informed choice about their relationship. To promote DVADS, a targeted multi-media advertising campaign was launched in a bid to promote the scheme and how people can apply. It also sought to raise public awareness of the issue of domestic violence and abuse more generally.

The 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy', led by the DoJ and the DoH, clearly identifies the need to raise awareness and promotes a zero-tolerance approach to domestic and sexual violence and abuse. A communication plan is fully implemented to support the Strategy. The DoJ is also currently in the final year of a three-year advertising campaign to raise awareness of the issue of domestic violence and abuse and the disclosure scheme. This is an extensive multi-media campaign using a mix of TV, radio, outdoor and social media advertising. Looking forward to future years it is the intention to run further promotional campaigns, which in particular will highlight the introduction of the new domestic abuse offence in Northern Ireland which will include coercive & controlling behaviour.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) raises awareness of domestic abuse across Northern Ireland with its domestic abuse media campaign. A 'Walking on Egg Shells' campaign was launched over Christmas 2018 and a social media campaign was also launched in July 2019.

Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) prisoners can take part in a range of programmes to help address their offending and prevent reoffending. The 'Victim Impact Course' consists of 26 sessions delivered over 13 days, with different topics delivered during each of the days. There are specific topics covering violence against women and domestic abuse. The programme has been delivered to male offenders (both young adult and adult) and to adult female offenders. Other treatment programmes include victim impact courses, the 'Building Better Relationships' programme, and the 'Alcohol Related Violence' programme.

Scotland

The Scottish Government has provided funding to Police Scotland to train over 14,000 officers and front-line staff to support the implementation of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018. They provided Police Scotland with £825,000 to deliver this training. To further support implementation, £166,000 was provided to Scottish Women's Aid to develop training materials and train workers.

The Scottish Government regularly carries out national awareness campaigns tackling a range of VAWG crimes, including in relation to domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault and forms of 'honour-based' abuse. Scotland has funded a Rape Crisis Scotland awareness raising campaign to increase public understanding of responses to rape, as well as a campaign around the new offence of sharing private intimate images which was introduced in the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm Act 2016. The Scottish Government also ran a campaign to raise awareness of the new offence of coercive control contained in the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 and another on sexual harassment and sexism is currently being developed.

The Scottish Government has funded the development of the Equally Safe in Higher Education Tool Kit, which was launched last year. The Tool Kit provides institutions with the resources they need to tackle gender-based violence and develop a whole campus response to the issue.

The Scottish Government is funding the Caledonian System (over £2 million in 2019/20) in 13 local authority areas across Scotland. This is a specialist court-mandated programme working with male

perpetrators which also aims to improve the lives of women and children affected. A further £2.8 million has been allocated between 2018 and 2020 and has allowed the expansion of the programme to a further six local authorities, increasing the number of local authority areas delivering the Caledonian System to 19.

Funding is also provided for the community delivery element of the Moving Forward: Making Changes (MFMC) programme, which is aimed at adult males convicted of a sexual offence (or a non-sexual offence that contains a significant sexual element) and who are deemed as being of medium or above risk of committing a similar offence in the future. From April 2017, a new justice social work funding distribution model was introduced to provide local authorities with more autonomy and flexibility to target resources to tackle local priorities, working in partnership with statutory community justice partners and in collaboration with the third sector to reduce reoffending. This resulted in a number of funding streams being decentralised, including funding for MFMC, which is now included in the wider justice social work funding allocation distributed to all 32 local authorities. It is therefore now up to each local authority to prioritise this funding to meet statutory obligations and local priorities.

Protection

We are committed to supporting all victims of abuse. We expect every report of VAWG to be treated seriously from the point of disclosure, every victim to be treated with dignity, and every investigation and every prosecution to be conducted thoroughly and professionally. The Convention highlights the importance of police intervention (including removing domestic abuse perpetrators from their home), refuge provision for victims, appropriate sexual violence referral centres, helplines, and ensuring information for victims is accessible.

As highlighted in the 2018 Report on Progress, since signing the Convention in 2012, we have created a range of additional protective tools and powers, including Sexual Harm Prevention Orders, Sexual Risk Orders and FGM Protection Orders, as well as making breach of a Forced Marriage Protection Order a criminal offence. Additionally, the Stalking Protection Act 2019, which was sponsored by Dr Sarah Wollaston MP and Baroness Bertin, gained Royal Assent on 15 March 2019. The Act creates new Stalking Protection Orders, designed to fill a gap in the protective order regime and to enable earlier police intervention in stalking cases. These will be brought into force as soon as possible.

The Victims' Code sets out the services that must be provided to victims of crime by organisations in England and Wales. This Code sets a minimum standard for these services. We intend to strengthen the Victims' Code to address its complexity and accessibility and to update the entitlements so that they are more reflective of victims' needs. That is why the Government launched a consultation in July 2019 aimed at strengthening the Victims' Code by giving victims a louder voice in the process, ensuring that they are better heard through their journey in the criminal justice system, and making sure they can access the support they need. Proposals include providing greater clarity around victims' rights and raising awareness for victims who do not report a crime or who withdraw from the criminal justice process that they are entitled to the same support as everyone else.

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) directly commissions 77 rape support centres across England and Wales to provide independent, specialist support to female and male victims of sexual violence, including victims of child sexual abuse. The support is offered by specialist local organisations at a physical location, free of charge and regardless of whether a person reported the crime to police. Emotional and practical support offered may include counselling, therapy, an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser service, helpline/online support, groupwork and advocacy.

The MoJ is committed to ensuring sexual violence support services receive more sustainable funding through multi-year grant settlements, which is why the recent funding has been awarded for three years rather than annually. In April this year, the funding available to these essential services increased by 10% - up to £8 million *per annum* and totalling £24 million over three years. In September, the MoJ announced a further £5 million increase for specialist support services. This will see a £4 million increase (up to £12 million per year) for support services across the country, including tailored face-to-face support and counselling and £1 million investment for recruiting more Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) who play a critical role in ensuring that victims feel informed, supported and engaged throughout the criminal justice process. This announcement means government funding for rape support will now total £32 million over the next three years.

In September 2018, the Government published the first ever cross-Government Victims Strategy, which sets out our vision for a justice system that supports even more victims to speak up with the certainty that they will be understood, that they will be protected, and that they will be supported whether or not they report a crime, and regardless of their circumstances or background. We continue to work across Government to ensure that victims of crime have access to the support services they need to help them cope with and, as far as possible, recover from the effects of crime.

The MoJ is also developing a Rape Victims' Pledge, which will provide additional support and information for victims, in order to make their engagement with the criminal justice system simpler and less distressing. The Pledge will consider both adult and child victims of sexual violence and abuse.

NHS England have developed a five-year Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse Services, to ensure victims receive joined-up pathways of care over the course of their life whenever they need it. The goal is for the strategy to radically improve access to services for victims and survivors of sexual assault and abuse, and support them to recover, heal and rebuild their lives.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) through NHS England and NHS Improvement will spend £35 million this year (2019/20) to fund 47 sexual assault referral centres to ensure that where sexual violence does occur, there is the best possible response for victims. The centres are available to all victims, regardless of age, gender and when the sexual violence or abuse occurred. NHS England & NHS Improvement regional teams may enter into local agreements with relevant partners, such as police, PCCs, CCGs and local authorities, to establish, where appropriate, collaborative commissioning arrangements for wider support services available at SARCs.

NHS England & NHS Improvement and DHSC have also launched new community-based clinics to support non-pregnant women who have undergone FGM. The holistic community-based clinics will offer a range of support services delivered by a multi-disciplinary team including: physical assessments and treatment (including deinfibulation if required), counselling, safeguarding information and access to a FGM Health Advocate. There will be onward support to a specialist consultant if additional support is required.

The Domestic Abuse Bill and consultation response set out a wide range of measures to improve protection for victims of domestic abuse and their children. This includes funding the evaluation and roll out of Operation Encompass - a scheme that facilitates schools and police working together to provide emotional and practical support to children affected by domestic abuse - to all forces across England and Wales. We have also provided funding to nine projects supporting children affected by domestic abuse.

We are introducing new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders which offer protection that can be tailored to the needs of each victim. These will have a flexible duration, a criminal sanction for breach and a range of conditions including prohibitions, positive requirements, notification requirements and the potential to use electronic monitoring to monitor compliance with specific conditions.

We are also placing the guidance on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme on a statutory footing. This scheme provides a framework for police to make disclosures about a current or former partner's abusive or violent offending. By placing the guidance in statute, we aim to raise awareness of the scheme and enable more victims to be warned of the dangers posed by their partners or ex-partners.

We are clear that all victims of domestic abuse are treated first and foremost as victims regardless of their immigration status. Some individuals who come forward as victims, may not have a recognised, secure immigration status. Some of these individuals may have a "no recourse to public funds" restriction on their permission to remain. However, where appropriate they will be sign posted to alternative options. We consider victims first and foremost – enforcement action is not prioritised against victims or survivors of abuse. We are continuing to develop safeguarding protocols to offer a degree of protection where this is required.

We have instigated special measures for individuals who are in the UK as a spouse or partner of someone who is British or a settled person, where they may apply for a period of permission to remain in their own right – independent from that of the sponsor who may be the alleged perpetrator. This period of leave allows them time in a safe environment to reflect and take advice on what they want to do next. Removing "no recourse to public funds" from their permission to remain, allows them to make a claim for public benefits.

The issue of support for migrant victims of domestic abuse was one of those raised by the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill in its report published in June. In its response, the Government said that it would:

“review the overall response to migrant victims of domestic abuse, taking careful account of evidence provided by stakeholders on this issue. The review will specifically consider the Committee’s recommendation to extend the period of time that support is offered for and how this relates to a victim’s ability to access refuge accommodation. In considering our response to those who are eligible for the DDVC, we will take into account any obligations we may have under the Istanbul Convention to ensure we are compliant.”⁵

We have therefore recorded Articles 4(3) and 59 as ‘under review’ to reflect the fact that we are considering the Committee’s concerns.

DHSC is overseeing £2m of government funding to expand the Standing Together Against Domestic Violence (STADV) led pathfinder programme to develop a whole health system response to domestic abuse in acute, community and mental health settings. This builds on the Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) model which provides staff training and a support programme to bridge the gap between the voluntary sector and primary care, to harness the strengths of each, and to provide an improved domestic violence service.

NHS England is developing a four-year action plan specifically on domestic violence and abuse. This will raise awareness amongst NHS staff, ensure that staff have the skills to identify and refer, and address the issue of NHS staff who are themselves victims or perpetrators.

Earlier this year, the Home Office held nine roadshows across England and Wales to train professionals on FGM and forced marriage protection orders. Around 1,300 professionals attended the events, which raised awareness of the scope and effectiveness of the orders, along with a practical guide on how to apply for one. The aim was to encourage professionals to always consider them in any safeguarding plans.

As at June 2019, 2,149 Forced Marriage Protection Orders and 418 FGM Protection Orders have been made since their introduction (2008 and 2015 respectively).

The Government has also committed more than £1.1 million per year up to 2022 to support seven helpline services:

- the national domestic violence helpline;
- a helpline for LGBT victims of domestic abuse;
- a helpline for male victims of domestic abuse;
- a helpline for perpetrators of domestic abuse;
- a helpline for victims of stalking;
- a helpline for victims of so-called honour-based abuse; and
- a helpline for victims of revenge porn.

The funding will be used to provide information to those experiencing (and in one case perpetrating) VAWG crimes as well as to provide specialist support for other victims and preparators. The MoJ has also funded a helpline and webchat service for male victims of sexual abuse this year (2019/20).

MHCLG continue to support and part fund Women’s Aid’s UK wide online VAWG service directory, ‘Routes to Support’. This contains information about VAWG services with up to date refuge vacancies. MHCLG also fund the Women’s Aid ‘No Woman Turned Away’ project which provides additional support to victims facing barriers to assessing services and support.

⁵ Paragraph 150, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817556/CCS0619467038-001_Domestic_Abuse_Bill_Print_WEB_Accessible.pdf

MHCLG have allocated £100 million for a Move-On Fund, which will deliver accommodation and support for former rough sleepers moving on from hostels and victims of domestic abuse moving on from refuges. The fund is split equally between the Greater London Authority in London and Homes England, who are administering the fund outside of London. To date £40 million has been allocated to providers across both parts of the fund.

Additionally, MHCLG secured £40 million dedicated funding in the 2015 Spending Review for specialist accommodation-based support and services for victims of domestic abuse. In July 2018 the second two-year fund for domestic abuse services was launched, including refuge and other safe accommodation. In November 2018 it was announced that 63 projects across the country will receive a share of the £22m fund to support victims of domestic abuse, creating more than 2,200 bed spaces and giving support to over 25,000 victims.

Alongside the funding, MHCLG published their updated 'Priorities for Domestic Abuse Services', developed with partners from the domestic abuse sector and local government. MHCLG's priorities are that local areas should respond to the needs of all domestic abuse victims including those from isolated and/or marginalised communities, BAME, LGBT, older people and victims with complex needs.

In May 2019, MHCLG launched a public consultation on a new statutory duty requiring local authorities to assess the needs of and commission support for victims and their children in safe accommodation.⁶ The consultation closed on 2 August, the responses have been carefully considered and the Government published a response on 14 October.⁷ The Domestic Abuse Bill will be amended to include a new legal duty for Tier 1 local authorities (County Councils, Metropolitan Councils, Unitary Councils and, in the case of London, the Greater London Authority) to provide support services in safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and their children.

⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/801097/DA_Consultation_Document.pdf

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-safe-accommodation>

Devolved administrations

Northern Ireland

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) will 'signpost' domestic abuse victims (with consent) to a range of voluntary/support organisations. This is supplementary to a referral to Victim Support Northern Ireland for all victims of domestic abuse-motivated crimes. Officers will also make referrals to Social Services where a child has been present or normally resident in a household where a domestic abuse incident has occurred. Support mechanisms are also available for high-risk victims of domestic abuse who can be referred to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.

The DoJ in conjunction with the DoH and PSNI are taking forward work to develop a streamlined advocacy support service for victims of domestic and sexual violence and abuse. A model has been developed, the advocacy role specification is being worked through and a voluntary sector consortium approach to delivery is being considered.

From October 2018 the DoJ has fully funded costs relating to the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) service pilot being led by Victim Support NI (VSNI). Additionally, in 2018/19 the DoH, DoJ and other statutory partners provided grant funding to key voluntary organisations supporting victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and abuse. The DoH, DoJ and Department for Communities (DfC) also jointly fund a 24 hour, 365 days a year domestic and sexual violence helpline, which is a freephone service offering support and signposting information to anyone affected by domestic and sexual violence in Northern Ireland. The DoH and the PSNI also jointly fund Northern Ireland's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), which provides 24-hour care and support, 365 days a year, to victims/survivors and their families.

Multi-agency guidelines on FGM were issued in 2014 and are currently being revised and updated. The revised guidance will take account of FGM Protection Orders, new FGM care pathways and an FGM risk assessment tool launched in October 2018. Work has been undertaken to update the Northern Ireland Maternity System (NIMATS) to enable collection and analysis of FGM data.

Scotland

The Scottish Government is investing around £12 million this financial year to tackle VAWG, which includes support for front line specialist services. This helps to support a range of services working with women and children who have experienced gender-based violence. This includes local Women's Aid and Rape Crisis services; funding to national bodies in Scotland which are working to support those at risk of domestic abuse and sexual violence; and third sector organisations supporting those at risk and survivors of forced marriage, FGM and other forms of so-called 'honour based' abuse.

The Scottish Government provides funding to support the Scottish Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline, the Rape Crisis National Helpline and the Men's Advice Line (Respect phonenumber for perpetrators). The funding they provide to support the work of Rape Crisis Scotland also includes core funding for their national office and support for the 17 local Rape Crisis services across Scotland. 14 Rape Crisis Centres have been allocated an additional £1.5 million over 2018-21 to help these services plan for the future and ensure that more people can receive access to the support they need.

The Scottish Government is working closely with Health Scotland to improve the health response to victims of gender-based violence and in March 2017 established a taskforce for the improvement of services for victims of rape and sexual assault. Scotland has also provided funding to NHS Education Scotland to deliver a new trauma informed course, both to doctors across Scotland who undertake forensic medical examinations, and to the nurses who support victims through the examination and refer them to appropriate services. They are also working closely with partners across Scotland to consider a pilot of Forensic Nurse Examiners.

It is possible for a person at risk in Scotland to obtain a court order and an interdict or non-harassment order against the person causing the risk. The police have a power to detain a suspect prior to charge, or to release on undertakings, which may include a requirement that the accused does not approach the residence of the suspected victim. Equally, the court can make it a condition of bail that an accused cannot return to the suspected victim's home. Ministers consulted earlier this year on proposals for new protective orders which would strengthen provision in this area by enabling the police to apply for an order without the need for the victim to apply to the civil courts.

The Scottish Government introduced the Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) Bill to the Scottish Parliament on 29 May, which includes provisions to confer the power upon Ministers to issue statutory guidance and for the creation of FGM Protection Orders.

Wales

The Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities and third sector organisations to deliver direct service provision to support and protect victims; for strategic coordination of services at a local level; and for training. The funding is directed towards delivering the objectives of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015, which are to prevent VAWDASV, and to protect and support victims and survivors of VAWDASV. The VAWDASV capital grant supports a range of capital projects, including 'target hardening' to improve security at victims' and survivors' homes.

The Welsh Government has introduced statutory guidance to require local authorities and local health boards to produce a local VAWDASV strategy and implementation plan. They have also introduced statutory guidance on regional needs-led commissioning of VAWDASV services.

The Welsh Government provides funding for Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) as well as funding for training them. Funding is also provided for Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), and a range of direct services including counselling support.

Other funding includes a Housing Support Grant (HSG), approximately £9.5 million of which is specifically directed towards supporting victims fleeing domestic abuse to obtain and retain housing. The Welsh Government also provides funding for the all Wales domestic abuse and sexual violence helpline, which delivers a free service, 24 hours and 365 days a year, and the Dyn Helpline for male victims of violence and abuse.

Prosecution

The Convention requires state parties to have in place a range of criminal offences covering the conduct set out in the Convention and measures to ensure the effective investigation of allegations; and to carry out judicial proceedings in a way that respects the rights of victims. Where the relevant conduct – which includes psychological, physical and sexual violence as well as stalking, forced marriage and FGM - is committed in the UK, we have robust laws in place to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. These include a specific offence of forced marriage, which came into force in 2014; and an offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship which came into force in 2015. The offence aims to protect victims who would otherwise be subjected to sustained patterns of abuse that can lead to total control of their lives by the perpetrator. We are currently undertaking a review of effectiveness of the offence - the review is due to report later this year.

Article 44 additionally requires the UK to be able to prosecute criminal conduct set out in the Convention when that conduct is committed outside the UK by a UK national or a person who is habitually resident in the UK (extraterritorial jurisdiction). The UK already has extraterritorial jurisdiction over offences which cover some of the conduct set out in the Convention, such as sexual offences where the victim of the offence is under 18, forced marriage and FGM. The Domestic Abuse Bill will amend domestic law – throughout the UK – to take extraterritorial jurisdiction over offences covering other criminal conduct set out in the Convention.

We have also strengthened the law in ways which go beyond what the Convention requires, including:

- a new Stalking Protection Order breach of which without a reasonable excuse will be a criminal offence. And we have raised the maximum penalty for the offences of putting people in fear of violence and stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm or distress from 5 to 10 years' imprisonment;
- a 'revenge porn' offence introduced in 2015, making it a criminal offence to disclose private sexual photographs and films without the consent of an individual who appears in them and with the intent to cause that individual distress. The Government also funds the 'revenge porn' helpline, which has helped with approximately 5,000 cases since it opened in February 2015;
- a new offence of 'upskirting' to close a loophole in the law. Parliament passed the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 which ensures this behaviour is captured by specific criminal offences. The provisions came into effect in April 2019;
- changes to FGM legislation including a new offence of failing to protect a girl from the risk of FGM; and granting victims of FGM lifelong anonymity both introduced in 2015. In February 2019, there was the first UK conviction for FGM. The perpetrator was sentenced to 11 years in prison;
- lifelong anonymity for victims of forced marriage was introduced in 2017 to encourage more victims to come forward.

Prosecutions and convictions

VAWG Convictions ⁸ (England & Wales)								
2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
68,154	66,860	58,276	67,380	78,773	87,275	84,565	80,387	70,323

The annual CPS VAWG report on prosecutions and convictions covers a broad range of offences including domestic abuse, rape, stalking, sexual abuse and so called 'honour-based' abuse.

⁸ This includes cases flagged as domestic abuse, rape and sexual offences excluding rape. Please refer to the CPS's Annual Crime Report on VAWG for 2018-19 for explanatory notes to help interpret the data.

Overall the data shows a decrease in the number of convictions for VAWG-related crimes. This should be viewed in the context of wider falls in the volume of cases across the criminal justice system. A cross-government review of rape cases is underway to understand the reasons for the fall in volumes of police referrals, charges, prosecutions and convictions for VAWG offences and to address any identified issues. Any lessons learnt for wider VAWG cases will be considered and steps taken as appropriate.

The CPS is leading efforts across Government on the implementation of a best practice framework for use across all Magistrates' Courts to ensure cases of domestic abuse are handled effectively, and victims and witnesses are supported appropriately. The framework was developed by identifying common components from high performing courts. This is a multi-agency project, approved for national rollout by the National Criminal Justice Board (NCJB) from January 2019 onward; a progress report to the NCJB will follow in due course.

CPS guidance on so called 'honour-based' abuse was revised in June 2019. It now includes information about all types of abuse rather than violence alone and contains bespoke advice about breast flattening.

The College of Policing has now published an evaluation of the Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment tool, which was piloted to improve recognition of coercive control and provide a more structured method of obtaining information to assess the threat posed by the perpetrator. Further testing of the tool has started in one force, with a further three to join the testing phase in October. The College will review its impact and consider any future roll out. A decision on next steps is expected by April 2020. This year the College has also published a series of new advice products for the police on stalking and harassment. There are products tailored to police responders and call handlers, those investigating stalking cases, managers and supervisors, and senior leaders.

Devolved administrations

Wales

Criminal justice matters are reserved in Wales, but the Welsh Government aims to support the UK Government in activities related to this area. For example, Welsh Government officials are represented on the MoJ's Specialist Domestic Violence Improvement Oversight Group, which considers improving the victim's experience. In doing so, the work has aimed to reduce witness attrition and improve prosecution and conviction rates. The Welsh Government has also contributed to the funding and training of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs). Early support from IDVAs and ISVAs have been shown to reduce witness attrition.

Scotland

Scotland has a range of legislation to tackle VAWG crimes. This includes specific offences of forced marriage, FGM and stalking. The Domestic Abuse (S) Act 2018 provides for a specific offence of abuse of a partner or ex-partner that covers behaviour likely to cause psychological harm, where it occurs between partners/ex-partners. There are also several more general offences that can be used in prosecuting VAWG crimes.

There are measures in place in Scotland to provide support for child witnesses during the criminal justice process, including automatic entitlement to certain protective measures. The Scottish Government's Equally Safe Violence Against Women and Girls fund provides funding for local specialist services including support for children who have experienced domestic abuse. The Vulnerable Witnesses (Criminal Evidence) (Scotland) Act was enacted in June 2019. Its main purpose is to improve the way in which child and vulnerable witnesses participate in the criminal justice system by enabling the much greater use of pre-recording of their evidence in advance of the criminal trial.

The Scottish Government is also exploring the application of the Barnahus concept of trauma informed support for child victims of serious and traumatic crimes. Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Care Inspectorate have been commissioned to develop Scotland-specific standards for Barnahus, which will set out what is required to improve the response to child victims and provide a roadmap for how the concept could operate in Scotland. Standards are expected to be published by summer 2020.

Northern Ireland

A range of special measures are available in Northern Ireland to assist vulnerable (including young children) and intimidated (including victims) witnesses to give evidence to the police and at court. Victims of violence can be issued non-molestation or occupation orders. Orders of this kind can, for example, give a victim exclusive rights to a residence. Any breach of a non-molestation or occupation order can result in criminal or other legal sanctions.

New domestic abuse legislation has been developed which will include a new offence to capture patterns of psychological abuse, violence, and/or coercion of a partner, ex-partner or close family member. In the absence of a Northern Ireland Assembly the Home Office engaged with the DoJ to include in the Domestic Abuse Bill a new domestic abuse offence in Northern Ireland and associated supplementary provisions. The inclusion of the new offence in the Bill will ensure that the criminal law in Northern Ireland satisfies the requirements of Article 33 of the Convention which requires parties to take the necessary measures "to ensure that the intentional contact of seriously impairing a person's psychological integrity through coercion or threats is criminalised".

Next steps

The Government remains committed to ratifying the Istanbul Convention and as this report highlights, we continue to make significant progress in tackling VAWG in the UK.

The Government takes its international commitments very seriously and will only ratify when we are satisfied that the UK has met all our obligations under the Convention. As set out above, the Domestic Abuse Bill includes provisions necessary for compliance with the extraterritorial jurisdiction requirements of the Convention across the UK and for the criminalisation of psychological violence in Northern Ireland. As we have committed previously, we are also reviewing the overall response to migrant victims of domestic abuse taking into account any obligations under the Convention.

The Government will set out a timetable for ratification in line with the requirement of section 1 of the Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Girls (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017 when all the legislative provisions necessary for compliance have been enacted.

We remain committed to doing all that we can to tackle VAWG. Everyone has the right to live in safety, regardless of their gender. As we drive forward our VAWG strategy, we will ensure we continue to deliver for all, leave no one behind and make VAWG everyone's business.

Annex A

Table of articles

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
Principles / Administrative articles: 1. Purposes of the Convention 2. Scope of the Convention 3. Definitions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Fundamental rights, equality and non-discrimination 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to promote and protect the right for everyone, particularly women, to live free from violence in both the public and the private sphere. 2. Parties condemn all forms of discrimination against women and take, without delay, the necessary legislative and other measures to prevent it, in particular by: - embodying in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation the principle of equality between women and men and ensuring the practical realisation of this principle; - prohibiting discrimination against women, including through the use of sanctions, where appropriate; - abolishing laws and practices which discriminate against women. 3. The implementation of the provisions of this Convention by the Parties, in particular measures to protect the rights of victims, shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, gender, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, state of health, disability, marital status, migrant or refugee status, or other status. 4. Special measures that are necessary to prevent and protect women from gender-based violence shall not be considered discrimination under the terms of this Convention.	Under review in relation to the migrant or refugee status element of section 3; otherwise compliant	Under review in relation to the migrant or refugee status element of section 3; otherwise compliant	Under review in relation to the migrant or refugee status element of section 3; otherwise compliant	Under review in relation to the migrant or refugee status element of section 3; otherwise compliant
5. State obligation a due diligence 1. Parties shall refrain from engaging in any act of violence against women and ensure that State authorities, officials, agents, institutions and other actors acting on behalf of the State act in conformity with this obligation. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, punish and provide reparation for acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention that are perpetrated by non-State actors.	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>6. Gender-sensitive policies</p> <p>Parties shall undertake to include a gender perspective in the implementation and evaluation of the impact of the provisions of this Convention and to promote and effectively implement policies of equality between women and men and the empowerment of women.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>7. Comprehensive and co-ordinated policies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to adopt and implement State-wide effective, comprehensive and co-ordinated policies encompassing all relevant measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention and offer a holistic response to violence against women. 2. Parties shall ensure that policies referred to in paragraph 1 place the rights of the victim at the centre of all measures and are implemented by way of effective co-operation among all relevant agencies, institutions and organisations. 3. Measures taken pursuant to this article shall involve, where appropriate, all relevant actors, such as government agencies, the national, regional and local parliaments and authorities, national human rights institutions and civil society organisations. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>8. Financial resources</p> <p>Parties shall allocate appropriate financial and human resources for the adequate implementation of integrated policies, measures and programmes to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, including those carried out by non-governmental organisations and civil society.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>9. Non-governmental organisations and civil society</p> <p>Parties shall recognise, encourage and support, at all levels, the work of relevant non-governmental organisations and of civil society active in combating violence against women and establish effective co-operation with these organisations.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>10. Co-ordinating body</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall designate or establish one or more official bodies responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence covered by this Convention. These bodies shall co-ordinate the collection of data as referred to in Article 11, analyse and disseminate its results. 2. Parties shall ensure that the bodies designated or established pursuant to this article receive information of a general nature on measures taken pursuant to Chapter VIII. 3. Parties shall ensure that the bodies designated or established pursuant to this article shall have the capacity to communicate directly and foster relations with their counterparts in other Parties. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>11. Data collection and research</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For the purpose of the implementation of this Convention, Parties shall undertake to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. collect disaggregated relevant statistical data at regular intervals on cases of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention; b. support research in the field of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention in order to study its root causes and effects, incidences and conviction rates, as well as the efficacy of measures taken to implement this Convention. 2. Parties shall endeavour to conduct population-based surveys at regular intervals to assess the prevalence of and trends in all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. 3. Parties shall provide the group of experts, as referred to in Article 66 of this Convention, with the information collected pursuant to this article in order to stimulate international co-operation and enable international benchmarking. 4. Parties shall ensure that the information collected pursuant to this article is available to the public. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status. Scotland
<p>12. General obligations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary measures to promote changes in the social and cultural patterns of behaviour of women and men with a view to eradicating prejudices, customs, traditions and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women or on stereotyped roles for women and men. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to prevent all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention by any natural or legal person. 3. Any measures taken pursuant to this chapter shall take into account and address the specific needs of persons made vulnerable by particular circumstances and shall place the human rights of all victims at their centre. 4. Parties shall take the necessary measures to encourage all members of society, especially men and boys, to contribute actively to preventing all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. 5. Parties shall ensure that culture, custom, religion, tradition or so-called “honour” shall not be considered as justification for any acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. 6. Parties shall take the necessary measures to promote programmes and activities for the empowerment of women. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>13. Awareness-raising</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall promote or conduct, on a regular basis and at all levels, awareness-raising campaigns or programmes, including in co-operation with national human rights institutions and equality bodies, civil society and non-governmental organisations, especially women’s organisations, where appropriate, to increase awareness and understanding among the general public of the different manifestations of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, their consequences on children and the need to prevent such violence. 2. Parties shall ensure the wide dissemination among the general public of information on measures available to prevent acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>14. Education</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take, where appropriate, the necessary steps to include teaching material on issues such as equality between women and men, non-stereotyped gender roles, mutual respect, non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships, gender-based violence against women and the right to personal integrity, adapted to the evolving capacity of learners, in formal curricula and at all levels of education. 2. Parties shall take the necessary steps to promote the principles referred to in paragraph 1 in informal educational facilities, as well as in sports, cultural and leisure facilities and the media. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>15. Training of professionals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall provide or strengthen appropriate training for the relevant professionals dealing with victims or perpetrators of all acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, on the prevention and detection of such violence, equality between women and men, the needs and rights of victims, as well as on how to prevent secondary victimisation. 2. Parties shall encourage that the training referred to in paragraph 1 includes training on co-ordinated multi-agency cooperation to allow for a comprehensive and appropriate handling of referrals in cases of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>16. Preventive intervention and treatment programmes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support programmes aimed at teaching perpetrators of domestic violence to adopt non-violent behaviour in interpersonal relationships with a view to preventing further violence and changing violent behavioural patterns. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or support treatment programmes aimed at preventing perpetrators, in particular sex offenders, from re-offending. 3. In taking the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, Parties shall ensure that the safety of, support for and the human rights of victims are of primary concern and that, where appropriate, these programmes are set up and implemented in close co-ordination with specialist support services for victims. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>17. Participation of the private sector and the media</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall encourage the private sector, the information and communication technology sector and the media, with due respect for freedom of expression and their independence, to participate in the elaboration and implementation of policies and to set guidelines and self-regulatory standards to prevent violence against women and to enhance respect for their dignity. 2. Parties shall develop and promote, in co-operation with private sector actors, skills among children, parents and educators on how to deal with the information and communications environment that provides access to degrading content of a sexual or violent nature which might be harmful. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>18. General Obligations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to protect all victims from any further acts of violence. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures, in accordance with internal law, to ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms to provide for effective co-operation between all relevant state agencies, including the judiciary, public prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, local and regional authorities as well as non-governmental organisations and other relevant organisations and entities, in protecting and supporting victims and witnesses of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, including by referring to general and specialist support services as detailed in Articles 20 and 22 of this Convention. 3. Parties shall ensure that measures taken pursuant to this chapter shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –be based on a gendered understanding of violence against women and domestic violence and shall focus on the human rights and safety of the victim; –be based on an integrated approach which takes into account the relationship between victims, perpetrators, children and their wider social environment; –aim at avoiding secondary victimisation; –aim at the empowerment and economic independence of women victims of violence; –allow, where appropriate, for a range of protection and support services to be located on the same premises; –address the specific needs of vulnerable persons, including child victims, and be made available to them. 4. The provision of services shall not depend on the victim's willingness to press charges or testify against any perpetrator. 5. Parties shall take the appropriate measures to provide consular and other protection and support to their nationals and other victims entitled to such protection in accordance with their obligations under international law. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>19. Information</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims receive adequate and timely information on available support services and legal measures in a language they understand.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>20. General support services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims have access to services facilitating their recovery from violence. These measures should include, when necessary, services such as legal and psychological counselling, financial assistance, housing, education, training and assistance in finding employment. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims have access to health care and social services and that services are adequately resourced and professionals are trained to assist victims and refer them to the appropriate services. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>21. Assistance in individual/collective complaints</p> <p>Parties shall ensure that victims have information on and access to applicable regional and international individual/collective complaints mechanisms. Parties shall promote the provision of sensitive and knowledgeable assistance to victims in presenting any such complaints.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>22. Specialist support services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide or arrange for, in an adequate geographical distribution, immediate, short- and long-term specialist support services to any victim subjected to any of the acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. 2. Parties shall provide or arrange for specialist women's support services to all women victims of violence and their children. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>23. Shelters</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide for the setting-up of appropriate, easily accessible shelters in sufficient numbers to provide safe accommodation for and to reach out pro-actively to victims, especially women and their children.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>24. Telephone helplines</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up state-wide round-the-clock (24/7) telephone helplines free of charge to provide advice to callers, confidentially or with due regard for their anonymity, in relation to all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>25. Support for victims of sexual violence.</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide for the setting up of appropriate, easily accessible rape crisis or sexual violence referral centres for victims in sufficient numbers to provide for medical and forensic examination, trauma support and counselling for victims.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>26. Protection and support for child witnesses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that in the provision of protection and support services to victims, due account is taken of the rights and needs of child witnesses of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention. 2. Measures taken pursuant to this article shall include age-appropriate psychosocial counselling for child witnesses of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention and shall give due regard to the best interests of the child. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>27. Reporting</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary measures to encourage any person witness to the commission of acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention or who has reasonable grounds to believe that such an act may be committed, or that further acts of violence are to be expected, to report this to the competent organisations or authorities.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>28. Reporting by professionals</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the confidentiality rules imposed by internal law on certain professionals do not constitute an obstacle to the possibility, under appropriate conditions, of their reporting to the competent organisations or authorities if they have reasonable grounds to believe that a serious act of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, has been committed and further serious acts of violence are to be expected.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>29. Civil lawsuits and remedies</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide victims with adequate civil remedies against the perpetrator.</p> <p>2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide victims, in accordance with the general principles of international law, with adequate civil remedies against state authorities that have failed in their duty to take the necessary preventive or protective measures within the scope of their powers.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>30. Compensation</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims have the right to claim compensation from perpetrators for any of the offences established in accordance with this Convention.</p> <p>2. Adequate state compensation shall be awarded to those who have sustained serious bodily injury or impairment of health, to the extent that the damage is not covered by other sources such as the perpetrator, insurance or state-funded health and social provisions. This does not preclude Parties from claiming regress for compensation awarded from the perpetrator, as long as due regard is paid to the victim's safety.</p> <p>3. Measures taken pursuant to paragraph 2 shall ensure the granting of compensation within a reasonable time.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>31. Custody, visitation rights and safety</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that, in the determination of custody and visitation rights of children, incidents of violence covered by the scope of this Convention are taken into account.</p> <p>2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the exercise of any visitation or custody rights does not jeopardise the rights and safety of the victim or children.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>32. Civil consequences of forced marriages</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that marriages concluded under force may be voidable, annulled or dissolved without undue financial or administrative burden placed on the victim.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>33. Psychological violence</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the intentional conduct of seriously impairing a person's psychological integrity through coercion or threats is criminalised.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	In progress towards compliance	Compliant
<p>34. Stalking</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the intentional conduct of repeatedly engaging in threatening conduct directed at another person, causing her or him to fear for her or his safety, is criminalised.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>35. Physical violence</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the intentional conduct of committing acts of physical violence against another person is criminalised.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>36. Sexual violence, including rape</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the following intentional conducts are criminalised: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) engaging in non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a sexual nature of the body of another person with any bodily part or object; b) engaging in other non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a person; c) causing another person to engage in non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a third person. 2. Consent must be given voluntarily as the result of the person's free will assessed in the context of the surrounding circumstances. 3. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the provisions of paragraph 1 also apply to acts committed against former or current spouses or partners as recognised by internal law. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>37. Forced marriage</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the intentional conduct of forcing an adult or a child to enter into a marriage is criminalised.</p> <p>2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the intentional conduct of luring an adult or a child to the territory of a Party or state other than the one she or he resides in with the purpose of forcing this adult or child to enter into a marriage is criminalised.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>38. Female genital mutilation</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the following intentional conducts are criminalised:</p> <p>a. excising, infibulating or performing any other mutilation to the whole or any part of a woman’s labia majora, labia minora or clitoris;</p> <p>b. coercing or procuring a woman to undergo any of the acts listed in point a;</p> <p>c. inciting, coercing or procuring a girl to undergo any of the acts listed in point a.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>39. Forced abortion and forced sterilisation</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the following intentional conducts are criminalised:</p> <p>a. performing an abortion on a woman without her prior and informed consent;</p> <p>b. performing surgery which has the purpose or effect of terminating a woman’s capacity to naturally reproduce without her prior and informed consent or understanding of the procedure.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>40. Sexual harassment</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, is subject to criminal or other legal sanction.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>41. Aiding or abetting and attempt</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish as an offence, when committed intentionally, aiding or abetting the commission of the offences established in accordance with Articles 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.a, and 39 of this Convention. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish as offences, when committed intentionally, attempts to commit the offences established in accordance with Articles 35, 36, 37, 38.a and 39 of this Convention. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>42. Unacceptable justifications for crimes, including crimes committed in the name of so-called “honour”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that, in criminal proceedings initiated following the commission of any of the acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, culture, custom, religion, tradition or so-called “honour” shall not be regarded as justification for such acts. This covers, in particular, claims that the victim has transgressed cultural, religious, social or traditional norms or customs of appropriate behaviour. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that incitement by any person of a child to commit any of the acts referred to in paragraph 1 shall not diminish the criminal liability of that person for the acts committed. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>43. Application of criminal offences</p> <p>The offences established in accordance with this Convention shall apply irrespective of the nature of the relationship between victim and perpetrator.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>44. Jurisdiction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish jurisdiction over any offence established in accordance with this Convention, when the offence is committed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. in their territory; or b. on board a ship flying their flag; or c. on board an aircraft registered under their laws; or d. by one of their nationals; or e. by a person who has her or his habitual residence in their territory. 2. Parties shall endeavour to take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish jurisdiction over any offence established in accordance with this Convention where the offence is committed against one of their nationals or a person who has her or his habitual residence in their territory. 	In progress towards compliance	In progress towards compliance	In progress towards compliance	In progress towards compliance

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>3. For the prosecution of the offences established in accordance with Articles 36, 37, 38 and 39 of this Convention, Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that their jurisdiction is not subordinated to the condition that the acts are criminalised in the territory where they were committed.</p> <p>4. For the prosecution of the offences established in accordance with Articles 36, 37, 38 and 39 of this Convention, Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that their jurisdiction as regards points d and e of paragraph 1 is not subordinated to the condition that the prosecution can only be initiated following the reporting by the victim of the offence or the laying of information by the state of the place where the offence was committed.</p> <p>5. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish jurisdiction over the offences established in accordance with this Convention, in cases where an alleged perpetrator is present on their territory and they do not extradite her or him to another Party, solely on the basis of her or his nationality.</p> <p>6. When more than one Party claims jurisdiction over an alleged offence established in accordance with this Convention, the Parties involved shall, where appropriate, consult each other with a view to determining the most appropriate jurisdiction for prosecution.</p> <p>7. Without prejudice to the general rules of international law, this Convention does not exclude any criminal jurisdiction exercised by a Party in accordance with its internal law.</p>				
<p>45. Sanctions and measures</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the offences established in accordance with this Convention are punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions, taking into account their seriousness. These sanctions shall include, where appropriate, sentences involving the deprivation of liberty which can give rise to extradition.</p> <p>2. Parties may adopt other measures in relation to perpetrators, such as: - monitoring or supervision of convicted persons; - withdrawal of parental rights, if the best interests of the child, which may include the safety of the victim, cannot be guaranteed in any other way.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>46. Aggravating circumstances</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the following circumstances, insofar as they do not already form part of the constituent elements of the offence, may, in conformity with the relevant provisions of internal law, be taken into consideration as aggravating circumstances in the determination of the sentence in relation to the offences established in accordance with this Convention:</p> <p>a. the offence was committed against a former or current spouse or partner as recognised by internal law, by a member of the family, a person cohabiting with the victim or a person having abused her or his authority;</p> <p>b. the offence, or related offences, were committed repeatedly;</p> <p>c. the offence was committed against a person made vulnerable by particular circumstances;</p> <p>d. the offence was committed against or in the presence of a child;</p> <p>e. the offence was committed by two or more people acting together;</p> <p>f. the offence was preceded or accompanied by extreme levels of violence;</p> <p>g. the offence was committed with the use or threat of a weapon;</p> <p>h. the offence resulted in severe physical or psychological harm for the victim;</p> <p>i. the perpetrator had previously been convicted of offences of a similar nature.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>47. Sentences passed by another Party</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide for the possibility of taking into account final sentences passed by another Party in relation to the offences established in accordance with this Convention when determining the sentence.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>48. Prohibition of mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes or sentencing</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to prohibit mandatory alternative dispute resolution processes, including mediation and conciliation, in relation to all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention.</p> <p>2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that if the payment of a fine is ordered, due account shall be taken of the ability of the perpetrator to assume his or her financial obligations towards the victim.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>49. General obligations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that investigations and judicial proceedings in relation to all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention are carried out without undue delay while taking into consideration the rights of the victim during all stages of the criminal proceedings. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures, in conformity with the fundamental principles of human rights and having regard to the gendered understanding of violence, to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of offences established in accordance with this Convention. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>50. Immediate response, prevention and protection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the responsible law enforcement agencies respond to all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention promptly and appropriately by offering adequate and immediate protection to victims. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the responsible law enforcement agencies engage promptly and appropriately in the prevention and protection against all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention, including the employment of preventive operational measures and the collection of evidence. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>51. Risk assessment and risk management</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that an assessment of the lethality risk, the seriousness of the situation and the risk of repeated violence is carried out by all relevant authorities in order to manage the risk and if necessary to provide co-ordinated safety and support. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the assessment referred to in paragraph 1 duly takes into account, at all stages of the investigation and application of protective measures, the fact that perpetrators of acts of violence covered by the scope of this Convention possess or have access to firearms. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>52. Emergency barring orders</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the competent authorities are granted the power to order, in situations of immediate danger, a perpetrator of domestic violence to vacate the residence of the victim or person at risk for a sufficient period of time and to prohibit the perpetrator from entering the residence of or contacting the victim or person at risk. Measures taken pursuant to this article shall give priority to the safety of victims or persons at risk.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>53. Restraining or protection orders</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that appropriate restraining or protection orders are available to victims of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention.</p> <p>2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the restraining or protection orders referred to in paragraph 1 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - available for immediate protection and without undue financial or administrative burdens placed on the victim; - issued for a specified period or until modified or discharged; - where necessary, issued on an <i>ex parte</i> basis which has immediate effect; - available irrespective of, or in addition to, other legal proceedings; - allowed to be introduced in subsequent legal proceedings. <p>3. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that breaches of restraining or protection orders issued pursuant to paragraph 1 shall be subject to effective, proportionate and dissuasive criminal or other legal sanctions.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>54. Investigations and evidence</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that, in any civil or criminal proceedings, evidence relating to the sexual history and conduct of the victim shall be permitted only when it is relevant and necessary.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>55. <i>Ex parte</i> and <i>ex officio</i> proceedings</p> <p>1. Parties shall ensure that investigations into or prosecution of offences established in accordance with Articles 35, 36, 37, 38 and 39 of this Convention shall not be wholly dependant upon a report or complaint filed by a victim if the offence was committed in whole or in part on its territory, and that the proceedings may continue even if the victim withdraws her or his statement or complaint.</p> <p>2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure, in accordance with the conditions provided for by their internal law, the possibility for governmental and non-governmental organisations and domestic violence counsellors to assist and/or support victims, at their request, during investigations and judicial proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with this Convention.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>56. Measures of protection</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to protect the rights and interests of victims, including their special needs as witnesses, at all stages of investigations and judicial proceedings, in particular by:</p> <p>a. providing for their protection, as well as that of their families and witnesses, from intimidation, retaliation and repeat victimisation;</p> <p>b. ensuring that victims are informed, at least in cases where the victims and the family might be in danger, when the perpetrator escapes or is released temporarily or definitively;</p> <p>c. informing them, under the conditions provided for by internal law, of their rights and the services at their disposal and the follow-up given to their complaint, the charges, the general progress of the investigation or proceedings, and their role therein, as well as the outcome of their case;</p> <p>d. enabling victims, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of internal law, to be heard, to supply evidence and have their views, needs and concerns presented, directly or through an intermediary, and considered;</p> <p>e. providing victims with appropriate support services so that their rights and interests are duly presented and taken into account;</p> <p>f. ensuring that measures may be adopted to protect the privacy and the image of the victim;</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>g. ensuring that contact between victims and perpetrators within court and law enforcement agency premises is avoided where possible;</p> <p>h. providing victims with independent and competent interpreters when victims are parties to proceedings or when they are supplying evidence;</p> <p>i. enabling victims to testify, according to the rules provided by their internal law, in the courtroom without being present or at least without the presence of the alleged perpetrator, notably through the use of appropriate communication technologies, where available.</p> <p>2.A child victim and child witness of violence against women and domestic violence shall be afforded, where appropriate, special protection measures taking into account the best interests of the child.</p>				
<p>57. Legal aid</p> <p>Parties shall provide for the right to legal assistance and to free legal aid for victims under the conditions provided by their internal law.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>58. Statute of limitation</p> <p>Parties shall take the necessary legislative and other measures to ensure that the statute of limitation for initiating any legal proceedings with regard to the offences established in accordance with Articles 36, 37, 38 and 39 of this Convention, shall continue for a period of time that is sufficient and commensurate with the gravity of the offence in question, to allow for the efficient initiation of proceedings after the victim has reached the age of majority.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>59. Residence status</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims whose residence status depends on that of the spouse or partner as recognised by internal law, in the event of the dissolution of the marriage or the relationship, are granted in the event of particularly difficult circumstances, upon application, an autonomous residence permit irrespective of the duration of the marriage or the relationship. The conditions relating to the granting and duration of the autonomous residence permit are established by internal law.</p> <p>2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims may obtain the suspension of expulsion proceedings initiated in relation to a residence status dependent on that of the spouse or partner as recognised by internal law to enable them to apply for an autonomous residence permit.</p> <p>3. Parties shall issue a renewable residence permit to victims in one of the two following situations, or in both:</p> <p>a. where the competent authority considers that their stay is necessary owing to their personal situation;</p> <p>b. where the competent authority considers that their stay is necessary for the purpose of their co-operation with the competent authorities in investigation or criminal proceedings.</p> <p>4. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims of forced marriage brought into another country for the purpose of the marriage and who, as a result, have lost their residence status in the country where they habitually reside, may regain this status.</p>	Under review	Under review	Under review	Under review
<p>60. Gender-based asylum claims</p> <p>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that gender-based violence against women may be recognised as a form of persecution within the meaning of Article 1, A (2), of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and as a form of serious harm giving rise to complementary/subsidiary protection.</p> <p>2. Parties shall ensure that a gender-sensitive interpretation is given to each of the Convention grounds and that where it is established that the persecution feared is for one or more of these grounds, applicants shall be granted refugee status according to the applicable relevant instruments.</p> <p>3. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to develop gender-sensitive reception procedures and support services for asylum-seekers as well as gender guidelines and gender-sensitive asylum procedures, including refugee status determination and application for international protection.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>61. Non-refoulement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to respect the principle of <i>non-refoulement</i> in accordance with existing obligations under international law. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims of violence against women who are in need of protection, regardless of their status or residence, shall not be returned under any circumstances to any country where their life would be at risk or where they might be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>62. General principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parties shall co-operate with each other, in accordance with the provisions of this Convention, and through the application of relevant international and regional instruments on co-operation in civil and criminal matters, arrangements agreed on the basis of uniform or reciprocal legislation and internal laws, to the widest extent possible, for the purpose of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. preventing, combating and prosecuting all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention; b. protecting and providing assistance to victims; c. investigations or proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with this Convention; d. enforcing relevant civil and criminal judgments issued by the judicial authorities of Parties, including protection orders. 2. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that victims of an offence established in accordance with this Convention and committed in the territory of a Party other than the one where they reside may make a complaint before the competent authorities of their state of residence. 3. If a Party that makes mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, extradition or enforcement of civil or criminal judgments imposed by another Party to this Convention conditional on the existence of a treaty receives a request for such legal cooperation from a Party with which it has not concluded such a treaty, it may consider this Convention to be the legal basis for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, extradition or enforcement of civil or criminal judgments imposed by the other Party in respect of the offences established in accordance with this Convention. 4. Parties shall endeavour to integrate, where appropriate, the prevention and the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in assistance programmes for development provided for the benefit of third states, including by entering into bilateral and multilateral agreements with third States with a view to facilitating the protection of victims in accordance with Article 18, paragraph 5. 	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>63. Measures relating to persons at risk</p> <p>When a Party, on the basis of the information at its disposal, has reasonable grounds to believe that a person is at immediate risk of being subjected to any of the acts of violence referred to in Articles 36, 37, 38 and 39 of this Convention on the territory of another Party, the Party that has the information is encouraged to transmit it without delay to the latter for the purpose of ensuring that appropriate protection measures are taken. Where applicable, this information shall include details on existing protection provisions for the benefit of the person at risk.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>64. Information</p> <p>1. The requested Party shall promptly inform the requesting Party of the final result of the action taken under this chapter. The requested Party shall also promptly inform the requesting Party of any circumstances which render impossible the carrying out of the action sought or are likely to delay it significantly.</p> <p>2. A Party may, within the limits of its internal law, without prior request, forward to another Party information obtained within the framework of its own investigations when it considers that the disclosure of such information might assist the receiving Party in preventing criminal offences established in accordance with this Convention or in initiating or carrying out investigations or proceedings concerning such criminal offences or that it might lead to a request for co-operation by that Party under this chapter.</p> <p>3. A Party receiving any information in accordance with paragraph 2 shall submit such information to its competent authorities in order that proceedings may be taken if they are considered appropriate, or that this information may be taken into account in relevant civil and criminal proceedings.</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>65. Data Protection</p> <p>Personal data shall be stored and used pursuant to the obligations undertaken by the Parties under the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No. 108).</p>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>66. Group of experts on action against violence against women and domestic violence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Group of experts on action against violence against women and domestic violence (hereinafter referred to as “GREVIO”) shall monitor the implementation of this Convention by the Parties. 2. GREVIO shall be composed of a minimum of 10 members and a maximum of 15 members, taking into account a gender and geographical balance, as well as multidisciplinary expertise. Its members shall be elected by the Committee of the Parties from among candidates nominated by the Parties for a term of office of four years, renewable once, and chosen from among nationals of the Parties. 3. The initial election of 10 members shall be held within a period of one year following the entry into force of this Convention. The election of five additional members shall be held following the 25th ratification or accession. 4. The election of the members of GREVIO shall be based on the following principles: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. they shall be chosen according to a transparent procedure from among persons of high moral character, known for their recognised competence in the fields of human rights, gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence, or assistance to and protection of victims, or having demonstrated professional experience in the areas covered by this Convention; b. no two members of GREVIO may be nationals of the same state; c. they should represent the main legal systems; d. they should represent relevant actors and agencies in the field of violence against women and domestic violence; e. they shall sit in their individual capacity and shall be independent and impartial in the exercise of their functions, and shall be available to carry out their duties in an effective manner. 5. The election procedure of the members of GREVIO shall be determined by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, after consulting with and obtaining the unanimous consent of the Parties, within a period of six months following the entry into force of this Convention. 6. GREVIO shall adopt its own rules of procedure. 7. Members of GREVIO, and other members of delegations carrying out the country visits as set forth in Article 68, paragraphs 9 and 14, shall enjoy the privileges and immunities established in the appendix to this Convention. 	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
Procedural: 67. Committee of the Parties 68. Procedure 69. General recommendations 70. Parliamentary involvement in monitoring 71. Relationship with other international instruments 72. Amendments 73. Effects of this Convention 74. Dispute settlement 75. Signature and entry into force 76. Accession to the Convention 77. Territorial application 78. Reservations 79. Validity and review of reservations 80. Denunciation 81. Notification	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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