



Home Office

# **Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2021 Report on Progress**

November 2021





Home Office

# **Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2021 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

November 2021



© Crown copyright 2021

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/official-documents](https://www.gov.uk/official-documents)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

Interpersonal Abuse Unit  
5th Floor, Fry Building  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

ISBN 978-1-5286-2962-1  
E02686085 11/21

Printed on paper containing 75% recycled fibre content minimum

Printed in the UK by HH Associates Ltd. on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office

# Contents

Introduction	1
Executive Summary	3
Integrated policy	19
Prevention	28
Protection	48
Prosecution	74
Next steps	86
Annex A: Table of Compliance	88



# Introduction

This is the fifth 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.<sup>1</sup> It follows the fourth report on progress, which was laid in Parliament on 22 October 2020, and sets out progress toward ratification since the UK signed the Istanbul 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 fourth report on progress. The

---

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.

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, Senedd Cymru and Northern Ireland Assembly, 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



# Executive Summary

Protecting women and girls from violence and abuse, and supporting victims and survivors, remain key priorities for this Government. Crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls, such as rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, ‘honour’-based abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and ‘honour’ killings), are extremely serious and have a huge impact both for those subjected to such violence and more broadly on our economy, health services, and criminal justice system. The 2019/20 Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that approximately 2.3 million adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse in the last year (1.6 million women and 757,000 men)<sup>2</sup>.

The Government signed the Istanbul Convention in 2012 to reaffirm the UK’s strong commitment to tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG). The Convention consists of 81 articles aimed at tackling VAWG which focus on prevention, protection of victims, prosecution, and integrated policies. As set out in the 2020 Report on Progress the UK already complies with, or goes further than, almost all the Convention’s articles.

---

2 Over the last decade, the police have improved offence-recording practices, and more abuse-related incidents have come to the attention of the police, which has influenced the volume of crimes recorded. Notwithstanding, there has been a small but statistically significant decrease in the prevalence of domestic abuse, with the trend flattening over recent years.

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 which were not subject to such jurisdiction required primary legislation.

On 29 April 2021 we passed the landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which includes necessary legislative measures on extraterritorial jurisdiction for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland as required by Article 44. The relevant provisions of the 2021 Act for England and Wales came into force automatically on 29 June and the corresponding provisions for Scotland were brought into force by order on the same day. Therefore, this means that those parts of the UK are now fully compliant with Article 44. Separately, the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021, which became law on 1 March 2021, includes and gives extraterritorial effect to a new domestic abuse offence in Northern Ireland, which will allow Northern Ireland to be compliant with the requirement in Article 33 of the Convention for **psychological violence** to be criminalised. Northern Ireland Ministers expect to implement this offence by late February 2022, and to

implement the provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 which relate to extraterritorial jurisdiction for other offences in Northern Ireland by no later than that date. The effect of those two actions will be to render Northern Ireland compliant with Article 33 and Article 44 of the Convention.

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 2019. In our response, the Government committed to “review the overall response to migrant victims of domestic abuse, taking careful account of evidence provided by stakeholders on this issue” and taking into account any obligations we may have under the Istanbul Convention regarding migrant victims. 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.

The Government consequently reviewed its overall response to migrant victims of domestic abuse, working with 24 expert organisations, and published Review Findings in July 2020. A key barrier to migrant victims of domestic abuse accessing support is the difficulty organisations face in funding bed spaces and ancillary services in a refuge for victims with no recourse to public funds. That is why the Government launched the £1.5 million Support for Migrant Victims scheme in April 2021, which is being run by Southall Black Sisters and their delivery partners, and which will last for 12 months. This

scheme will provide accommodation and wrap around support for migrant victims of domestic abuse with no recourse to public funds, as well as providing the data required to inform subsequent policy decisions.

We have therefore recorded Articles 4(3) (to the extent that it relates to non-discrimination on the grounds of migrant or refugee status) and 59 as “under review” pending the evaluation and findings from the SMV scheme.

In addition to the provisions on extraterritorial jurisdiction referred to above, the **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** also:

- creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic abuse;
- establishes in law the 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;
- provides for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order;
- prohibits perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the family and civil courts;

- creates a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link);
- enables domestic abuse offenders to be made subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody;
- places the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing;
- introduces a statutory duty on tier one local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation;
- extends the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse;
- extends the offence of disclosing private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress (known as the “revenge porn” offence) to cover threats to disclose such material;
- creates a new offence of non-fatal strangulation or suffocation of another person;
- clarifies by restating in statute law the general proposition that a person may not consent to the infliction of serious harm and, by extension, is unable to consent to their own death;

- provides for a statutory domestic abuse perpetrator strategy;
- provides that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance;
- ensures 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;
- prohibits GPs and other health professionals in general practice from charging a victim of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid; and
- provides for a statutory code of practice relating to the processing of domestic abuse data for immigration purposes.

We are determined to build on our previous action to reduce violence against women and girls (VAWG) through a cross-Government approach. On 21 July 2021 the Government published a new and ambitious cross-Government **Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy** to help ensure that women and girls are safe everywhere – at home, online and on the streets. The VAWG Strategy sets out our approach to



tackling VAWG, such as ‘honour’-based abuse, stalking and sexual violence, as well as online forms of violence against women and girls. It sets out that we will prioritise prevention, support survivors, pursue perpetrators and create a stronger system. The Strategy commits to a number of actions which include:

- the introduction of a new full-time National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls to take the lead for this area nationally;
- a national communications campaign with a focus on targeting perpetrators and harmful misogynistic attitudes, educating young people about healthy relationships and ensuring victims can access support;
- working to criminalise virginity testing, to send a clear message that this practice is wholly unacceptable in our society;
- introducing a £5 million ‘Safety of Women at Night’ fund, in addition to the £25 million Safer Streets Fund, focused on the prevention of violence against women and girls in public spaces at night, including in the night-time economy;
- appointing a Transport Champion to make public transport safer for women and girls;
- piloting a tool, StreetSafe, which enables the public to anonymously report areas where they feel unsafe and

identify what it was about the location which made them feel this way. The data will be used to inform local decision-making;

- better supporting teachers to deliver the recently introduced Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum;
- providing funding to invest in high quality, evidence-informed prevention projects, including in schools, to ascertain what works to tackle violence against women and girls; and
- providing an additional £1.5 million this year for specialist support services and to increase our funding for helplines, such as the Revenge Porn Helpline.

This strategy will be followed by a complementary **Domestic Abuse Strategy**. We currently estimate that there are 2.3 million victims of domestic abuse – while domestic abuse remains a form of violence against women and girls, direct, targeted action through a dedicated strategy is required to tackle it. The Domestic Abuse Strategy will be published this year and will seek to transform the whole of society’s response to domestic abuse in order to prevent offending, support victims and pursue perpetrators.

The Government has recognised the concerning declines in the volumes of police referrals, charges, prosecutions and convictions for rape and sexual offences in recent



years. We have therefore carried out an end-to-end review of the criminal justice system's response to rape cases (the '**Rape Review**'). This work was a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Justice, the Home Office, the Attorney General's Office, and police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) colleagues, with valued input from specialists including service providers from the voluntary and community sector. On 18 June the Government published the Rape Review Report and Action Plan.

The Report shows that in the years between 2015/16 and 2019/20, as the number of reported rape cases increased from 24,093 to 43,187, the proportion of cases ending in an outcome of 'charged/summonsed' dropped from 13% to 3%. The review found that the reasons for the decline in cases reaching court are several and include:

- increases in the volume of personal digital data being requested during investigation;
- delays at the investigation stage;
- strained relationships between the different agencies – particularly between police and prosecutors – which comprise the criminal justice system; and
- a lack of specialist resources and inconsistent support to victims.

One of the main reasons why cases do not progress to court is victim withdrawal: in 57% of adult rape cases in

2019/20, the victim felt unable to pursue their case. The review showed the various reasons why victims disengage from the process. Often they are not treated well by the system; fear giving evidence in court; feel judged or disbelieved by criminal justice agencies; and suffer adverse mental health effects.

The Action Plan set out a robust programme of work to achieve a significant improvement in the way the criminal justice system responds to rape, with an ambition to increase the number of cases reaching court to 2016 levels. We are committed to delivering on the actions in order to bring about much-needed improvements.

In response to the tragic murder of Sarah Everard in March this year, the Home Secretary commissioned Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to undertake an **inspection into the effectiveness of the police response to violence against women and girls**. On 17 September 2021 HMICFRS published their report which set out their findings from their inspection. One of the recommendations that came out of the inspection was for a full-time National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) VAWG National Delivery Lead to be appointed to lead on all police activity related to violence against women and girls. Deputy Chief Constable Maggie Blyth has been appointed as the National Policing Lead on VAWG to transform the way policing responds to these crimes. DCC Blyth will report on progress to the Home Secretary-

chaired National Policing Board and will provide national coordination across policing, working as part of the National Police Chiefs' Council.

The Government is continuing to make record **investment** so that victims and survivors are supported, with more than £300 million being invested this year across all crime types to ensure this. In 2021-22 the Government will provide just under £151 million for victim and witness support services for violence against women and girls crimes to include £20.7 million for local community-based sexual violence and domestic abuse services and £2 million for smaller specialist organisations helping ethnic minority, LGBT or disabled victims. We will also be refreshing the Male Victims Position Statement, which concerns men and boys who are victims of these crimes, and publishing a refreshed National Statement of Expectations on VAWG to help those responsible for commissioning services (for example, services to provide support to victims) in this area to do this effectively.

The Ministry of Justice has increased core funding for rape support centres by 50%, from £8 million to £12 million *per annum*, and extended the Rape Support Fund until March 2023 to ensure support services can continue to provide emotional and practical support to victims. We have also announced a £51 million funding boost for specialist support services to support victims through the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond. This includes national investment over two years to recruit more Independent

Sexual Violence Advisers and Independent Domestic Abuse Advisers. The Critical Support Fund and Male Rape Support Service Fund were also launched to meet exceptional need which could not be met by existing funding and to increase provision for men and boys.

In addition, to make sure that victims know what they can expect from the police, CPS, courts and other criminal justice organisations, we introduced a revised **Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales** ('Revised Victims' Code') which came into effect in April 2021. This vital work has laid the foundations for effective legislation in this area and the Ministry of Justice will launch a Victims' Bill consultation to make victims central to our work to tackle crime. The consultation and subsequent bill will seek to enshrine the rights set out in the Victims' Code in law, as well as exploring elements of support for victims.

On 9 October 2020, the Home Secretary appointed Nimco Ali OBE as an **Independent Government Advisor on Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls**. In her role, Ms Ali advises the Home Secretary and other ministers, and has played an active role in the development of the Government's new Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

# Devolved administrations

## Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's 2016 *'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy'* 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. Annual actions plans are published under which a range of cross-governmental initiatives are taken forward.

## Scotland

The Scottish Government is implementing *'Equally Safe, Scotland's Strategy to tackle all forms of VAWG'*, which entails working with stakeholders to prevent violence from occurring in the first place, building the capability and capacity of mainstream and specialist services to support survivors and those at risk, and strengthening the justice response to victims and perpetrators. Scotland has invested significant levels of funding in preventing and eradicating VAWG. This includes an additional £20



million over 2015-18 from justice budgets, which continued into 2019–2021, with around £5.7 million committed in 2020/21, primarily to support a number of existing funding allocations committed over the initial three-year period. It also included around £12 million in 2019/20 from the equality budget to support a range of projects and initiatives. This funding was continued to September 2021 to enable organisations to focus on responding to Covid-19. The Scottish Government has also invested an additional £5.75 million in frontline services to allow for rapid redesign of services and to respond to any increase in demand caused by the pandemic. This year it will invest a further £5 million in frontline services to tackle the waiting lists that have built up over the course of the pandemic. This year, the Scottish Government will also launch its Delivering Equally Safe Fund, providing organisations and services across the VAWG sector a share of £19 million.

## Wales

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 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. Collaborative work on a new strategy has already commenced.

During 2020-21 the Welsh Government focused a proportion of funding on supporting VAWDASV organisations to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. It also established a resilience fund which third sector organisations could draw upon. A VAWDASV Covid-19 Strategic Stakeholder group provided expert input to inform policy and procedure around Covid-19 to help mitigate specific risks to victims.

The Welsh Government opened up its e-learning training for those who may come into contact with victims of VAWDASV during the pandemic. From April 2020 to March 2021 over 56,000 people accessed this training, enabling them to recognise signs of abuse and signpost people safely to support.

The Minister for Housing and Local Government announced a new £10 million funding package to provide appropriate temporary accommodation and support to vulnerable groups, including those fleeing domestic abuse and sexual violence, during the Covid-19 pandemic. This funding included support for staff and the welfare of clients. This has been followed by an additional £50 million and clear guidance on the next phase to both begin the transformation of homelessness service provision and ensure that no one is forced to return to the street or inappropriate temporary accommodation, but is

instead supported to move on to more permanent homes. This is on top of the Housing Support Grant, of which approximately £9.5 million is directed towards supporting victims who are fleeing domestic abuse to obtain and retain housing.

Last year, Welsh Ministers approved an additional £4 million of funding to help support the VAWDASV sector to meet any anticipated increase in demand as the easing of lockdown developed further. This is an extra 67% compared with the previous year. This funding was utilised for specialist training and through the VAWDASV regional partnerships to develop the resilience of the sector in the face of increased demand and to address any gaps in provision. The funding included support for services supporting older people experiencing domestic abuse and/or sexual violence.



# Integrated policy

Tackling violence against women and girls requires an effectively co-ordinated multi-agency response. The Convention places a strong emphasis on the importance of multi-agency working and of having national strategies in place to ensure a co-ordinated approach. As set out in the 2020 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 in December 2016 of the National Statement of Expectations (NSE), which sets out a clear blueprint for local action, including what local commissioners need to put in place to ensure their response to violence against women and girls is collaborative, robust and effective, and the importance of considering how services will be accessible to ethnic minority; disabled; LGBT; and older victims and survivors. The NSE will be reviewed, in partnership with expert stakeholders, to ensure it remains robust, effective, and as up to date as possible, and a new version will be published;
- the provision by the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, in the current financial year, of just under £151 million for victim and witness support services. This includes an extra £51 million to increase support

for rape and domestic abuse victims, building on the emergency funding provided to domestic abuse and sexual violence services to help them meet Covid-driven demand. This is on top of the emergency funding package of £750m, pledged in financial year 2020/21, to help the charity sector to support the most vulnerable in our society. The beneficiaries of that funding included domestic abuse and sexual violence charities;

- the publication of the first cross-Government Male Victims' Position Statement, in March 2019. This has sat alongside our cross-Government VAWG Strategy, to recognise the needs of male victims and clarify and strengthen our response. The Government intends to publish a refreshed Position Statement later this year, although the publication date remains under review.
- the appointment of a designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner (Nicole Jacobs), to stand up for victims, raise awareness of domestic abuse, and hold both government and local agencies to account. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 gives her legal powers to strengthen this role and drive forward progress nationally, such as a requirement for specified public bodies to cooperate with the Commissioner.

Since last year's report on progress, we have taken a range of further action to build on this. In July we published our new cross-Government Tackling Violence

Against Women and Girls Strategy which sets out our ambition to prioritise prevention, support survivors, pursue perpetrators and create a stronger system. The Strategy commits to a number of actions which include:

- the introduction of a new full-time National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls to take the lead for this area nationally;
- a national communications campaign with a focus on targeting perpetrators and harmful misogynistic attitudes, educating young people about healthy relationships and ensuring victims can access support;
- working to criminalise virginity testing, to send a clear message that this practice is wholly unacceptable in our society;
- introducing a £5 million 'Safety of Women at Night' fund, in addition to the £25 million Safer Streets Fund, focused on the prevention of violence against women and girls in public spaces at night, including in the night-time economy;
- appointing a Transport Champion to make public transport safer for women and girls;
- piloting a tool, StreetSafe, which will enable the public to anonymously report areas where they feel unsafe and identify what it was about the location which

made them feel this way. The data will be used to inform local decision-making;

- better supporting teachers to deliver the recently introduced Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum;
- providing funding to invest in high quality, evidence-informed prevention projects, including in schools, to ascertain what works to tackle violence against women and girls; and
- providing an additional £1.5 million this year for specialist support services and to increase our funding for helplines, such as the Revenge Porn Helpline.

Since 2016 there have been five annual rounds of Tampon Tax Funding to support good causes and the serious issues that affect women and girls. £79 million of funding has been awarded to more than 1,000 charities that support disadvantaged women and girls. Around 30% of the total fund (£24.5 million) has been allocated to projects that aim to end violence against women and girls. For the 2021/22 Tampon Tax Funding round, £11.25 million will be allocated to projects supporting vulnerable women and girls, including projects specifically focused on supporting victims of domestic abuse.

## International work

Violence against women and girls is a global challenge: it undermines poverty reduction, gender equality, and conflict prevention and resolution. At the G7 this year, Foreign and development Leaders committed to driving forward the ‘three Es’: educating girls, empowering women and ending violence against women and girls. Through the G7 Interior & Security Ministers track, we are seeking to step up international multi-stakeholder efforts to share information on the behaviours that constitute online violence against women and girls and to share insights into how to address them, coupled with a greater emphasis on preventing all forms of violence against women and girls.

The UK will protect and promote the safety and rights of women and girls in all their diversity, and calls for all Member States to remain committed to international conventions including the Istanbul Convention. The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas raised Turkey’s regrettable decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention with her Turkish counterpart and with the Turkish Ambassador. The UK has also endorsed statements of concern by UN Women, the OSCE Permanent Council and the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers. We will continue to use our influence through international global fora to encourage others to remain committed to implementing the Istanbul

Convention in full, and to sharing learning as we work to do so.

The UK will also work through international fora to persuade others that prevention of violence against women and girls is possible, and to increase investment in proven approaches to prevent violence. At the Generation Equality Forum which took place in July in Paris this year, the UK Government announced the launch of ‘What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale’, the international successor programme to our ‘What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls 2014-2020’. This will expand proven approaches to prevent violence and pioneer new scalable interventions where evidence is lacking, such as relating to women with disabilities and adolescent girls. It will include rigorous evaluations of interventions to improve understanding of what works to prevent violence against women and girls at scale. We are also working through the Action Coalition to call for increased funding and support to women’s rights organisations and movements to play their central role in ending violence against women and girls, and we will continue to support the Africa-led movement to end FGM, including through our multi-year programme which commenced in 2019.

The UK continues to take a leading role in tackling gender-based violence in conflict and crisis including through the ‘Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict’ initiative. This year, the UK will be launching a new



strategy and theory of change to increase prosecution of perpetrators and to support survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

In September 2020, the Government launched the *UK Strategy: Safeguarding Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment within the Aid Sector*. This sets out the UK's actions – across all Government departments that deliver Official Development Assistance – to prevent sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment from occurring, and respond appropriately where it does. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office is working with Interpol and the National Crime Agency to reduce the opportunity for transnational child sex offenders to target children abroad. This work brings together law enforcement and international aid agencies to prevent perpetrators of sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment from working in the aid industry and ensure that there is no impunity for those that are apprehended.

## 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 progress against both the Strategy and the measures in the Act. The latest progress report was published in February 2021. In accordance with the Act, work has begun on the next iteration of the Strategy following the election of the new Administration.

Following a public consultation exercise, in June 2019 the Welsh Government published a set of national indicators for measuring progress against the Strategy. Work with stakeholders to identify additional data sources and further refine the indicators was paused when the Covid-19 pandemic took effect and will be revised following the publication of the new Strategy.



## 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. Annual action plans are published under which a range of cross-governmental initiatives are taken forward.

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 DoJ 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 has been included within the survey, with the domestic and sexual violence and abuse modules being rotated biennially. The domestic violence module was included in the 2018/19 survey while sexual violence and abuse was 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, raise awareness, and provide treatment programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse and sexual abuse. Since signing the Convention in 2012, we have taken forward a range of measures:

- We published specific advice on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) in relation to domestic abuse during Covid-19. This information made clear that isolation instructions did not apply where victims needed to leave home to seek help if they were at risk of domestic abuse. The guidance also shared details of the services available to victims or those concerned about others during the lockdown. Alongside the guidance, in April 2020 the Home Secretary launched a domestic abuse communication campaign, #YouAreNotAlone, to ensure that victims of abuse and those worried about them know how to access help and advice. As of June 2021, the #YouAreNotAlone campaign is estimated to have reached almost 33 million people (UK adults) through paid advertising and has been translated into 16 languages.

- We also launched a codeword scheme, Ask for ANI, to provide a discreet way for victims of domestic abuse to signal that they need emergency help from the safety of their local pharmacy. Over half of UK pharmacies, including Boots, Superdrug and Lloyds, are now enrolled in the scheme and people from across the UK have been supported by pharmacists to access support from the police or domestic abuse services.
- In July 2020, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)<sup>3</sup> announced a new £5.1 million ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) for Integration Fund for 30 councils across England. The programme supports socially isolated people, in particular women, with little or no English, by increasing their confidence and language proficiency. This aims to enable their wider participation in their local area and to improve their access to information and support services, including domestic abuse and modern slavery.
- In September 2020 Relationships Education became mandatory in all primary schools, Relationships and Sex Education in all secondary schools, and Health Education in all state funded schools. Relationships Education for primary pupils covers the

---

3 The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) was renamed to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on 16 September 2021. When this report refers to actions before that date taken by DLUHC, the action was taken by MHCLG.

characteristics of healthy relationships, building the knowledge and understanding that will enable them to model those behaviours. In secondary schools, the subject introduces concepts about healthy intimate relationships. The Department for Education's statutory guidance on this states that pupils should be taught about a range of areas including consent, exploitation, grooming, coercion, harassment, domestic abuse and FGM.

- *Supporting Families* has succeeded the Troubled Families Programme for 2021-22, with new funding from DLUHC of up to £165 million. The name was updated to better reflect how the programme is working to join up support for families with multiple and complex needs such as domestic abuse, children who need additional support, mental health and other interconnected issues. Supporting Families, which is delivered by local authorities and their partners, demonstrates the way public services should work, with services joining up to ensure that more families get access to early, coordinated support to help them overcome their problems before they escalate.
- Our response to the Online Harms White Paper consultation highlighted the importance of platform design and committed to developing 'safety by design' guidance for companies. In June 2021 we published voluntary guidance for small and medium enterprises and start-ups that sets out clear principles

and guidance to help companies make safer design choices, reflecting the fact that some online harms, such as online abuse and harassment, can be countered through such a design approach.

- In 2021/22 we are continuing to fund specialist support for children who have been directly or indirectly affected by domestic abuse with over £3 million being provided to nine services across the country. This includes one-to-one and group counselling sessions to improve the mental health of children affected and early intervention schemes. The Domestic Abuse Act also recognises children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse as victims in their own right.

Until March 2020, the Police Transformation Fund (PTF) funded the development of a range of innovative approaches to working with perpetrators of domestic abuse. In 2020/21, the Home Office was allocated £10 million to tackle perpetrators of domestic abuse. From this budget over £7.2 million was awarded to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to fund perpetrator programmes in their respective areas. £800,000 was also allocated to fund 15 organisations to conduct research into domestic abuse perpetrators.

In 2021/22, the Home Office has received a £15 million uplift to scale-up its work to tackle perpetrators of domestic abuse. £7.2 million has been allocated to fund

the extension of those programmes funded in 2020/21. An additional £11.3 million has been provided to PCCs to extend the geographical coverage of perpetrator programmes and support the roll-out of both adolescent and stalking perpetrator programmes. A further £1 million will be utilised to fund additional research into domestic abuse perpetrators.

The aim of this funding is to reduce reoffending and protect survivors from re-victimisation. The data and insights obtained will support the development of an evidence base for ‘what works’ in addressing perpetrator behaviour. The learning acquired will support the implementation of an evidence-based approach to future funding of perpetrator programmes and research.

Furthermore, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 includes 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 a 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 and unconvicted people who have committed domestic abuse-related offences. These include accredited domestic abuse programmes for perpetrators identified as high and moderate risk of further violence. These programmes address a range of risk, need and responsivity factors which have been supported by literature and include areas such as attitudes and thinking, emotion management, relationship skills and sexual offending. HMPPS also provides training for multidisciplinary teams across prison and the community in assessments designed to identify risk factors and risk management strategies for domestic abuse perpetrators.

The introduction of the Alternative Delivery Framework (ADF) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic has meant that accredited programmes can now be offered on a small group and individual basis, both in person and via remote means, meaning that the programme can now operate more flexibly and responsively.

In addition to the accredited offers, all Probation regions deliver a range of non-accredited interventions, which support the needs of a diverse group of people in prisons and on probation, who have no access to accredited programmes. These include support for those who are

risk of perpetration, unconvicted and convicted service users.

Early prevention work is also provided by the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) who commission the delivery of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes, to intervene with those identified at risk of perpetration by the family courts.

The Skills for Relationships Toolkit has been developed to support front line probation practitioners to have enhanced rehabilitative conversations about domestic abuse with people on probation. The toolkit, which uses digital technology, has been approved for national use via the HMPPS Effective Intervention Panel and has been further endorsed by the Accredited Programme Intervention Delivery Strategy Board.

HMPPS is currently developing an evidence based, strategic approach to the use of and investment in accredited programmes and interventions. The strategy will attend to the prioritisation of places, quality of delivery and robust evaluation. It will include a full review of the accredited programme provision with the aim of delivering a more streamlined and responsive offer. The needs of those convicted of domestic abuse will be accommodated in the review.

Education has a vital role to play in encouraging young people to build healthy relationships, and to identify those relationships which are unhealthy. It is now compulsory



for all primary schools in England to teach Relationships Education and for 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 has developed an online service featuring training materials, an implementation guide and case studies. This will cover all of the teaching requirements in the Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance, including online modules on how teachers teach about respectful relationships, being safe and 'families & people who care for me'. In addition, bespoke support for teachers will be available to help them teach about sexual abuse and harassment. This will help pupils to recognise when it is happening and where to seek support.

In 2021, the Department for Education commissioned Ofsted to undertake a review of sexual abuse in schools

and colleges. Ofsted published its report in June 2021<sup>4</sup>. The report found that children and young people, especially girls, received unsolicited nude pictures and videos on an almost daily basis, were subjected to sexual assault and unwanted touching, were pressured into sending pictures of themselves that were then shared, were photographed, or videoed, without consent, and received sexist name calling. The Department accepted Ofsted's findings in full<sup>5</sup> and is taking a number of actions including:

- Strengthening statutory guidance for schools and colleges - Keeping Children Safe in Education - to help ensure that all school and college staff are clear on how to deal with reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, whether they occur inside or outside the school or college gates, or online. The revised guidance, which came into force in September 2021, will also help to ensure that all school and college staff understand how they can actively identify and respond effectively to all forms of abuse and neglect, including harmful sexual behaviour and peer-on-peer abuse, so that victims are confident action will be taken and that both they, and perpetrators, will get the support they need.

---

4 [Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97422/sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges-2021.pdf)

5 [Ofsted Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges - Thursday 10 June 2021 - Hansard - UK Parliament](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021/06/10/HCDebate_202106100001)

- Providing additional support, in 2022, to help teachers deliver statutory relationships, sex and health education effectively and confidently. This will include working with leading experts to provide the best evidence-based approach to teaching about violence and abuse and enable teachers to share good practice.

## Devolved administrations

### Wales

In Wales, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) will be made a statutory part of the new curriculum for all learners and updated guidance will be produced.

The Welsh Government has also published VAWDASV *'Guidance for Governors; a 'Good Practice Guide'* on a whole education approach to VAWDASV in Wales; and a VAWDASV education toolkit.

The Welsh Government and Higher Education Funding Council for Wales developed guidance on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence for Welsh universities. This guidance was published in March 2020 and reviewed in November 2020.

The Welsh Government's approach to prevention includes tackling attitudes and behaviours before they become entrenched and to this end, the Welsh Government continues to fund Hafan Cymru's Spectrum project,

which promotes the importance of healthy relationships and raises awareness of VAWDASV. Spectrum also delivers training for school staff and governors about understanding the impact of domestic abuse on a child as well as promoting a whole school approach to tackling domestic abuse.

Between April 2019 and March 2020 35,284 young people accessed healthy relationship awareness workshops via the Spectrum project.

The Welsh Government has also directed communications campaigns at children, young people and their care givers.

The Welsh Government continues to work with expert partners to develop and implement VAWDASV perpetrator policy, leading the multi-agency VAWDASV perpetrator workstream under the *‘Framework to support positive change for those at risk of offending in Wales 2018-2023’*. *‘Good practice Guidance for non-specialist Welsh public services on working with adult perpetrators’* was published in November 2019.<sup>6</sup> Practice sharing events have been held quarterly to allow those who work with, or conduct research relating to, perpetrators to come together and share examples of their work and their findings, although some events were cancelled due to Covid-19.

---

6 <https://gov.wales/violence-against-women-domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence-public-services-good-practice-guide>

*‘Coronavirus (Covid-19): Guidance for services for perpetrators of VAWDASV’* was published in April 2020<sup>7 8</sup>.

In response to the pandemic, the Welsh Government recognised the need to further raise awareness of VAWDASV with professionals who are not covered under the VAWDASV National Training Framework, and provided additional training to professionals in groups such as the private housing sector, charities and third sector organisations, and criminal justice organisations. Over 1,300 professionals accessed this training. The additional courses included increased awareness covering ‘honour’-based abuse, responding to male victims, responding to and supporting children and young people affected by domestic abuse, working with victims of sexual violence and recognising and responding to perpetrators of abuse.

## Northern Ireland

A range of educational programmes are in place in Northern Ireland to promote pupils’ mental health and wellbeing. In further education institutions, there are also pastoral care arrangements and access to an external counselling service, ‘Inspire Workplaces’, for students. All publicly funded schools in Northern Ireland are required

---

7 <https://gov.wales/guidance-services-perpetrators-violence-against-women-domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence>

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



to deliver the statutory curriculum which is designed to give schools as much flexibility as possible in what they choose to teach and to use approaches that best suit their pupils. The legal minimum content to be taught by schools is set out as high-level areas of learning. Mental health awareness, including the management of feelings and emotions, is covered under the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) area of learning at primary level and the Learning for Life and Work (LLW) area of learning at post-primary level.

The Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme (DVADS) aims 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. A targeted multi-media advertising campaign was launched in a bid to promote the DVADS scheme and explain 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 Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Department of Health, 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. DoJ also ran an advertising campaign to raise awareness of the issue of domestic violence and abuse

and the disclosure scheme. Run most recently in early 2020/21 this was an extensive multi-media campaign using a mix of television, 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 and 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, Christmas 2019 and during the Covid-19 period in 2020.

Libraries NI linked with the PSNI's 'Walking on Eggshells' campaign as part of the 'New Year, New You' campaign and the Samaritans' 'Blue Monday' campaign in order to raise awareness of domestic abuse in rural communities. The 24 hour Domestic and Sexual Abuse Helpline was also promoted in the public offices of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and across the 96 library locations.

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland continues to deliver two court mandated programmes as additional requirements of a licence or order:



- (i) Building Better Relationships – a nationally accredited group work programme for male perpetrators of domestic abuse, aimed at increasing understanding of motivating factors and reducing further incidents.
- (ii) Respectful Relationships Interventions – one-to-one work to develop awareness of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships.

An important component of both programmes is the Partner Support Worker who supports the current/former partner of the participant, assists with safety planning and signposts to partner agencies.

The Northern Ireland Prison Service together with its partner agencies offers a range of psychology-led programmes to support and challenge those in its care, which include:

- the Victim Impact Course, which includes specific topics covering violence against women and domestic abuse;
- the Building Better Relationships programme, aimed at promoting lifelong changes in behaviours which in the past have resulted in domestic abuse;
- the Resolve programme, aimed at offenders who have been assessed as posing medium risk of further aggressive behaviour, but may not have been convicted of violence;

- the Alcohol Related Violence programme;
- the Thinking Skills programme;
- the Horizon programme targeting adult male sex offenders;
- the Safer Lives programme, aimed at young adult males who offend before the age of 18;
- the Beyond Violence Pilot for females, which is a four-level model of violence prevention and considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors. It addresses factors that put people at risk of experiencing and/or perpetrating violence; and
- the introduction of a Women's Safety Officer to support survivors of domestic abuse.

The Gillen Review into the law and procedures in serious sexual offences in Northern Ireland recommended work to develop an awareness campaign to challenge the myths surrounding such offences. The DoJ is leading a cross sectoral and multi-agency group to scope and gather information to inform plans for this campaign through schools, television, radio and social media, with the launch planned for early next year.

In addition, the Gillen Review strongly advocates that consistent and uniform Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) is critical to giving children and young

people the information and tools they need to understand healthy relationships, make informed decisions and protect themselves from becoming victims of sexual abuse and violence.

In March 2021 the then Education Minister agreed that his department would lead a working group to look at the recommendations of the Gillen Review and current curriculum requirements. This work is ongoing.

## **Scotland**

The Scottish Government has provided £825,000 of 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. To further support implementation, £166,000 was provided to Scottish Women's Aid to develop training materials and train workers. The Scottish Government continues to fund Scottish Women's Aid to develop a gender competent approach to capacity building on VAWG. It also funded the development of a training animation to provide an insight into the range of issues a solicitor might face when working on civil domestic abuse cases.

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 (Scotland) 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. Following the introduction of public health restrictions in March 2020, the Scottish Government re-ran this campaign to raise awareness and encourage individuals experiencing abuse to seek support.

The Scottish Government supported the development and implementation of the Equally Safe in Higher Education Tool Kit (2018-20). The Tool Kit, launched in 2018, provides institutions with the practical resources to tackle gender-based violence. Further initiatives included the development of staff support cards and stickers on gender-based violence; mental health support for use in student accommodation and teaching and communal areas; the development of additional materials to support freshers week and start of the college year activities; ongoing support for the Emily Test Charity for the development of a Charter Mark for universities; and exploration of the parameters of effective risk management approaches to complement the work undertaken by Universities Scotland. The Scottish Government also continues to support Rape Crisis Scotland to, amongst other things, ensure that all colleges

and universities can access training and support, relevant to their identified needs, from local Rape Crisis Centres and other allied organisations; to further disseminate online training materials for students; and to support the continued development of local partnerships (such as Fearless Glasgow and Fearless Edinburgh).

The Scottish Government is funding the Caledonian System in 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 by domestic abuse. A further £2.8 million was allocated between 2018 and 2020, allowing the expansion of the programme to a further six local authorities; this increased the number of local authority areas delivering the Caledonian System to 19. In the Programme for Government 2019-20, the Scottish Government set out a commitment to explore policy options to increase access to positive behaviour change programmes for domestically abusive men. Work is currently underway to develop policy in relation to court and non-court mandated perpetrator programmes, which includes the development of demonstration projects to test delivery of a non-court mandated, one to one version of the Caledonian Programme.

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 at 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 violence against women and girls crimes. 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 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.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic the police took advantage of reductions in some other types of offending to prioritise domestic abuse cases. Police forces proactively targeted known offenders and strengthened safeguards for victims. There has been increased use of web based and online services to reach victims and allow them safely to report offences. Serial and high-risk perpetrators are subject to monitoring and proactive intervention where appropriate. Police forces pursued Domestic Violence Protection Orders, enabling perpetrators to be removed from shared accommodation to protect victims. To assist this the courts prioritised domestic abuse cases during lockdown periods.



The Victims' Code sets out the services that must be provided to victims of crime by organisations in England and Wales and sets a minimum standard for these services. After wide consultation the revised Victims' Code came into effect on 1 April 2021. The revised Code has been re-structured so that victims are the primary audience. It has been simplified to focus on 12 key overarching rights that are clear, concise and easy to understand, setting out the level of service victims can expect to receive from criminal justice agencies. The 12 key rights are:

- To be able to understand and be understood
- To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay
- To be provided with information when reporting the crime
- To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs
- To be provided with information about compensation
- To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution
- To make a Victim Personal Statement
- To be given information about the trial, trial process and the role as a witness

- To be given information about the outcome of the case and any appeals
- To be paid expenses and have property returned
- To be given information about the offender following conviction
- To make a complaint about your rights not being met

A new Victims' Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech in May 2021, will be the cornerstone of the Government's work and ensure that victims' and survivors' experiences are at the heart of our approach to tackling crime. The consultation will consider how to hold criminal justice agencies to account for the enforcement of rights under the Victims' Code as well as exploring the provision of community-based domestic abuse and sexual violence services and a statutory underpinning for Independent Sexual Violence Advisers and Independent Domestic Violence Advisers.

## **Funding for victims**

The Home Office has also committed more than £1.2 million up to 2022 to support seven helpline services:

- the national domestic abuse 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 is used to provide information to those experiencing (and in one case perpetrating) violence against women and girls crimes as well as to provide specialist support for other victims and perpetrators. In addition, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funds a helpline and webchat service for male victims of sexual abuse.

The MoJ directly commissions 75 rape support centres across England and Wales, and a further 16 via Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), 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 the police. The emotional and practical support offered may include counselling, therapy, an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser service, helpline/online support, groupwork and advocacy.

In April 2020, MoJ funding for these centres increased to £12 million *per annum* (up from £8 million in 2019/20). In recognition of increased demand, the Rape and Sexual

Abuse Fund has been extended for a fourth year (until 2023) to provide the sector with the stability it needs. As part of Covid-19 funding last year, the MoJ provided two rounds of emergency funding for the victim support sector for domestic abuse and sexual violence victims, totalling £32 million overall.

In 2021-22, MoJ will provide just under £151 million for victim and witness support services. This includes an extra £51 million to increase support for rape and domestic abuse victims, building on the emergency funding from the last financial year to help domestic abuse and sexual violence services meet Covid-driven demand. The additional £51 million includes:

- £20.7 million for local community-based sexual violence and domestic abuse services, helping to reduce the amount of time survivors have to wait for support. Male-specific services will see a 60% funding increase following a significant increase in demand for support from men and boys.
- £2 million for smaller specialist organisations helping ethnic minority, LGBT or disabled victims.
- £1.3 million for remote and online services – allowing more victims to access support while at home.

Further, the MoJ is investing in recruiting more Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) to help

victims feel informed and supported at every stage of their recovery journey. ISVAs and IDVAs provide an important link between police, support services and criminal justice agencies, and as part of their role may support a victim when they are attending court and giving evidence. This funding will provide over 700 new posts.

At the Hidden Harms Summit (May 2020) hosted by the Prime Minister, the MoJ committed to developing a cross-government Victim Funding Strategy to improve the way victim funding is managed across government. The Strategy will set out commissioning standards and expectations to place the victim support sector on a sustainable footing, and ensure that victims continue to receive the support they need now and in the future.

## **Legal protections**

As highlighted in the 2020 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 (SHPOs), Sexual Risk Orders (SROs), FGM Protection Orders (FGMPOs) and Stalking Protection Orders. The number of SHPOs (and Sexual Offences Prevention Orders, which were superseded by SHPOs in 2015/16) in place in 2019/20 was 4,395 (compared to 5,931 in 2016/7). As of 30 June 2021, 2,972 Forced Marriage Protection Orders and

717 FGMPOs have been made since their introduction (in 2008 and 2015 respectively).

Further to this, through the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Bill we are strengthening the regime for managing registered sex offenders and those who pose a risk of sexual harm. This includes changes to:

- enable the courts to impose positive obligations through SHPOs and SROs where appropriate to, for example, require an individual to engage in a behaviour change programme;
- make explicit in legislation that the court may impose a positive requirement for those subject to SHPOs and SROs to wear an electronic monitoring tag (to monitor their compliance with conditions in the order);
- specify that the court should apply the lower civil standard of proof ('balance of probabilities') to SHPOs and SROs when determining whether the individual in respect of whom the application is made has done the act in question;
- ensure that Scottish Sexual Offences Prevention Orders and Risk of Sexual Harm Orders are fully enforceable in England and Wales and that orders made in one jurisdiction (either England and Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland) can be varied, renewed or discharged in another;



- give police the power to impose notification requirements on sex offenders who commit offences abroad, removing the requirement to apply through the courts;
- streamline the process for prescribing police stations and give Chief Constables flexibility to determine which police stations offenders must notify at;
- confer a power on the Secretary of State to prepare (or direct a relevant person, such as the National Crime Agency (NCA), to prepare) a list of countries deemed to be at “high risk” of child sexual abuse by UK nationals/residents, to be considered by applicants and the courts when applying for, or making, a SHPO or SRO, for the purpose of protecting children outside the UK from the risk of sexual harm from the respondent; and
- enable the British Transport Police (BTP) and Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) to directly apply to the court for an SHPO or SRO.

We are introducing new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders which will 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 possible 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 (“Clare’s Law”) on a statutory footing. This scheme provides a framework for police to make disclosures to someone about their 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 people to be warned of the dangers posed by their partners or ex-partners.

## Health

NHS England developed a five-year *Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse Services (2018-2023)*, 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, commissions 47 sexual assault referral centres (SARCs), which provide an integrated response to sexual violence and rape. SARCs are available to all victims and survivors of sexual violence and abuse – irrespective of age, gender or when the assault or abuse occurred. NHS England/ NHS Improvement regional commissioning teams may enter into local agreements with relevant partners, such as police, PCCs, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and local authorities, to establish, where appropriate,

collaborative commissioning arrangements for wider support services available as part of Sexual Assault and Abuse pathways of care.

NHS England and NHS Improvement and DHSC launched eight pilot female genital mutilation (FGM) clinics to support women with FGM who are not pregnant, through providing basic healthcare services and emotional and psychological support. The holistic community-based clinics 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. NHS England and NHS Improvement have in 2021 extended the funding for these clinics. The pilot will help ensure that local areas have the evidence base they need to commission such services locally in a sustainable way.

From 2018-2020 DHSC oversaw £2 million of government funding to expand the pathfinder programme, led by the charity Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse, to develop a whole health approach to domestic abuse in acute trusts, general practices, community and mental health trusts. It provided staff training and a support programme to bridge the gap between the voluntary sector and healthcare, to harness the strengths of each, and to provide an improved domestic abuse

service. A toolkit was developed and launched to help share the learning from the project and is available for free online.

Following concerns that some young women and girls are being coerced and forced to have their virginity tested by examining if their hymen is intact, the Government undertook an intensive review. This concluded that there is no reason why a virginity test should be carried out - it is not a medical procedure and is based on repressive and inaccurate<sup>1</sup> views about female virginity and the hymen. It can have detrimental physical and psychological impacts on women and girls, and the Government fully agrees with the World Health Organisation's view that 'virginity testing' is a violation of the victim's human rights<sup>9</sup>. We will therefore be working to criminalise 'virginity testing'. Legislation on this area will be brought forward when parliamentary time allows. We will also put in place a programme of education in community, education and clinical settings.

In addition, we have established an independent expert panel to look further into the clinical and ethical aspects of hymenoplasty (hymen reconstruction surgery) and to consider whether it should also be criminalised. The panel had its first meeting at the beginning of October, and we anticipate that it will make its recommendations to the Government before Christmas. The Government will

---

9 [WHO: Eliminating 'virginity testing'](#)

consider the report from the panel and, if necessary, will bring forward legislation when parliamentary time allows.

## Children

Children will benefit from a number of measures in the Domestic Abuse Act, which recognises them as victims of domestic abuse in their own right where they see, hear or experience its effects. The designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner has been appointed to encourage good practice in, amongst other things, the provision of protection and support for children affected by domestic abuse.

The Home Office has provided funding to Operation Encompass - a scheme that facilitates schools and police working together to provide emotional and practical support to children affected by domestic abuse, including provision of a specialist helpline for teachers. The department has also provided funding to nine projects across the country supporting children affected by domestic abuse.

The Government is examining the recommendations from the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's report 'It was Hard to Escape', as well as those from other safeguarding reviews relating to child criminal exploitation. This is in order to identify areas for improvement, put in place support for vulnerable children, raise awareness of criminal exploitation from county lines and ensure that the

criminal justice response to county lines is as effective and robust as possible.

## **Migrant victims**

The Government is committed to supporting all victims of domestic abuse. Furthermore, anyone who has suffered domestic abuse must be treated as a victim first and foremost, regardless of immigration status.

In June 2019, the Joint Committee on the draft Domestic Abuse Bill published its first report. The Committee highlighted that some migrant victims of domestic abuse who have no recourse to public funds and do not qualify for the Destitution Domestic Violence Concession or other avenues of support may be faced with the choice of staying with a perpetrator of abuse or becoming homeless and destitute if they do not know how to access support.

The Government consequently reviewed its overall response to migrant victims of domestic abuse, working with 24 expert organisations and publishing Review Findings in July 2020. A key barrier to migrant victims of domestic abuse accessing support is the difficulty organisations face in funding bed spaces and ancillary services in a refuge for victims with no recourse to public funds.

That is why the Government has launched the £1.5 million Support for Migrant Victims (SMV) Scheme which is being run by Southall Black Sisters and their delivery



partners. This scheme looks to provide accommodation and support for migrant victims of domestic abuse with no recourse to public funds, as well as providing the data required to inform subsequent policy decisions. In addition, we have appointed an independent evaluator, Behavioural Insights Ltd, who are working with Southall Black Sisters and their delivery partners to assess the effectiveness of the scheme, with a view to producing a final report in June 2022.

## **Safe accommodation**

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities continues to support and part-fund Women's Aid's UK-wide online VAWG service directory, 'Routes to Support'. This contains information about violence against women and girls services with up-to-date refuge vacancies. DLUHC also funds the Women's Aid 'No Woman Turned Away' project which provides additional support to victims facing barriers to accessing services and support.

DLUHC has made over £500 million available via the Move-On Fund and Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme. Local authorities can use some of this funding to deliver accommodation and support both to female rough sleepers moving on from hostels and to victims of domestic abuse moving on from refuges.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 includes a new duty on Tier 1 local authorities in England to provide support for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation when they need it. In April 2021 DLUHC released £125 million of funding to local authorities for the delivery of the duty in 2021/22. To help authorities plan and prepare for the coming duty, a £6 million Capacity Building Fund was allocated by DLUHC to all Tier 1 authorities in October 2021.

On 3 March 2021, as part of the Budget, the Chancellor announced that a further £4.2 million would be allocated to pilot a ‘Respite Rooms’ programme to provide specialist support for vulnerable rough sleepers at risk of domestic abuse and other forms of violence, with a focus on women. On 26 July DLUHC announced<sup>10</sup> the 12 areas that will take part in this trial, with delivery expected to begin from October. They are; Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole; Birmingham; Bristol; Camden; Hastings and East Sussex; Exeter; Leicester; Liverpool; Manchester; Nottingham; Portsmouth; and Westminster.

DLUHC also provided a £10 million emergency fund for safe accommodation services in the Covid-19 pandemic up to 31 March 2021. This funding supported over 160 frontline charities to reopen 351 bedspaces and create an additional 1,628.

---

10 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/safe-housing-and-support-for-rough-sleepers-experiencing-violence-and-abuse>



# 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 is 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 Department of Justice (DoJ), in conjunction with the PSNI, has progressed on a new streamlined advocacy support service for victims of domestic and sexual violence and abuse. This service is available from autumn 2021.

In 2020/21 the Department of Health (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.

On 1 April 2021 the DoJ launched a pilot scheme to provide publicly funded legal advice to adult complainants in serious sexual offence cases. The pilot is set to run for two years, is funded by DoJ and will be delivered by Victim Support Northern Ireland. The scheme will see complainants provided with advice in relation to the disclosure of evidence, will provide specific legal advice in relation to the disclosure of previous sexual history and will ensure that complainants' interests and wishes are communicated to the Public Prosecution Service. The current pilot scheme will help to inform the development of equivalent legal advice for complainants who are children.

The Northern Ireland Prison Service and Probation Board for Northern Ireland jointly appointed a Women's Safety Officer in November 2019. The role of the safety officer is to work alongside Women's Aid in supporting women both in custody and in the community (post-release) who have experienced domestic abuse. The safety officer will help women understand their pathway into abusive relationships and empower them to live lives beyond the controlling and coercive relationships they have previously experienced.

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 (FGMPOs), as well as the FGM care pathways and FGM risk assessment tool, both of which launched in October 2018. The Department of Finance is progressing work to introduce legislation to define Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland as ‘relevant third parties’ in relation to FGMPOs. In addition, the DoH is introducing powers to enable a court, when considering the case of a child at risk of FGM, to make other orders regarding the welfare of the child (for example, a care or an interim care order). This will improve the ability of the court to act quickly to protect children at risk.

Presently Emergency Protection Orders (EPOs) can be arranged by health and social care organisations should they suspect a child to be at risk of FGM. The Northern Ireland Maternity System (NIMATS) collects and analyses data regarding historical FGM. A cross-departmental Child Protection Senior Officials Group (CPSOG) provides strategic oversight and monitoring of child protection issues including FGM.

As part of the Historical Institutional Abuse (HIA) Inquiry a range of support services were put in place by The Executive Office (TEO) to support individuals who suffered abuse whilst resident in an institution as children.

The Historical Institutional Abuse (Northern Ireland) Act 2019 provides for the establishment of the HIA Redress Board and a Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse (COSICA). These were two of the recommendations of the HIA Inquiry Report.

The Redress Board administers a redress scheme to award compensation to those who suffered institutional abuse as children. The Commissioner was appointed in December 2020 and has a statutory duty to promote the interests of any person who suffered abuse as a child while resident in an institution at some time between 1922 and 1995.

## **Scotland**

The Scottish Government is investing around £19 million this financial year to tackle VAWG, which includes support for front line specialist services. This includes an additional £5.75 million to support front line services in responding to Covid-19. The funding 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 Respect's Men's Advice Line. 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 Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2021, which was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament, provides a new legal basis for the carrying out of forensic medical examinations for victims of sexual crime, and in particular will establish a national self-referral model for victims who wish to have an examination without first reporting to the police.

The Act underpins the ongoing work of the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland's Rape and Sexual Assault Taskforce which has been tasked by the Scottish Ministers with providing national leadership for the improvement of healthcare and forensic medical examination and healthcare services for adults, children and young people who have experienced rape, sexual assault or child sexual abuse. The Taskforce has wide representation from experts, including health, justice, social work, and third



sector partners, such as Rape Crisis Scotland, to ensure that the voice of lived experience is heard.

Taskforce funding has been provided to support the creation of Scottish Sexual Assault Response Coordination (SSARC) services in each territorial health board where these did not previously exist, to make improvements to existing facilities and to develop regional centres of expertise. Funding also continues to be provided to NHS Education Scotland to deliver trauma-informed training to doctors who undertake forensic medical examinations as well as those nurses who are involved in providing trauma-informed care for victims of rape and sexual assault and onward referrals to aftercare services. Proposals to develop the role of nurse sexual offence examiners in Scotland have been approved by Ministers and the Lord Advocate with a test of change due to commence late in 2020. Taskforce funding has also paid for priority places on a new Postgraduate Qualification course in Advanced Forensic Practice developed at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh, which commenced in January 2021

A package of Taskforce resources was launched at the end of 2020 which includes clinical pathways, the national form, supplementary guidance documents for healthcare professionals and national data sets to monitor Health Board performance against the Healthcare Improvement Services Quality Indicators. A National Self-Referral Protocol for the Health Boards is being developed to



ensure consistent access to services for victims; and work is being done to explore how victims will know about and access self-referral services.

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 who is the cause of 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. The Domestic Abuse (Protection) Scotland Act 2021 came into force in May 2021. The Act introduces new forms of protection, with Police Scotland and the courts being given powers to protect those who are most at risk by issuing Domestic Abuse Protection Notices (DAPNs) and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs). Senior members of the police now have the power to issue a DAPN as a short-term, emergency protection measure where they have reasonable grounds to believe a partner or ex-partner has been abusive.

The Scottish Government introduced the Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) Bill to the Scottish Parliament in May 2019, which included provisions to confer the power upon Ministers to issue statutory guidance and for the creation of FGM Protection Orders.

The Bill was passed on 19 March 2020 and received Royal Assent on 22 April 2020, becoming an Act.

## Wales

The Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities and third sector organisations: for strategic coordination of services at a local level; to deliver direct service provision to support and protect victims; 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 violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV), and to protect and support victims and survivors of VAWDASV. The VAWDASV capital grant supports a range of capital projects.

The Minister for Housing and Local Government announced a new £10 million funding package to provide appropriate temporary accommodation and support to vulnerable groups, including those fleeing domestic abuse and sexual violence, during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has been followed by an additional £50 million and clear guidance on the next phase to both begin the transformation of homelessness service provision and ensure that no one is forced to return to the street or inappropriate temporary accommodation, but is instead supported to move on to more permanent homes.

The Welsh Government also provides Local Authorities with a Housing Support Grant, of which approximately £9.5 million is directed towards supporting victims who are fleeing domestic abuse to obtain and retain housing.

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 aim of this guidance is to promote high-quality collaborative commissioning that delivers more consistent and effective services to prevent VAWDASV and protect and support victims of VAWDASV across Wales. This guidance applies to the commissioning of both specialist and non-specialist VAWDASV services, whether commissioned from the public, third or private sectors.

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.

Capital funding programmes include target hardening, aimed at supporting victims and survivors to remain safely in their own homes. In 2020-21 the Welsh Government provided an additional £1.2 million to fund dispersed community-based accommodation for those fleeing abuse

and violence for whom refuge accommodation is not appropriate. This is in addition to the Housing Support Grant (HSG), which supports victims who are fleeing domestic abuse to obtain and retain housing.

The Welsh Government continues to deliver its ‘Ask and Act’ programme - training for frontline professionals to enable them to identify and appropriately support victims and survivors of VAWDASV. The programme is now being delivered across all Local Authorities in Wales and in response to the pandemic is being delivered through combined learning. As of the end of July 2021, Ask and Act training has been delivered to 11,834 professionals, an increase of 6,582 since 2019-2020.

Support is provided through the Live Fear Free helpline, which delivers a free service, 24 hours and 365 days a year, and the Dyn Helpline for male victims of violence and abuse.

The Welsh Government commissioned an experienced ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) charity to provide free virtual training from January to the end of March 2021 to all professionals working across the statutory and voluntary sectors. This training has enabled learners to understand and identify HBA; manage and safely respond to disclosures of HBA; identify potential risk indicators in cases of HBA; provide safer multi-agency spaces for victims and survivors to speak; and broaden “safe spaces” for victims and survivors to make disclosures.

The All Wales Honour-based Abuse Delivery Plan sets out the framework for key partners to contribute to tackle this issue in Wales, whilst providing the best possible support to survivors.

Information about HBA was included for the first time in the Violence Prevention Unit's report in August 2020, with data provided by the All Wales Leadership Group on Honour-Based 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 which 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 as section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

The latter 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. In 2019, as part of our response to the consultation on domestic abuse, the Government committed to undertaking a review into the controlling or coercive behaviour offence. Coercive or controlling behaviour does not stop at the point of separation. Indeed, it often increases as the perpetrator seeks to retain control over the victim, and as a result of the review, published earlier this year, the Government agreed to amend section 76



to remove the co-habitation requirement. As part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, section 76 was amended so that the definition of ‘personally connected’ was replaced by the definition in Part 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. As of Spring 2022 the controlling or coercive behaviour offence will therefore also apply to ex-partners or family members who do not live together. To ensure that the new offence is effectively implemented and to further support frontline agencies in identifying, investigating and evidencing domestic abuse offences, we are updating the controlling and coercive behaviour statutory guidance, which will be published next year.

One of the key commitments in the VAWG Strategy Refresh of 2019 was the establishment of an end-to-end review of the criminal justice system’s response to rape cases (the Rape Review). The Rape Review was led jointly by the Attorney General’s Office, Home Office and Ministry of Justice, and its findings and statistical analysis were published on 18 June 2021. In the years between 2015/6 and 2019/20, as the number of reported rape cases increased from 24,093 to 43,187, the proportion of cases ending in an outcome of ‘charged/summonsed’ dropped from 13% to 3%. In the same period, prosecutions and convictions had declined by 59% and 47% respectively. In 2019/20, 57% of all rape cases were discontinued, because the victim did not feel able to pursue the case for a variety of reasons.

The review found that, among the main reasons for the drop in cases ending in conviction or even reaching court were strained relationships between the police and prosecutors, as well as other factors which led to victims withdrawing from the process. Key among these factors were delays to the investigation, poor treatment by police and prosecutors, and re-traumatisation and adverse mental health consequences.

In response to these findings, the Government has announced a Rape Review Action Plan, which is a robust programme of work that will drive sustainable and impactful changes in the ways that rape cases are investigated and progressed by the police and prosecutors, as well as the ways in which victims and survivors are treated by agencies and while giving evidence. Progress made under the action plan will be monitored by a ministerial-led oversight board, and scorecards showing how well each aspect of the criminal justice system is performing will be published regularly.

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 had 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 Act 2021

(and, in the case of one offence in Northern Ireland, the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021) amended domestic law – throughout the UK – to take extraterritorial jurisdiction over offences covering other criminal conduct set out in the Convention. The relevant provisions relating to England and Wales, and Scotland, are now in force; once Northern Ireland Ministers introduce commencement regulations, the Northern Ireland provisions will be too.

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

- a new Stalking Protection Order (introduced in January 2020), breach of which without a reasonable excuse is a criminal offence. We have also 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 five to ten 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. This offence was supplemented in 2021 through the Domestic Abuse Act, such that threatening to disclose private sexual images with intent to cause distress has become a criminal offence;

- a new offence of ‘upskirting’ to close a previous 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 were introduced in 2015. In February 2019, there was the first UK conviction for FGM, with the perpetrator sentenced to 11 years in prison; and
- lifelong anonymity for victims of forced marriage was introduced in 2017 to encourage more victims to come forward.

## Prosecutions and convictions

VAWG Convictions <sup>11</sup> (England & Wales)								
2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
60,854	67,382	78,780	87,345	84,611	80,447	70,345	56,414	49,863

Previously, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has published annual data on violence against women and girls (VAWG) offences. In order to enhance accountability and transparency with regards to CPS performance, the CPS now publishes quarterly data on a wider range of offence types.

11 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 assist in interpreting 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. In January 2021, the CPS and police published and are implementing a Joint National Action Plan focusing on improving rape and sexual offences investigations and prosecutions. As above, the Rape Review Action Plan will drive sustainable and impactful changes in the ways that rape cases are investigated and progressed by the police and prosecutors, as well as the ways in which victims and survivors are treated by agencies and while giving evidence.

Additionally, the CPS has launched a five-year strategy on these offences. The strategy is underpinned by a commitment to ensuring that the right person is prosecuted for the right offence. It represents a clear articulation of the role that the CPS can play in driving a step change for the criminal justice system as a whole – emphasising that work needs to be approached collectively.

The CPS is leading efforts across Government on the national 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 has been developed after common components from high performing courts were identified. Progress is being



reviewed by a national delivery group which includes all criminal justice agencies and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner.

The CPS has also developed an ambitious and rigorous programme of work for domestic abuse. This programme will improve joint working and will narrow the disparity between domestic abuse reporting and criminal justice outcomes; building public confidence in the criminal justice system's response by delivering justice for all.

The College of Policing continues the testing of a new frontline Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA) process for frontline police officers, with more forces joining the testing. A 'readiness assessment' is currently being developed and discussed with the policing portfolio leads in relation to national rollout. The College continues to provide its Domestic Abuse Matters Change Programme through its licensed providers to adopting forces. Recent research was published regarding the effectiveness of this course.

The College is supporting the implementation of its principles on the Management of Serial and Dangerous Perpetrators of domestic abuse and stalking through force regional domestic abuse leads. It has also been working closely with academics on the recently published *Domestic Homicide and Suspected Victim Suicide during the Covid-19 pandemic 2020-21* and is currently working on recommendations to support learning in forces.



Furthermore, the College is supporting the Tackling VAWG Strategy, developing a product which will help the police to deal with instances of street harassment directed at women and girls. Its advice product for police officers who are first responders to cases of 'honour'-based abuse will be ready for publication soon.

## **Devolved administrations**

### **Wales**

Criminal justice matters are reserved in Wales, but the Welsh Government supports the UK Government in activities related to this area. For example, Welsh Government officials sit on the Ministry of Justice's Specialist Domestic Violence Improvement Oversight Group, which considers how to improve 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 has been shown to reduce witness attrition.

The Welsh Government has supported regions across Wales with remote court facilities. The grant provided by the Government has enabled regions to purchase equipment that will allow specialist VAWDASV facilities to be adapted to allow victims to present secure evidence

safely by video link. Enabling victims to present evidence by video link hosted by a specialist provider will provide a secure and safe means of reducing witness attrition. The 13 sites adapted are all planned to be open by autumn 2021.

## **Scotland**

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

The Scottish Parliament considered a Legislative Consent Motion for the Domestic Abuse Bill on 17 June 2020. The Parliament agreed that the relevant provisions of the Bill relating to amendments to the law of Scotland concerning extra-territorial jurisdiction over certain offences committed outside the UK by a UK national or habitual resident of Scotland, in order to ensure compliance with Article 44 of the Istanbul Convention, should be considered by the UK Parliament. Those provisions were passed by the UK Parliament and formed part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Scottish Ministers brought the relevant provisions into force on 29 June 2021, meaning that Scotland is now compliant with Article 44.

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. Work is ongoing and will build on learning from the current children and families, health and justice work streams and the impact of and response to Covid-19 to support the co-design of draft standards for consultation.

## Northern Ireland

A range of special measures is 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.

Further protections to vulnerable complainants and witnesses in serious sexual offence cases have been provided by the establishment of two temporary Remote Evidence Centres, one in Belfast and the other in Craigavon. These centres will provide important additional protections to vulnerable complainants, ensuring that they do not have to give evidence in a daunting court environment and that there is no chance that they could encounter the accused in the court building. Phase 2 of the project is well advanced, with a location for a longer-term bespoke Remote Evidence Centre in Belfast identified. The final stage of the project will see further Remote Evidence Centres across Northern Ireland.

The Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 received Royal Assent earlier this year. It includes a new offence to capture patterns of psychological abuse, violence, and/or coercion of a

partner, ex-partner or close family member. It is intended that this will come into operation by late February 2022 and 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 conduct of seriously impairing a person’s psychological integrity through coercion or threats is criminalised” – as well as the associated extraterritorial jurisdiction provisions in Article 44.

## Next steps

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

The Government takes its international commitments very seriously and will ratify only when we are satisfied that the UK has met all our obligations under the Convention. Since the 2020 progress report England and Wales, and Scotland, have become compliant with Article 44 of the Convention, and the necessary legislative measures have been put in place to enable Northern Ireland to be compliant with that article once those measures are commenced. Likewise, since the 2020 report the necessary legislative measures have been put in place to enable Northern Ireland to become compliant with Article 33, relating to the criminalisation of psychological violence, once those measures are commenced. It is intended that both of those measures will have commenced in Northern Ireland by late February 2022, whereupon Northern Ireland will be fully compliant with all devolved matters covered by the Convention. As we have committed previously, we are also reviewing the overall response to migrant victims of domestic abuse.

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 violence against women and girls. Everyone has the right to live in safety, regardless of their gender. As we drive forward our new Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse Strategies, we will ensure we continue to deliver for all, leave no one behind and make violence against women and girls everyone's business.

# Annex A: Table of Compliance

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.	Compliant, other than section 3 in relation to the migrant or refugee status element, which is under review.	Compliant, other than section 3 in relation to the migrant or refugee status element, which is under review.	Compliant, other than section 3 in relation to the migrant or refugee status element, which is under review.	

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>5. State obligation a due diligence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<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"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	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"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>11. Data collection and research</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the purpose of the implementation of this Convention, Parties shall undertake to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. collect disaggregated relevant statistical data at regular intervals on cases of all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention;</li> <li>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.</li> </ol> </li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>4. Parties shall ensure that the information collected pursuant to this article is available to the public.</li> </ol>	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"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>6. Parties shall take the necessary measures to promote programmes and activities for the empowerment of women.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>13. Awareness-raising</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2021 Report on Progress

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>14. Education</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>15. Training of professionals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>16. Preventive intervention and treatment programmes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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 coordination with specialist support services for victims.</li> </ol>	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"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2021 Report on Progress

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>18. General Obligations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to protect all victims from any further acts of violence.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>3. Parties shall ensure that measures taken pursuant to this chapter shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 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;</li> <li>– be based on an integrated approach which takes into account the relationship between victims, perpetrators, children and their wider social environment;</li> <li>– aim at avoiding secondary victimisation;</li> <li>– aim at the empowerment and economic independence of women victims of violence;</li> <li>– allow, where appropriate, for a range of protection and support services to be located on the same premises;</li> <li>– address the specific needs of vulnerable persons, including child victims, and be made available to them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. The provision of services shall not depend on the victim's willingness to press charges or testify against any perpetrator.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<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

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>20. General support services</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	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> <p>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.</p> <p>2. Parties shall provide or arrange for specialist women's support services to all women victims of violence and their children.</p>	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
<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

Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2021 Report on Progress

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
25. Support for victims of sexual violence. 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.	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
26. Protection and support for child witnesses 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
27. Reporting 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.	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
28. Reporting by professionals 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.	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
29. Civil lawsuits and remedies 1. Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to provide victims with adequate civil remedies against the perpetrator. 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.	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<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
<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

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<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"> <li>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"> <li>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;</li> <li>b) engaging in other non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a person;</li> <li>c) causing another person to engage in non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a third person.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Consent must be given voluntarily as the result of the person's free will assessed in the context of the surrounding circumstances.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>37. Forced marriage</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant



Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>excising, infibulating or performing any other mutilation to the whole or any part of a woman's labia majora, labia minora or clitoris;</li> <li>coercing or procuring a woman to undergo any of the acts listed in point a;</li> <li>inciting, coercing or procuring a girl to undergo any of the acts listed in point a.</li> </ol>	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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>performing an abortion on a woman without her prior and informed consent;</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	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
<p>41. Aiding or abetting and attempt</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2021 Report on Progress

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>42. Unacceptable justifications for crimes, including crimes committed in the name of so-called “honour”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	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

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>44. Jurisdiction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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"> <li>a. in their territory; or</li> <li>b. on board a ship flying their flag; or</li> <li>c. on board an aircraft registered under their laws; or</li> <li>d. by one of their nationals; or</li> <li>e. by a person who has her or his habitual residence in their territory.</li> </ol> </li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	In progress towards compliance	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>45. Sanctions and measures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>2. Parties may adopt other measures in relation to perpetrators, such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- monitoring or supervision of convicted persons;</li> <li>- 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.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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;</li> <li>b. the offence, or related offences, were committed repeatedly;</li> <li>c. the offence was committed against a person made vulnerable by particular circumstances;</li> <li>d. the offence was committed against or in the presence of a child;</li> <li>e. the offence was committed by two or more people acting together;</li> <li>f. the offence was preceded or accompanied by extreme levels of violence;</li> <li>g. the offence was committed with the use or threat of a weapon;</li> <li>h. the offence resulted in severe physical or psychological harm for the victim;</li> <li>i. the perpetrator had previously been convicted of offences of a similar nature.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>49. General obligations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>50. Immediate response, prevention and protection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) – 2021 Report on Progress

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>51. Risk assessment and risk management</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the restraining or protection orders referred to in paragraph 1 are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>available for immediate protection and without undue financial or administrative burdens placed on the victim;</li> <li>issued for a specified period or until modified or discharged;</li> <li>where necessary, issued on an ex parte basis which has immediate effect;</li> <li>available irrespective of, or in addition to, other legal proceedings;</li> <li>allowed to be introduced in subsequent legal proceedings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant



Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<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
<p>55. <i>Ex parte</i> and <i>ex officio</i> proceedings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. providing for their protection, as well as that of their families and witnesses, from intimidation, retaliation and repeat victimisation;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>e. providing victims with appropriate support services so that their rights and interests are duly presented and taken into account;</li> <li>f. ensuring that measures may be adopted to protect the privacy and the image of the victim;</li> <li>g. ensuring that contact between victims and perpetrators within court and law enforcement agency premises is avoided where possible;</li> <li>h. providing victims with independent and competent interpreters when victims are parties to proceedings or when they are supplying evidence;</li> <li>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.</li> <li>j. 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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>57. Legal aid 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 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
<p>59. Residence status</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>3. Parties shall issue a renewable residence permit to victims in one of the two following situations, or in both: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. where the competent authority considers that their stay is necessary owing to their personal situation;</li> <li>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.</li> </ol> </li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Under review	Under review	Under review	Under review

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>60. Gender-based asylum claims</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
<p>61. <i>Non-refoulement</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

Article	Status, England	Status, Wales	Status, Northern Ireland	Status, Scotland
<p>62. General principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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"> <li>a. preventing, combating and prosecuting all forms of violence covered by the scope of this Convention;</li> <li>b. protecting and providing assistance to victims;</li> <li>c. investigations or proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with this Convention;</li> <li>d. enforcing relevant civil and criminal judgments issued by the judicial authorities of Parties, including protection orders.</li> </ol> </li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	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"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>4. The election of the members of GREVIO shall be based on the following principles: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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;</li> <li>b. no two members of GREVIO may be nationals of the same state;</li> <li>c. they should represent the main legal systems;</li> <li>d. they should represent relevant actors and agencies in the field of violence against women and domestic violence;</li> <li>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.</li> </ol> </li> <li>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.</li> <li>6. GREVIO shall adopt its own rules of procedure.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	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



978-1-5286-2962-1  
E02686085