



Reacting to Difference – A Plea for an Intersectional Understanding of the Istanbul Convention

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Abstract

The Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) from 2011 is the legal framework of the Council of Europe to enhance prevention of and protection from violence against women and domestic violence within the European Human Rights system. The Convention recognizes that women might be subject to multiple discriminations when facing gender-based violence but does not take an intersectional approach in tackling gender-based violence. The paper argues that in order to guarantee the rights set forth in the Convention and to achieve its aims, states have to take intersecting dimensions of discrimination into consideration when deciding on preventative and restorative measures under the Convention. Only if such an approach is applied can multiple vulnerabilities be addressed in a comprehensive manner. An intersectional approach to gender-based violence can act as a tool to ensure a life free from violence to all women under the jurisdiction of the Convention. To implement such an approach, the paper tries to analyze potential access points in the text of the Convention.

Keywords: gender-based violence, intersectionality, Istanbul-Convention, violence against women, violence prevention