

Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Bill

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Explanatory notes to the Bill, prepared by Dr Eilidh Whiteford, are published separately as Bill 12 – EN.

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Require the United Kingdom to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention); and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Ratification of the Istanbul Convention on violence against women

It shall be the duty of Her Majesty’s Government to take all reasonable steps as soon as reasonably practicable to enable the United Kingdom to become compliant with the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Treaty no. 210 (the “Istanbul Convention”).

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2 The timetable for ratification of the Istanbul Convention

(1) The Secretary of State shall lay a report before each House of Parliament setting out—

(a) the steps required to be taken to enable the United Kingdom to ratify the Istanbul Convention; and

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(b) the date by which the Secretary of State would expect the United Kingdom to be able to ratify the Convention.

(2) The report at subsection (1) must be laid within four weeks of this Act receiving Royal Assent.

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(3) When Her Majesty’s Government has determined that the United Kingdom is compliant with the Istanbul Convention, it shall make a statement to each House of Parliament—

(a) of its determination, and

(b) the date by which the Convention will be ratified.

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3 Reports on progress

- (1) The Secretary of State shall each year lay before each House of Parliament a report on the following—
- (a) (before ratification) any alteration in the date by which the United Kingdom expects to be able to ratify the Convention and the reasons for the alteration; 5
 - (b) (before ratification) the administrative measures taken by Her Majesty's Government to enable the United Kingdom to ratify the Istanbul Convention;
 - (c) (before ratification) the legislative proposals brought forward, including those to the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly, to enable the United Kingdom to ratify the Istanbul Convention; 10
 - (d) (before ratification) the measures to be taken and legislation required to enable the United Kingdom to ratify the Istanbul Convention; and 15
 - (e) the measures taken by Her Majesty's Government to ensure that the United Kingdom is, and remains, compliant with the Istanbul Convention, including but not limited to measures to—
 - (i) protect women against violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence; 20
 - (ii) contribute to the elimination of discrimination against women, promote equality between women and men, and empower women;
 - (iii) protect and assist victims of violence against women and domestic violence; 25
 - (iv) promote international co-operation against these forms of violence; and
 - (v) provide support and assistance to organisations and law enforcement agencies to co-operate in order to adopt an integrated approach to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence. 30
- (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.

4 Short title, commencement and extent

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017. 35
- (2) The provisions of this Act come into force on the day on which this Act receives Royal Assent.
- (3) This Act extends to England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

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