**Press Release 3 October 2018**

**Human Rights Delegation: Work combating violence against women in Finland still under-resourced**

* 47 % of Finnish women report experiences physical and/or sexual violence after the age of 15 in a wide-ranging study published in 2014 by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. Out of all EU countries, only Denmark has a higher rate than Finland (52 %).
* Violence against women is currently the second most serious factor affecting general safety based on a report published by the Ministry of the Interior.

More effective methods are needed to prevent violence against women and domestic violence in Finland. The Human Rights Delegation demands that more comprehensive resources be allocated for the work during the next government term and that a special national body be established to monitor the activities.

“Violence against women is one of the most serious human rights violations in Finland. This problem must be taken seriously and adequate resources must be allocated for the work against violence as well as the implementation of the Istanbul Convention,” emphasises **Jukka Maarianvaara**, Ombudsman for Equality and member of the Human Rights Delegation.

In 2015, Finland committed itself to the Istanbul Convention i.e. the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The GREVIO expert group (Council of Europe), which monitors the implementation of the Convention, is visiting Finland this week to assess how the obligations of the Convention have been followed.

“Finland has received numerous recommendations from international treaty monitoring bodies on issues relating to violence against women and domestic violence. The Istanbul Convention is thus particularly important for Finland, and the Convention has already had positive effects. Its implementation process must be strengthened and, in addition to international monitoring, we must also enhance our national monitoring processes as well,” notes **Sirpa Rautio**, Chair of the Human Rights Delegation and Director of the Human Rights Centre.

When allocating resources for the work combating violence against women and domestic violence, special care must be taken to ensure that enough resources are available in different languages and that the special needs of minorities and persons with disabilities are taken into account when planning the measures. In addition, the services must be able to reach people all around Finland.

The Human Rights Delegation’s statement and related background memorandum attached.

Further information:

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