

**Group of Experts on Action against Violence
against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Rules of Procedure

**Adopted by GREVIO at its 1st meeting
(Strasbourg, 21-23 September 2015)**

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Contents

TITLE I: GENERAL RULES	5
CHAPTER I: GREVIO	5
Rule 1 – Mandate	5
CHAPTER II: MEMBERS OF GREVIO	5
Rule 2 – Exercise of functions	5
Rule 3 – Solemn declaration.....	6
Rule 4 – Resignation	6
Rule 5 – Failure to meet the requirements for membership	6
CHAPTER III: PRESIDENCY AND BUREAU OF GREVIO.....	6
Rule 6 – Election of the President and the Vice-Presidents	6
Rule 7 – Functions of the President and the Vice-Presidents	7
Rule 8 – Composition of the Bureau.....	7
Rule 9 – Functions of the Bureau	7
CHAPTER IV: SECRETARIAT OF GREVIO	8
Rule 10 – Staff	8
CHAPTER V: WORKING OF GREVIO.....	8
Rule 11 – Seat	8
Rule 12 – Languages.....	8
Rule 13 – Holding of meetings.....	8
Rule 14 – Agenda	8
Rule 15 – Meeting documents.....	9
Rule 16 – Quorum	9
Rule 17 – Privacy of meetings.....	9
Rule 18 – Hearings	9
CHAPTER VI: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS	9
Rule 19 – Proposals	9
Rule 20 – Order of voting on proposals and amendments	9
Rule 21 – Points of order	10
Rule 22 – Order of procedural motions.....	10
Rule 23 – Reconsideration of a question.....	10
Rule 24 – Voting	10
CHAPTER VII: DECISIONS AND MEETING REPORTS	11
Rule 25 – Adoption of decisions and meeting reports	11
CHAPTER VIII: RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMITTEE OF THE PARTIES AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES AND ORGANS	11
Rule 26 – Periodic meetings with the Committee of the Parties.....	11
Rule 27 – Annual report.....	11

TITLE II: EVALUATION PROCEDURE.....	12
CHAPTER I: FIRST ASSESSMENT	12
Rule 28 – Submission of reports by the Parties under Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Convention.....	12
Rule 29 – Examination of reports under Article 68, paragraph 2 of the Convention.....	12
CHAPTER II: SUBSEQUENT EVALUATION	12
Rule 30 – Evaluation by rounds.....	12
Rule 31 – Provisions to be evaluated	13
Rule 32 – Duration of rounds.....	13
CHAPTER III: MEANS OF EVALUATION	13
Rule 33 – Questionnaire and replies	13
Rule 34 – Other requests for information.....	13
Rule 35 – Information from non-governmental organisations and other civil society actors, as well as national institutions for the protection of human rights	14
Rule 36 – Existing information from other regional and international instruments and bodies	14
Rule 37 – Existing data collection and research in the Parties.....	14
Rule 38 – Information from the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, the Parliamentary Assembly and relevant specialised bodies of the Council of Europe as well as bodies established under other international instruments	14
Rule 39 – Visits.....	15
Rule 40 – Other means of evaluation	15
Rule 41 – Languages for communication with GREVIO.....	16
CHAPTER IV: REPORTS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	16
Rule 42 – Rapporteurs.....	16
Rule 43 – Draft report	16
Rule 44 – Report and conclusions.....	16
TITLE III: SPECIAL INQUIRY PROCEDURE	17
CHAPTER I: RELIABLE INFORMATION INDICATING A SITUATION WHERE PROBLEMS REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.....	17
Rule 45 – Transmission of information to GREVIO	17
Rule 46 – Preliminary consideration of information by GREVIO	17
Rule 47 – Examination of information by GREVIO	17
CHAPTER II: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INQUIRY	18
Rule 48 – Appointment of a member or members of GREVIO to conduct an inquiry.....	18
Rule 49 – Visits.....	18
Rule 50 – Other means of inquiry	18
CHAPTER III: FINDINGS OF THE INQUIRY	19
Rule 51 – Examination and transmission of the findings of the inquiry	19
Rule 52 – Follow-up action taken by the Party	19
TITLE IV: GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.....	19
Rule 53 – Adoption of general recommendations.....	19
Rule 54 – Action taken by the Parties in the light of general recommendations.....	20

TITLE V: RELATIONSHIP WITH PARLIAMENTS	20
CHAPTER I: PARLIAMENTS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION	20
Rule 55 – Involvement of parliaments in the drawing-up, by the Parties, of reports and replies to questionnaires or other requests for information	20
Rule 56 – Consultation of parliaments	20
Rule 57 – Follow-up action taken by parliaments	20
CHAPTER II: PARLIAMENTARY INVOLVEMENT IN MONITORING	21
Rule 58 – Participation of parliaments in monitoring	21
Rule 59 – Submission of the reports of GREVIO to parliaments	21
Rule 60 – Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe	21
TITLE VI: COMMUNICATIONS AND PROTECTION OF PERSONS OR ORGANISATIONS	
COMMUNICATING WITH GREVIO.....	21
Rule 61 – Transmission of communications received	21
Rule 62 – Protection of persons or organisations communicating with GREVIO	22
TITLE VII: CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GREVIO AND THE PARTIES.....	22
Rule 63 – Appointment of “contact persons” by the Parties	22
Rule 64 – Co-operation with GREVIO	22
Rule 65 – Co-operation of the Parties	22
TITLE VIII: SUSPENSION, AMENDMENTS AND ENTRY INTO FORCE.....	23
Rule 66 – Suspension of a Rule	23
Rule 67 – Amendments to the Rules of Procedure	23
Rule 68 – Entry into force of the Rules of Procedure	23

Rules of Procedure of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

The *Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence* (hereafter referred to as “GREVIO”),

Having regard to the *Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence* (CETS No.: 210) (hereinafter referred to as the “Convention”),

Pursuant to Article 66, paragraph 6 of the Convention,

Adopts the present rules:

TITLE I: GENERAL RULES

CHAPTER I: GREVIO

Rule 1 – Mandate

As stipulated in Article 66, paragraph 1 of the Convention, GREVIO shall monitor the implementation of the Convention by the Parties. GREVIO shall do so in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 68 of the Convention and in the present rules.

CHAPTER II: MEMBERS OF GREVIO

Rule 2 – Exercise of functions

1. Members shall perform their duties in their individual capacity, shall be independent and impartial in the exercise of their functions, and shall be available to carry out their duties in an effective manner as stipulated in *litra e* of paragraph 4 of Article 66 of the Convention. During their term of office, they shall not perform any function which is incompatible with these requirements.

2. In order to contribute effectively to GREVIO’s work, members shall have good command of at least one of the official languages of the Council of Europe (English or French). Passive knowledge of the other language is desirable.

3. Members shall keep secret GREVIO’s deliberations and respect the confidentiality of its documents.

4. No member of GREVIO shall intervene when a draft report or any other question of substance concerning the Party in respect of which he/she was elected is being considered, unless otherwise invited by the Bureau.

5. No member of GREVIO shall be present during this examination of reports concerning the Party in respect of which he/she was elected including during any follow-up discussion.

Rule 3 – Solemn declaration

Each member shall, at the first meeting of GREVIO at which he/she is present after his/her election, make the following solemn declaration:

“I solemnly declare that I will exercise my functions as a member of GREVIO honourably, independently, impartially, conscientiously and without accepting any instruction. I will respect on all occasions the confidentiality of GREVIO’s documents and deliberations, and I will stand by GREVIO’s decisions”.

Rule 4 – Resignation

A member who wishes to terminate his/her membership shall notify the President of his/her intention to request the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to terminate his/her membership.

Rule 5 – Failure to meet the requirements for membership

If there are serious grounds to believe that a member has failed to meet the requirements set out in Rule 2, GREVIO may, after the member has had an opportunity to state his/her views, decide to invite the Committee of the Parties to assess whether the matter falls under the second paragraph of Rule 14 of *Resolution CM/Res(2014)43 on rules on the election procedure of the members of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)*. The decision to invite the Committee of the Parties to make this assessment shall be taken by secret ballot and by a two-thirds majority of the members.

CHAPTER III: PRESIDENCY AND BUREAU OF GREVIO

Rule 6 – Election of the President and the Vice-Presidents

1. GREVIO shall elect from among its members a President, a first Vice-President and a second Vice-President. At the first election to be held after GREVIO reaches its full composition of 15 members, GREVIO shall proceed with the election of the President and the two Vice-Presidents with a view to reflecting its new composition.

2. The President and Vice-Presidents shall be elected for a term of office of two years. They may be re-elected. The term of office of the President or a Vice-President shall end before its normal expiry if he/she ceases to be a member.

3. No member of GREVIO may be elected President or Vice-President for more than six out of eight consecutive years.

4. If the President or a Vice-President ceases to be a member or resigns his/her office of President or Vice-President before its expiry, GREVIO may elect a successor for the remainder of the term of that office.

5. The elections of the President and Vice-Presidents shall be held separately and by secret ballot amongst members present, unless GREVIO decides otherwise by consensus. Only the members present may stand for election. The member who obtains a majority of the votes cast shall be elected. If no member receives such majority, a second ballot shall take place. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall then be elected. In the event of a tie, the longest serving member shall be elected. If the members concerned have the same length of time in office, the eldest shall be elected.

6. Candidatures for the elections shall preferably be transmitted to the Secretariat at the latest two weeks before the elections. Persons whose candidatures are not announced at the end of the first day of the meeting at which the elections are to take place are not eligible unless they have been candidates in a previous election during the same meeting.

Rule 7 – Functions of the President and the Vice-Presidents

1. The President shall direct the work of GREVIO, chair its meetings and those of its Bureau, co-ordinate the work of working groups set up by GREVIO and perform all other functions conferred upon him/her by the Convention, by the present rules and by GREVIO.

2. In exercising his/her functions, the President shall remain under the authority of GREVIO.

3. The President may delegate on an ad hoc basis certain of his/her functions to either Vice-President.

4. The first Vice-President shall take the place of the President if the latter is unable to carry out his/her duties or if the office of President is temporarily vacant. The second Vice-President shall replace the first Vice-President if the latter is unable to carry out his/her duties or if the office of first Vice-President is temporarily vacant. If the President and the Vice-Presidents are at the same time unable to carry out their duties or if their offices are at the same time vacant, the duties of the President shall be carried out by the longest serving member. If two or more members concerned have served the same length of time in GREVIO, the eldest shall carry out the duties of the President.

5. The President, or the Vice-President or member replacing him/her, shall retain the right to participate in the discussions of GREVIO and to vote.

6. No member of GREVIO shall preside when a draft report or any other question of substance concerning the Party in respect of which he/she was elected is being considered.

Rule 8 – Composition of the Bureau

The Bureau shall consist of the President and the two Vice-Presidents.

Rule 9 – Functions of the Bureau

The Bureau shall direct the work of GREVIO and perform all other functions conferred upon it by the present rules and by GREVIO.

CHAPTER IV: SECRETARIAT OF GREVIO

Rule 10 – Staff

The Secretariat of GREVIO shall consist of the Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (hereinafter referred to as “the Executive Secretary”) and other necessary staff appointed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

CHAPTER V: WORKING OF GREVIO

Rule 11 – Seat

The seat of GREVIO shall be at the premises of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Rule 12 – Languages

The working languages of GREVIO shall be the official languages of the Council of Europe (English and French).

Rule 13 – Holding of meetings

1. GREVIO shall hold meetings as required for the exercise of its functions.
2. The meetings of GREVIO shall be held at the seat. However, GREVIO may, within the resources available, decide to meet elsewhere, in particular at the Council of Europe Office in Paris or in other Council of Europe premises.
3. GREVIO meetings shall be convened at dates decided by GREVIO or, as circumstances may require, by the Bureau. It shall also meet if at least one third of the members so request.
4. The Executive Secretary shall notify the members of the place, date and opening time of the meeting, its probable duration and the subjects to be dealt with. Convocation letters should be sent at least four weeks in advance of the meeting, except on grounds of urgency which shall be duly explained.
5. Members who are unable to attend a GREVIO meeting or a part thereof shall notify, in due time, the Executive Secretary who shall inform the President.
6. Analogous arrangements shall apply to meetings of the Bureau.

Rule 14 – Agenda

1. Following consultation with the President, the Executive Secretary shall transmit a draft agenda to the members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
2. The agenda shall be adopted by GREVIO at the beginning of the meeting.

Rule 15 – Meeting documents

1. The Executive Secretary shall transmit to the members, whenever possible at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, the working documents relating to the different agenda items.
2. The working documents will only be transmitted to a newly-elected member after a signed statement, as provided in paragraph 4 of Rule 17, is received by the Executive Secretary.

Rule 16 – Quorum

The quorum of GREVIO shall be the majority of its members.

Rule 17 – Privacy of meetings

1. GREVIO shall meet *in camera*, unless it decides otherwise. Apart from the members of GREVIO, only the designated members of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe and other persons assisting GREVIO may be present at meetings held *in camera*.
2. Members of GREVIO, members of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe and other persons assisting GREVIO are required to maintain the confidentiality of the meeting documents and the deliberations at meetings held *in camera*, unless GREVIO decides otherwise.
3. Analogous provisions shall apply to meetings of the Bureau.
4. Newly elected members who have not yet taken up their duties in accordance with the present rules shall be required to state in writing that they will respect the requirement to maintain confidentiality.

Rule 18 – Hearings

GREVIO or, where appropriate, the Bureau may decide to organise hearings with any person or group considered to be in a position to contribute to the work of GREVIO. In each case, GREVIO (or its Bureau) shall decide whether the hearing shall be held *in camera*.

CHAPTER VI: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 19 – Proposals

Any proposal for a decision by GREVIO must be submitted in writing if a member so requests. In that case, it shall not be discussed until it has been circulated.

Rule 20 – Order of voting on proposals and amendments

1. If two or more proposals relate to the same subject they shall be put to the vote in the order in which they were submitted. In case of doubt as to the order of priority, the President shall decide.

2. Where a proposal is the subject of an amendment, the amendment shall be put to the vote first. Where two or more amendments to the same proposal are presented, GREVIO shall vote first on whichever departs furthest in substance from the original proposal. It shall then vote on the next furthest removed from the original proposal, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. However, where the acceptance of one amendment necessarily entails rejection of another, the latter shall not be put to the vote. The final vote shall then be taken on the proposal as amended or not amended. In case of doubt as to the order of priority, the President shall decide. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

3. Parts of a proposal or amendment may be put to the vote separately.

4. In the case of proposals with financial implications, the most costly shall be put to the vote first.

Rule 21 – Points of order

During the discussion of any matter, a member may at any time raise a point of order, and the point of order shall immediately be decided upon by the President in accordance with the present rules. Any appeal against the ruling of the President shall immediately be put to the vote. A member may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 22 – Order of procedural motions

Procedural motions shall take precedence over all other proposals or motions except points of order. They shall be put to the vote in the following order:

- a. suspension of the sitting;
- b. adjournment of discussion on the item in hand;
- c. postponement of a decision on the substance of a proposal until a specified date;
- d. closure of discussion on the item in hand.

Rule 23 – Reconsideration of a question

When a decision has been taken it is only re-examined if a member so requests, and if GREVIO accedes to this request.

Rule 24 – Voting

1. Subject to the provisions of Rule 5, paragraph 5 of Rule 6, Rule 66 and Rule 67, the decisions of GREVIO shall be taken by a majority of the members present.

2. Subject to the provisions of Rule 5 and paragraph 5 of Rule 6, GREVIO shall normally vote by show of hands. However, any member may request that a vote be taken by roll-call; in this event, the roll shall be called in the English alphabetical order of the surnames of the members. A vote shall be held by secret ballot when a request to that effect is supported by one-third of the members.

3. After a vote has commenced, there shall be no interruption of the voting except on a point of order by a member in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. Brief statements by members consisting solely of explanations of their votes may be permitted by the President before the voting has commenced or after the voting has been completed.

CHAPTER VII: DECISIONS AND MEETING REPORTS

Rule 25 – Adoption of decisions and meeting reports

1. At the end of each meeting, the Executive Secretary shall submit to GREVIO for its approval a list of the decisions adopted during the meeting. The adopted list of decisions is subsequently made public.

2. After each meeting, a draft meeting report containing a summary of GREVIO's discussions shall be prepared by the Executive Secretary. This draft report shall be submitted to the President for approval. The meeting report as approved by the President shall then be transmitted to the members, whenever possible at least two weeks in advance of the next meeting of GREVIO. The report shall be confidential, unless GREVIO decides otherwise.

CHAPTER VIII: RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMITTEE OF THE PARTIES AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES AND ORGANS

Rule 26 – Periodic meetings with the Committee of the Parties

1. The President shall periodically meet with the Committee of the Parties to inform it about the state of the work of GREVIO and progress in preparing GREVIO's reports and conclusions concerning the measures taken by the Parties to implement the provisions of the Convention, as well as any other issue relating to the good functioning of the monitoring mechanism of the Convention.

2. GREVIO may decide to invite the Chair of the Committee of the Parties for exchanges of views.

Rule 27 – Annual report

1. GREVIO shall submit to the Committee of the Parties and the Committee of Ministers an annual report on its activities containing, *inter alia*, information on the organisation and internal workings of GREVIO and on its activities.

2. The annual report shall be transmitted to the other bodies and appropriate organs of the Council of Europe and be made public.

TITLE II: EVALUATION PROCEDURE

CHAPTER I: FIRST ASSESSMENT

Rule 28 – Submission of reports by the Parties under Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Convention

1. GREVIO shall request each Party to submit to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe a report on legislative and all other measures giving effect to the provisions of the Convention, based on the questionnaire prepared by GREVIO in accordance with Rule 33, indicating the time-limit within which the report shall be communicated.
2. A Party may provide additional information prior to the consideration of the report by GREVIO, provided that such information is communicated no later than four weeks prior to the opening date of the meeting at which the report of the Party concerned is to be considered.
3. If a Party fails to submit a report pursuant to paragraph 1 of the present rule within the time-limit determined by GREVIO, GREVIO may obtain relevant information through all other means provided for in Article 68 of the Convention and in application of Rules 35 to 40.

Rule 29 – Examination of reports under Article 68, paragraph 2 of the Convention

1. GREVIO shall decide which reports submitted by the Parties to consider at its subsequent meeting(s), bearing in mind the criteria of date of submission and geographical balance.
2. GREVIO shall invite the members concerned of the Committee of the Parties to attend the meetings at which the reports submitted by their authorities are to be examined.
3. Members of the Committee of the Parties may support, be supported or be replaced by any other representatives designated by the Parties.
4. If the representative(s) of a Party fail(s) to respond to an invitation to attend the meeting of GREVIO at which its report is being examined, GREVIO may proceed with the examination of the report in the absence of a representative of the Party in question.
5. No member of GREVIO shall be present at any stage during the examination of reports concerning the Party in respect of which he/she was elected. *

CHAPTER II: SUBSEQUENT EVALUATION

Rule 30 – Evaluation by rounds

1. Following its first assessment pursuant to Rules 28 and 29, GREVIO evaluates the implementation of the Convention by the Parties following a procedure divided into rounds.
2. The Parties shall undergo all evaluation rounds, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO by unanimity.

* Note: added by GREVIO at its 9th meeting (Strasbourg, 14-17 February 2017), with immediate effect.

Rule 31 – Provisions to be evaluated

At the beginning of each round, taking due account of the outcome of the first assessment and, where appropriate, of previous rounds, GREVIO shall select the specific provisions of the Convention on which the evaluation procedure shall be based.

Rule 32 – Duration of rounds

The duration of each evaluation round shall be determined by GREVIO, with due regard to decisions taken under Rule 31.

CHAPTER III: MEANS OF EVALUATION

Rule 33 – Questionnaire and replies

1. GREVIO shall initiate the evaluation procedure by preparing a questionnaire on the basis of which each Party submits a report on legislative and all other measures giving effect to the provisions of the Convention in compliance with Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Convention and Rule 28. GREVIO shall adopt its questionnaire within six months following its first meeting.

2. For each subsequent evaluation, GREVIO may draw up and adopt a questionnaire, which shall serve as a basis for the evaluation of the implementation of the provisions of the Convention by the Parties.

3. When drawing up a questionnaire, GREVIO may request, within the limits of budgetary appropriations, the Executive Secretary to have recourse to consultancy services.

4. Any questionnaire adopted by GREVIO in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 of the present rule shall be addressed to the Parties and shall be made public, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO.

5. GREVIO shall require each Party to submit its report or reply to the questionnaire within the time-limit set by GREVIO. The report or reply shall include all necessary reference texts and relevant data.

6. GREVIO shall publish the report submitted by the Party or the reply of the Party to the questionnaire, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO on reasoned request of the Party concerned.

Rule 34 – Other requests for information

1. GREVIO may request information from a Party (or Parties) other than that obtained in accordance with Rule 33.

2. GREVIO's request shall be made public, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO.

3. GREVIO shall require the Party concerned to provide the information requested within the time-limit set by GREVIO.

4. When GREVIO is not in session, the Bureau may, if appropriate, decide on GREVIO's behalf on making a request for information under the present rule. The Executive Secretary will promptly inform the members of GREVIO of requests made by the Bureau.

5. GREVIO shall publish the information provided by the Party concerned in accordance with the present rule, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO on reasoned request of the Party concerned.

Rule 35 – Information from non-governmental organisations and other civil society actors, as well as national institutions for the protection of human rights

1. GREVIO may invite non-governmental organisations and other members of civil society active in the areas of concern to GREVIO, in particular women’s organisations, national coalitions of organisations and national branches of international non-governmental organisations, to provide it with information in relation to:

- a questionnaire adopted under Rule 33;
- other requests for information made under Rule 34; or
- any other relevant matter in the context of the evaluation procedure.

2. GREVIO may invite national institutions for the protection of human rights to provide it with information in relation to:

- a questionnaire adopted under Rule 33;
- other requests for information made under Rule 34; or
- any other relevant matter in the context of the evaluation procedure.

3. GREVIO shall treat the information provided in application of this rule as confidential, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO on request of the institution, organisation or civil society actor concerned.

Rule 36 – Existing information from other regional and international instruments and bodies

GREVIO shall take into due consideration the existing information available from other regional and international instruments and bodies in areas falling within the scope of the Convention.

Rule 37 – Existing data collection and research in the Parties

GREVIO may invite official co-ordinating bodies designated or established by the Parties in application of Article 10 of the Convention to make any existing data and research referred to in Article 11 of the Convention available to it.

Rule 38 – Information from the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, the Parliamentary Assembly and relevant specialised bodies of the Council of Europe as well as bodies established under other international instruments

1. GREVIO may invite the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, the Parliamentary Assembly and relevant specialised bodies of the Council of Europe, as well as those established under other international instruments, to provide it with information of relevance to the implementation of the Convention in the Parties.

2. Where appropriate, GREVIO may invite the relevant bodies to provide it with information on any complaints presented to them and their outcome.

Rule 39 – Visits

1. GREVIO may decide to carry out a visit to any Party in accordance with Article 68, paragraph 9 of the Convention.

2. GREVIO shall appoint a delegation to carry out the visit consisting of the Rapporteurs for the report on the Party concerned and, if necessary, one or more other members of GREVIO.

3. A member of GREVIO elected in respect of the Party concerned shall not be a member of the delegation in charge of the visit.

4. GREVIO's delegation shall be accompanied by one or more members of the Secretariat of the Convention and, if necessary, interpreters.

5. GREVIO may also decide that the delegation shall be assisted by one or more specialists in specific fields. The delegation shall not be assisted by a specialist who is a national of the Party to be visited.

6. GREVIO shall inform the Party concerned of its intention to carry out the visit. The visit to the Party concerned shall be organised and carried out in co-operation with the "contact person" appointed by the national authorities in application of Rule 63.

7. GREVIO's delegation in charge of the visit may also organise the visit with the assistance of one or more independent national experts.

8. The delegation in charge of the visit shall decide on the programme of the visit. It shall decide on the dates of the visit and organise meetings with governmental bodies in co-operation with the "contact person". Where appropriate, the "contact person" may also be requested to facilitate the organisation of a meeting with representatives of the national institution for the protection of human rights. Meetings with non-governmental organisations, other relevant organisations, members of civil society or any other individuals shall be organised directly with them.

9. Following the visit, the delegation shall report on its findings to GREVIO.

10. The information gathered by the delegation in relation to a visit shall be confidential, unless otherwise decided.

Rule 40 – Other means of evaluation

1. GREVIO may decide to use other appropriate means to carry out the evaluation of the implementation of the Convention by the Parties. GREVIO may, in particular, organise hearings with various actors in the field of action against violence against women and domestic violence and otherwise have recourse to consultancy services.

2. The information gathered by members of GREVIO under this rule shall be confidential, unless otherwise decided.

Rule 41 – Languages for communication with GREVIO

Reports and replies to questionnaires and requests for information as well as other information addressed to GREVIO shall be submitted in one of the official languages of the Council of Europe (English or French).

CHAPTER IV: REPORTS AND CONCLUSIONS**Rule 42 – Rapporteurs**

1. GREVIO shall appoint Rapporteurs for each report evaluating the implementation of the Convention by a Party.
2. No member of GREVIO shall be appointed as Rapporteur for the report evaluating the implementation of the Convention by the Party in respect of which he/she was elected.

Rule 43 – Draft report

1. The Rapporteurs shall prepare a draft report containing their findings related to the implementation by the Party of the provisions of the Convention under evaluation and conclusions, setting out, where appropriate, suggestions and proposals concerning the manner in which the Party may deal with any problems which have been identified.
2. The draft report shall be examined, discussed and approved by GREVIO in plenary.
3. The draft report as approved by GREVIO shall be transmitted to the Party concerned for comments to be provided within the time-limit set by GREVIO.
4. GREVIO shall treat as confidential the draft report and any comments to it submitted by the Party concerned.

Rule 44 – Report and conclusions

1. If the Party concerned submits comments to the draft report within the time-limit set by GREVIO, they shall be taken into account by GREVIO when establishing its report and conclusions.
2. GREVIO shall endeavour to adopt its report and conclusions by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, its report and conclusions shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.
3. The report and conclusions shall be transmitted to the Party, which shall be invited to submit any final comments within a month of transmission.
4. GREVIO's report and conclusions, together with any final comments by the Party concerned, shall be made public, at the expiry of the time-limit of one month to make comments, and sent to the Committee of the Parties.

TITLE III: SPECIAL INQUIRY PROCEDURE

CHAPTER I: RELIABLE INFORMATION INDICATING A SITUATION WHERE PROBLEMS REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

Rule 45 – Transmission of information to GREVIO

1. The Executive Secretary shall bring to the attention of GREVIO any information that is or appears to be submitted for GREVIO's consideration under Article 68, paragraph 13 of the Convention.
2. GREVIO shall treat the information brought to its attention under the present rule as confidential, unless otherwise decided.

Rule 46 – Preliminary consideration of information by GREVIO

1. GREVIO may, through its Executive Secretary, ascertain the reliability of the information and/or the sources of the information brought to its attention under Article 68, paragraph 13 of the Convention and may obtain additional relevant information substantiating the facts of the situation.
2. GREVIO shall determine whether the information received indicates a situation where problems require immediate attention to prevent or limit the scale or number of serious violations of the Convention in the Party concerned.
3. GREVIO may set up a working group and request, within the limits of budgetary appropriations, the Executive Secretary to have recourse to consultancy services to assist it in carrying out its duties under the present rule.

Rule 47 – Examination of information by GREVIO

1. If GREVIO is satisfied that the information received is reliable and indicates a situation covered by Article 68, paragraph 13 of the Convention, it may request the urgent submission, within a specified time-limit, of a special report concerning measures taken to prevent a serious, massive or persistent pattern of violence against women.
2. GREVIO may request additional information from any other relevant sources.
3. GREVIO shall treat the information received under the present rule as confidential, unless otherwise decided.

CHAPTER II: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INQUIRY

Rule 48 – Appointment of a member or members of GREVIO to conduct an inquiry

1. Taking into account the information submitted by the Party concerned, as well as any other reliable information available to it, or in the absence of information submitted by the Party concerned within the specified time-limits, GREVIO may designate one or more members to conduct an inquiry and to report urgently to it.
2. No member of GREVIO shall be designated to conduct an inquiry concerning the Party in respect of which he/she was elected.

Rule 49 – Visits

1. Where GREVIO considers it warranted, the inquiry may include a visit to the territory of the Party concerned.
2. Where a visit is deemed warranted, the Executive Secretary shall inform the Party concerned of the wishes of GREVIO regarding the timing of the visit and the facilities required to allow the designated member(s) of GREVIO to carry out their task.
3. The visit of the member(s) of GREVIO designated to conduct an inquiry may be organised with the assistance of one or more independent national experts. During the visit, the member(s) of GREVIO may be assisted by one or more specialists in specific fields. No specialist assisting the member(s) of GREVIO concerned shall be a national of the Party to be visited.
4. The information gathered under the present rule shall be confidential, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO.

Rule 50 – Other means of inquiry

1. The member or members of GREVIO designated to conduct an inquiry may decide to use any other appropriate means to allow them to collect all necessary information and ascertaining the facts in relation to the specific situation in question. They may:
 - i) request information from any relevant sources, including those referred to in Rules 35 to 38;
 - ii) organise a hearing or hearings with any person or organisation considered to be in a position to contribute to the inquiry. Any such hearings shall be held *in camera*, unless otherwise decided;
 - iii) have recourse, at any stage of the inquiry, to the assistance of one or more specialists in specific fields. No specialist assisting the member(s) of GREVIO concerned shall have the nationality of the Party subject to the inquiry.
 - iv) use any other appropriate means which are deemed necessary for the carrying out of their task.
2. The information gathered under the present rule shall be confidential, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO.

CHAPTER III: FINDINGS OF THE INQUIRY

Rule 51 – Examination and transmission of the findings of the inquiry

1. GREVIO shall examine the findings of the inquiry in plenary.
2. GREVIO shall transmit the findings to the Party concerned, together with any comments and recommendations.
3. Where appropriate, GREVIO shall transmit the findings to the Committee of the Parties and the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe with any comments and recommendations.
4. The findings of the inquiry shall be made public, unless otherwise decided by GREVIO.

Rule 52 – Follow-up action taken by the Party

1. Where appropriate, GREVIO may, at the end of a period of time determined by GREVIO, invite a Party that has been the subject of an inquiry to inform it of any measures taken in the light of the findings, comments and recommendations transmitted in accordance with paragraph 2 of Rule 51 as well as in respect of any action taken by the Committee of the Parties in relation to the inquiry.
2. GREVIO may request the member(s) designated under Rule 48 or other members of GREVIO to collect information, from any relevant sources and through the means at their disposal, on measures taken by the Party in the light of the findings, comments and recommendations transmitted in accordance with paragraph 2 of Rule 51. Where warranted and with the consent of the Party, a visit may be carried out to its territory to that effect.
3. The information gathered in application of paragraphs 1 and 2 of the present rule shall be transmitted in due course to the Committee of the Parties and the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. It shall be made public, unless GREVIO decides otherwise.

TITLE IV: GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Rule 53 – Adoption of general recommendations

1. In accordance with Article 69 of the Convention, GREVIO may adopt, where appropriate, general recommendations on the implementation of the Convention.
2. The adoption of general recommendations shall be based on the examination of information submitted by the Parties and GREVIO's conclusions and findings.
3. General recommendations shall be communicated to the Committee of the Parties and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and included in annual reports drawn up in accordance with Rule 27.

Rule 54 – Action taken by the Parties in the light of general recommendations

1. GREVIO shall take into consideration the manner in which general recommendations are taken into account by the Parties in the context of the evaluation and inquiry procedures.
2. Action taken in the light of general recommendations may be the subject of meetings with the Committee of the Parties and exchange of views as referred to in Rule 26.

TITLE V: RELATIONSHIP WITH PARLIAMENTS

CHAPTER I: PARLIAMENTS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

Rule 55 – Involvement of parliaments in the drawing-up, by the Parties, of reports and replies to questionnaires or other requests for information

GREVIO may invite the Parties to encourage the participation of their respective parliaments through the following means:

- parliaments should be invited to review draft reports to be submitted in application of Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Convention;
- parliaments should be invited to review draft replies to questionnaires or other requests for information;
- Parties should include in their reports and replies to questionnaires or other requests for information details of parliamentary initiatives in the elaboration of legislative measures aimed at giving effect to the provisions of the Convention.

Rule 56 – Consultation of parliaments

1. Where members of GREVIO decide to carry out a visit to a Party in accordance with Rule 39 or Rule 49, meetings with parliamentarians may be requested.
2. Where appropriate, members of GREVIO may decide to consult parliamentarians through other means.

Rule 57 – Follow-up action taken by parliaments

1. GREVIO may invite parliaments, within their mandate and through appropriate channels, to take action in the light of its report and conclusions.
2. Where appropriate, GREVIO may draw the attention of the Committee of the Parties to the need for parliamentary action or involvement to give effect to the provisions of the Convention in one or more Parties.

CHAPTER II: PARLIAMENTARY INVOLVEMENT IN MONITORING

Rule 58 – Participation of parliaments in monitoring

1. GREVIO may take any appropriate action to ensure that parliaments are invited to participate in the monitoring of the measures taken for the implementation of the Convention, in accordance with Article 70, paragraph 1 of the Convention.
2. GREVIO may seek any relevant information resulting from parliamentary oversight of governmental action to give effect to the provisions of the Convention, including through meetings with the members of parliament involved.

Rule 59 – Submission of the reports of GREVIO to parliaments

1. GREVIO shall take appropriate action to ensure that its reports are submitted to parliaments pursuant to Article 70, paragraph 2 of the Convention.
2. GREVIO may request information on the outcome of any debate in parliament on its reports.

Rule 60 – Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

1. GREVIO may suggest to the Committee of the Parties to invite the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to take stock of the implementation of the Convention or specific provisions thereof in the light of its evaluation reports or general recommendations.
2. Where appropriate, GREVIO may suggest to the Committee of the Parties and the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to invite the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to take stock of the implementation of the Convention in the light of the findings of an inquiry transmitted in accordance with paragraph 3 of Rule 51.

TITLE VI: COMMUNICATIONS AND PROTECTION OF PERSONS OR ORGANISATIONS COMMUNICATING WITH GREVIO

Rule 61 – Transmission of communications received

1. The Executive Secretary shall bring to the attention of GREVIO any communication addressed to it, unless the information contained in it falls outside its field of competence.
2. Any relevant communication received by individual members of GREVIO shall be promptly forwarded to the Executive Secretary who shall bring it to the attention of GREVIO.
3. The Executive Secretary shall keep on file all communications received.
4. The confidential information contained in communications received by GREVIO shall be protected.

Rule 62 – Protection of persons or organisations communicating with GREVIO

1. GREVIO shall ensure that, when carrying out its functions under the Convention, the situation of persons or organisations communicating with it is not prejudiced.
2. Any attempt or action attributable to authorities, institutions, public officials or other actors acting on behalf of a Party to prevent any person or organisation from communicating information to GREVIO or to access information provided in confidence to GREVIO shall be considered as a breach of the obligations of the Party concerned under the Convention.
3. Any action or omission attributable to authorities, institutions, public officials or other actors acting on behalf of a Party who order, carry out, permit or tolerate any sanction against any person or organisation for communicating or having communicated to GREVIO or to its members any information, whether true or false, shall be considered as a breach of the obligations of the Party concerned under the Convention.
4. Where appropriate, GREVIO shall request the Party concerned to carry out an effective investigation into any indication of an attempt, action or omission referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the present rule and to take all necessary preventive measures.

TITLE VII: CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GREVIO AND THE PARTIES

Rule 63 – Appointment of “contact persons” by the Parties

1. In order to facilitate co-operation, the Executive Secretary shall request each Party to inform it of the name, title and details of any “contact person” appointed to liaise with GREVIO. This information shall be provided to the Executive Secretary within a reasonable period.
2. The Parties shall promptly inform the Executive Secretary of any change in the appointment of the “contact person” referred to in paragraph 1 of the present rule.

Rule 64 – Co-operation with GREVIO

GREVIO shall seek the co-operation of the national authorities at all stages of the evaluation and inquiry procedures.

Rule 65 – Co-operation of the Parties

1. If a Party fails to co-operate, GREVIO may decide, after the Party has had an opportunity to make known its views, to forward a communication to the Committee of the Parties and, if deemed necessary, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
2. Where appropriate, GREVIO may decide, by a two-thirds majority of its members, to make such a communication public.

TITLE VIII: SUSPENSION, AMENDMENTS AND ENTRY INTO FORCE

Rule 66 – Suspension of a Rule

Upon the proposal of a member of GREVIO, the application of a Rule may be suspended by a decision of the majority of members of GREVIO, subject to the provisions and spirit of the Convention. The suspension shall be limited to its operation to the particular purpose for which such suspension has been sought.

Rule 67 – Amendments to the Rules of Procedure

GREVIO may amend these Rules of Procedure by a decision of the majority of its members.

Rule 68 – Entry into force of the Rules of Procedure

Each Title of these Rules of Procedure shall enter into force upon its adoption.