

**NON.  
NO.  
NEIN.**

Say No!  
Stop  
**violence**  
against  
women

**Violence against women** is rooted in women's unequal status in society, and that status reflects the unbalanced distribution of social, political, and economic power among women and men in society. It is one of the most pervasive human rights violations of our time and a form of discrimination that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women <sup>(1)</sup>. Violence against women undermines women's dignity and integrity and imposes serious harms on families, communities and societies. Violence against women undermines women's dignity and integrity and imposes serious harm on families, communities and societies. In the EU, estimates suggest that 1 in 3 women (or 61 million out of 185 million) have experienced physical or sexual violence, or both, since the age of 15 <sup>(2)</sup>.

The full extent of violence against women is difficult to estimate, as it continues to be under-reported and stigmatised, meaning that what actually gets reported is only a fraction of the reality. In Greece, 66 % of the population tend to trust the police <sup>(3)</sup>.

In EIGE's Gender Equality Index 2015 it was found that where people tend to have more trust in justice institutions, levels of disclosed violence are higher <sup>(4)</sup>. It is estimated that in Greece, 25 % of women have experienced violence, which is 8 % lower than in the EU overall <sup>(5)</sup>.

The European Institute for Gender Equality has estimated that the cost of intimate partner violence against women in Greece could amount to EUR 2.4 billion per year. This figure was calculated according to the methodology used in EIGE's 2014 study <sup>(6)</sup>, which Member States can replicate, as done by Estonia in 2016 <sup>(7)</sup>.



## What are the facts?

- There were 234 reports of rape and attempted rape in Greece in 2013 <sup>(8)</sup>.
- The 2014 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights survey data results showed that since the age of 15, 1 in 4 women in Greece have experienced physical and/or sexual violence and that 25 % of people in Greece knew a female victim of domestic violence within their circle of friends and family <sup>(9)</sup>.
- During the period 2010—2012, it is estimated that there were 283 victims of human trafficking in Greece, of which 70 % were women and girls <sup>(10)</sup>.



When trust in police is low, victims are less likely to report violence.



## Is violence against women a crime in Greece?

Although there is no specific law on violence against women in Greece, some specific forms of violence against women are covered by the criminal code. Rape, sexual assault and domestic violence are criminalised and the law also punishes rape and indecent assault within marriage <sup>(11)</sup>. Although there is no specific legislation on stalking, forced marriage or female genital mutilation, these forms of violence are punishable under provisions of the criminal code.

## What is being done to eliminate violence against women in Greece?

The national programme on preventing and combating violence against women (2009—2013) included actions to prevent and combat rape and sexual assault, violence within the family or domestic violence, sexual harassment and violation of freedom of choice with regard to reproductive rights <sup>(12)</sup>. Through the implementation of the national programme, an integrated network of 61 structures was developed throughout Greece for preventing and combating violence against women. This network offers psychological and social support services, legal counselling and accommodation for women victims of violence, and includes the SOS Helpline 15900, 39 counselling centres and 21 shelters for women victims of violence. The General Secretariat for Gender Equality was responsible for the implementation of the national programme and the relevant

## Good practices show the way

The project 'Gender Equality Awareness-Raising against Intimate Partner Violence' (GEAR against IPV) is a coordinated action of primary and secondary prevention of intimate partner violence (IPV) through school-based interventions, aiming to raise awareness amongst high school students and teachers about the harmful effects of gender stereotypes, and how these relate to gender-based violence. The GEAR against IPV programme has been implemented in Germany, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Austria and Romania <sup>(13)</sup>.

The GEAR against IPV approach has been selected as one of the 12 most successful practices in advocacy and policy dialogue to promote the role of women in society by the European Institute for the Mediterranean.

actions and policies continue via the current national programme 'Horizontal Interventions at the National Level to Combat Violence Against Women' (2014—2020) (14).

## How are women and girls protected?

Women victims of domestic violence in Greece have access to specific legal provisions for the removal of a perpetrator from the family residence and for preventing the perpetrator from approaching the victim at her residence, workplace, children's schools, relatives' homes or shelter.

Greece signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) in May 2011, but has not yet ratified it (15). The Istanbul Convention is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights.



**There are 26 women's shelters in Greece, with approximately 470 shelter beds for women and their children.**

### What help is available in Greece?

The SOS helpline (15900) of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE) (Τηλεφωνική Γραμμή SOS 15900 της Γενικής Γραμματείας Ισότητας των Φύλων) operates 24 hours a day but is not free of charge (landline charges apply). Multilingual support is provided in Greek, English, French and other languages if needed. The SOS helpline received 10 176 calls in its first 2 years, of which 79 % involved incidents of gender-based violence (16). There is also an email address providing support: [sos15900@isotita.gr](mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr)

The state-run general helpline, Telephone Line for Emergency Social Aid (197), operates 24 hours a day and is free of charge.

There are 26 women's shelters in Greece, with approximately 470 shelter beds for women and their children. Most of the women's shelters also accept victims of trafficking and the Thessaloniki-based non-profit organisation, A21, also provides a shelter specifically for victims of human trafficking. The majority of women's shelters (21) are run by the state and five shelters are run by women's non-governmental organisations. All the shelters provide accommodation free of charge, as well as psychological support, and cover the women's basic needs (17).

**SOS helpline: 15900**  
**e-mail: <mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr>**



**The helpline 15900 received 10 176 calls in its first 2 years, of which 79 % involved incidents of gender-based violence.**

## Endnotes

- (<sup>1</sup>) Council of Europe (2011). *Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, and its explanatory report*. Council of Europe Treaty Series No 10. Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210>
- (<sup>2</sup>) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey — Main results*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
- (<sup>3</sup>) European Commission (2016). *Eurobarometer*. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeky/18/groupKy/88>
- (<sup>4</sup>) European Institute for Gender Equality (2013). *Gender Equality Index — Report*. Available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Gender-Equality-Index-Report.pdf>
- (<sup>5</sup>) Ibid. The level of disclosed violence in the EU overall is 33 %.
- (<sup>6</sup>) European Institute for Gender Equality (2014). *Estimating the costs of gender-based violence in the European Union — Report*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0414745EN2.pdf>
- (<sup>7</sup>) *The cost of domestic violence in Estonia*. Available at: [https://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Sotsiaal/Norra/vagivalla\\_hind.pdf](https://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Sotsiaal/Norra/vagivalla_hind.pdf)
- (<sup>8</sup>) Hellenic police, *Statistics crime data — Statistics crime data for the year 2013*. Available at: [http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=30634&Itemid=1149&lang](http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&lang=%27..%27&perform=view&id=30634&Itemid=1149&lang)
- (<sup>9</sup>) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey — Main results*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
- (<sup>10</sup>) Eurostat (2015). *Trafficking in human beings*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eurostat\\_report\\_on\\_trafficking\\_in\\_human\\_beings\\_-\\_2015\\_edition.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eurostat_report_on_trafficking_in_human_beings_-_2015_edition.pdf)
- (<sup>11</sup>) Law 3500/2006: prevention and combating of domestic violence.
- (<sup>12</sup>) Ministry of Justice, General Secretariat for Gender Equality (2009). *National programme on preventing and combating violence against women — 2009-2013*. Available at: <http://www.isotita.gr/en/var/uploads/english/NATIONAL%20PROGRAMME%20ON%20PREVENTING%20AND%20COMBATING%20VIOLENCE%20AGAINST%20WOMEN%202009-2013.pdf>
- (<sup>13</sup>) [www.gear-ipv.eu](http://www.gear-ipv.eu)
- (<sup>14</sup>) WAVE (2016). *Country report — Greece*, p. 4. Available at: [https://cloud-11.datenbanken24.de/apps/wave\\_help/public.nsf/IDs/160504-58684-CC-801102153/\\$FILE/Greece.pdf](https://cloud-11.datenbanken24.de/apps/wave_help/public.nsf/IDs/160504-58684-CC-801102153/$FILE/Greece.pdf)
- (<sup>15</sup>) By decision of the Minister of the Interior and Administrative Reconstruction (ministerial decisions 239/2015 and 443/2016), a working group has been established, its mission being to identify gaps between domestic law and the Istanbul Convention and make relevant proposals, as the implementation of the convention either introduces new offences (e.g. female genital mutilation, stalking, etc.) or regulates issues differently (e.g. domestic violence).
- (<sup>16</sup>) Ministry of Interior, General Secretariat for Gender Equality, *2 years of telephone line SOS 15900*. Available at: [http://www.isotita.gr/var/uploads/PRESS%20%28APO%20SEP%202010%29/DT\\_27-3-13\\_GRAMMI-SOS.pdf](http://www.isotita.gr/var/uploads/PRESS%20%28APO%20SEP%202010%29/DT_27-3-13_GRAMMI-SOS.pdf)
- (<sup>17</sup>) WAVE (2015). *WAVE report on the role of specialist women's support services in Europe* (Greece country information). Available at: [http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE\\_Report\\_2015.pdf](http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf)

## European Institute for Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.



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