

Is female genital mutilation a problem for the EU?



Yes it is. It is estimated that 180,000 girls and women are at risk of female genital mutilation in the EU each year. This harmful practice leaves many long-lasting consequences for the victim and in some cases, can be fatal.

However, we do not have a full picture of the phenomenon because of underreporting and not enough comparable data. This year, EIGE is continuing to work on the topic and support more Member States better understand and address the problem.

“Female genital mutilation is a severe form of gender-based violence that directly affects girls’ and women’s health. It leaves deep psychological and physical scars. EIGE’s upcoming study aims to identify how many girls are at risk and support Member States to plan effective prevention measures”, said Anke Gittenauer, EIGE’s seconded national expert from Belgium on gender-based violence.

To fill data gaps and help policy makers design better protection measures for girls in the EU, EIGE is working on a study that will estimate the risk of female genital mutilation in six Member States: Belgium, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy and Malta. EIGE has previously used this methodology to estimate the risk in Ireland, Portugal and Sweden. The new study will further strengthen the methodology for collecting comparable data on female genital mutilation. It will also propose actions to protect girls at risk.

Apart from providing more information on the number of girls at risk, the study will also strengthen Member States' capacity to prevent female genital mutilation, both in their country and across the EU. The impact of new and evolving patterns of migration will be a focus of the study.

As part of the project, EIGE will meet with Member States and experts in the area to exchange knowledge, share good practices and agree on action points.

The results of the study will be published in early 2018. Before that, EIGE will release additional information about female genital mutilation in the EU as part of the Gender Equality Index 2017. The Index report on violence will be published in November 2017.

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Read more about EIGE's studies on female genital mutilation [here](#)