

Female genital mutilation: How many girls are at risk in Austria?

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Girls at risk
12–18 % (*) of girls
The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) estimates that 12–18 % of girls (735–1 083 girls) aged 0–18 are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) in Austria out of a total population of 5 910 girls aged 0–18 in 2019 and originating from countries where FGM is practised. Of these 5 910 migrant girls, 38 % (2 243) are second generation.

Asylum-seeking and refugee girls
31 % of asylum-seeking girls
From 2016 until the first half of 2020, there were 2 899 asylum-seeking girls aged 0–18 originating from FGM-practising countries. No official data on the number of people granted asylum and living in Austria was found. Taken together with existing migrants, EIGE estimates that 31 % of asylum-seeking girls are at risk of FGM in Austria (20 %).

FGM is a severe form of gender-based violence, leaving deep physical and psychological scars and affecting the lives of victims around the world. It is a violent form of subordination of women and girls and it stands in gross contradiction to the principles of gender equality. It is a violation of women's and girls' human rights.

According to the World Health Organization, FGM refers to 'all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons' (1).

About the study
EIGE has developed a methodology to estimate the number of girls at risk of FGM in the EU and has applied it to a total of 13 Member States. The calculation of FGM risk considers two scenarios. In the high-risk scenario, it is assumed that there is no influence of migration and that girls originating from an FGM-practising country and living in an EU Member State face the same risk as if they had never migrated. In the low-risk scenario, it is assumed that migration and acculturation influence changing attitudes and behaviours regarding FGM (2).

The latest study 'Estimation of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union - Denmark, Spain, Luxembourg and Austria' was conducted in 2020. It provides the EU institutions and EU Member States with accurate information on FGM and its risks among girls in the EU. This enables the design of targeted policies to eradicate FGM.

(*) The percentage refers to girls aged 0–18 originating from countries where FGM is practised. Note for Denmark, Luxembourg and Austria from 2016. Note for Spain from 2019.

(1) WHO, 'Definition of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union - Denmark, Spain, Luxembourg and Austria', FGM as a Crime of the League of Women, Luxembourg, 2021.

(2) World Health Organization, 'Definition of female genital mutilation', 2012. <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/female-genital-mutilation>

(3) EIGE, 'Estimation of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union - Denmark, Spain, Luxembourg and Austria', Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2021.

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Girls at risk of FGM in Austria mostly originate from Egypt and Somalia. Smaller groups originate from Ethiopia, Guinea, Iraq, Nigeria and Sudan.

Further information

[Report: Estimation of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union: Denmark, Spain, Luxembourg and Austria](#) →

[EIGE's work on female genital mutilation](#) →

[FGM study: More girls at risk but community opposition growing](#) →

[Estimation of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union: Step-by-step guide](#) →

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