

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

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Cyprus
 It is estimated that **1.2% to 1.7% of girls are at risk** of female genital mutilation (FGM or cutting) in Cyprus, out of a total population of 756,000 girls aged 0-18 originating from countries where female genital mutilation is practiced.

FGM refers to all of female genital procedures in Cyprus originating mostly from Egypt, Sudan, Iraq and Somalia.

These findings are from the latest research conducted by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) on female genital mutilation in the EU(1).

Female genital mutilation is a serious form of gender-based violence, leaving deep physical and psychological scars on the lives of women. Beyond the scars, it is a system built on subordination of women and girls and it stands in gross contradiction to the principle of gender equality.

According to the World Health Organization, female genital mutilation 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"(2).

About the study and the European Institute for Gender Equality

The study 'Estimation of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union – Belgium, Greece, France, Italy, Cyprus and Malta' was conducted in 2017-2018. It supports the EU institutions and EU Member States in providing more accurate information on female genital mutilation and its risks among girls in the European Union.

EIGE is the EU knowledge centre for gender equality. It supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all EU citizens, by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in the EU.

More information is available at www.eige.europa.eu

Female genital mutilation in the context of migration

Migration from FGM-practising countries to non-practising countries and an increase in the number of unaccompanied children has been observed in Cyprus. Such numbers are the primary indicators of irregular immigration.

Gender sensitive asylum procedures are in place in the sector that women are interviewed by women. They are offered their own advisors. There is a choice of interviewers and, upon presentation of a medical certificate, a medical professional can be present on the basis of female genital mutilation. In general there is no mechanism in place to ensure the systematic identification of unaccompanied asylum seekers. These studies focus on inquiries on persons at the asylum system, encouraging visits to their home countries and therefore reducing the risk of female genital mutilation.

1. The questionnaire was distributed to all member states of the EU in order to estimate the prevalence of FGM in Europe.
 2. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines female genital mutilation as "partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons".
 World Health Organization (WHO) defines female genital mutilation as "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".

This factsheet presents the results of the study 'Estimation of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union – Belgium, Greece, France, Italy, Cyprus and Malta' for Cyprus.

The study was conducted in 2017-2018. It supports the EU institutions and EU Member States in providing more accurate information on female genital mutilation and its risks among girls in the European Union.

Downloads



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