

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



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9-15 % (*)
of girls

Girls at risk

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) estimates that 9-15 % of girls (3 435-6 025 girls aged 0-18) are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) in Spain out of a total population of 39 734 girls aged 0-18 in 2018 and originating from countries where FGM is practised. Of these 39 734 migrant girls, 79 % (31 232) are second generation.

Girls at risk of FGM in Spain mostly originate from Guinea, Mali and The Gambia. Smaller groups of girls originate from Egypt, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Senegal (5).

Asylum-seeking and refugee girls

No disaggregated data for asylum seekers and refugees was available from the Ministry of Interior.

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 15 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.

(*) Percentage values in parentheses. If originating from countries where FGM is practised. Data for Denmark, Luxembourg and Austria from 2018. Data for Spain from 2019.

(1) WHO, 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.

(2) World Health Organization, Guidelines on female genital mutilation (FGM), <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/female-genital-mutilation>

(3) WHO, 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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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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