

**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 (1). Violence against women undermines women's dignity and integrity and imposes serious harms 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 (2).

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 Denmark, over 90 % of the population tend to trust the police (3).

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 (4). It is estimated that in Denmark, 52 % of women have experienced violence, which is 19 % higher than in the EU overall (5).

The European Institute for Gender Equality has estimated that the cost of intimate partner violence against women in Denmark could amount to EUR 1.2 billion per year. This figure was calculated according to the methodology used in EIGE's 2014 study (6), which Member States can replicate, as done by Estonia in 2016 (7).



## What are the facts?

- In 2013, there were 1 788 cases of reported sexual assault and rape against women in Denmark <sup>(8)</sup>.
- An estimated 33 000 women fall victim to intimate partner violence in Denmark each year <sup>(9)</sup>.
- An estimated 9 500 young women between 16 and 24 years old fall victim to physical, psychological or sexual violence in relation to teen dating each year <sup>(10)</sup>.
- It is estimated that there are more than 100 000 victims of stalking each year <sup>(11)</sup>.
- The 2014 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights survey data results showed that in Denmark, 52 % of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 and 42 % of people in Denmark said they knew a woman within their circle of friends and family who has been a victim of domestic violence <sup>(12)</sup>.
- In 2010, the Danish study 'The Cost of Violence' estimated that the cost in Denmark could amount to EUR 37.7 million each year <sup>(13)</sup>.
- From 2010 to 2012, an estimated 1.1 per 100 000 people in Denmark were registered as victims of human trafficking <sup>(14)</sup>.

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



## Is violence against women a crime in Denmark?

Although there is no specific law on violence against women in Denmark, many forms of violence against women are covered by general provisions of the criminal code including physical, sexual, psychological and financial violence. Rape is punishable with penalties of up to 12 years and references to marital status and the use of force or violence were removed in 2013. Female genital mutilation is a crime and is punishable even if it is committed outside the country.

### Good practices show the way

The Danish national action plan to prevent violence in intimate relationships (2014—2017) has singled out dating violence as a key action area to focus on, in addition to the existing system. Within the area there are three initiatives:

#### ***Victim programme for young people exposed to dating violence***

Young people exposed to dating violence rarely seek help and the existing programmes are largely aimed at adults. A need exists for victim programmes for young people aged 15—18 who suffer from exposure to dating violence. As a part of the national action plan there is a pilot scheme that aims to prevent these young people from being affected by the violence to the extent that they are unable to live normal lives. Through the scheme, victims are offered counselling and support from professionals trained to handle this target group.

#### ***Dating violence competition for students***

As part of the national action plan, an annual national school competition targeted at students aims to invoke debate and inform young people about dating violence, respect and personal boundaries. Through the competition, young girls and boys are educated about dating violence and are then encouraged to express their feelings about the subject through short stories, songs, poems and various visual forms.

#### ***Information/theme days on domestic violence/dating violence***

Young people are in need of a broad range of information about violence and the opportunity to debate and question violence in the family, and between girlfriends and boyfriends. A number of annual theme days on domestic violence and dating violence are therefore being organised in schools across the country. The theme days at schools help educate students about dating violence and what characterises a good and respectful relationship, as well as informing potential victims about where to seek help.

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

The Danish government has a comprehensive set of institutional mechanisms in place across the social, legal and health care sectors dealing with violence against women. Women exposed to violence in the family or in intimate relationships are entitled to stay in accommodation facilities/ crisis centres and people exposed to violence can find support and treatment through national 24/7 helplines, psychological and legal counselling services, intervention centres, etc. The Danish police force and health care system play important roles in intercepting violence against women. The institutional mechanisms are supplemented by national action plans, which launch new programmes and pilot projects to expand the scope of the government's policy on violence in the family and in intimate relationships.

The 2014 National Action Plan against Violence in the Family and in Intimate Relations<sup>(15)</sup> focuses on providing and developing new methods of counselling and treatment for victims of different forms of violence, including men exposed to violence, victims of stalking and young victims of violence/ date violence.

In 2015, Denmark launched its fourth national action plan against human trafficking (action plan to combat trafficking in human beings 2015—2018)<sup>(16)</sup>. This action plan ensures the continuation of national efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

## How are women and girls protected?

All women victims of family or partner violence have the right to temporary stay at a shelter and are legally entitled to immediate and long-term support, as well as protection and counselling.

They also have legal access to protection measures including restriction orders forbidding the perpetrator from physical or other contact with the victim, and barring orders banning the perpetrator from the family home<sup>(17)</sup>.

Denmark ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) on 23 April 2014. The Istanbul Convention is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights.

## What help is available in Denmark?

The national women's helpline (70203082) operates 24/7, is anonymous and free of charge. It is run by the National Organisation of Women's Shelters in Denmark (LOKK) and provides multilingual support. It is financed by the state<sup>(18)</sup>.

In 2012, three regional centres for sexual assault and rape were established offering free medical and psychological treatment and counselling.

There are 43 women's shelters in Denmark, with 934 beds (427 for women and 507 for children). Women's shelters exist in all regions and all provide 24/7 access<sup>(19)</sup>.



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**National women's helpline (70203082)**

## 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/themKey/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>) Joint Eurostat and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime data, 2013.
- (<sup>9</sup>) National Institute of Public Health (2012c), *Violence in Intimate Relations* [Vold i nære relationer], Copenhagen.
- (<sup>10</sup>) National Institute of Public Health (2012b), *Teen Dating Violence in Denmark* [Kærestevold i Danmark], Copenhagen.
- (<sup>11</sup>) Ministry of Children (2015). Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs.
- (<sup>12</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>13</sup>) National Institute of Public Health (2010), *The Cost of Violence* (Voldens pris), Copenhagen.
- (<sup>14</sup>) Eurostat (2015). *Trafficking in human beings*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, p. 23. 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>15</sup>) <http://www.centermodmenneskehandel.dk/in-english>
- (<sup>16</sup>) <http://www.centermodmenneskehandel.dk/in-english>
- (<sup>17</sup>) Feldtmann, B. and Svensson, E. A. (2015). *Mapping the legislation and assessing the impact of protection orders in the European Member States (POEMS) — National Report Denmark*. Available at: <http://poems-project.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Denmark.pdf>
- (<sup>18</sup>) WAVE (2015). *WAVE report on the role of specialist women's support services in Europe* (Denmark country information). Available at: [http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE\\_Report\\_2015.pdf](http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf)
- (<sup>19</sup>) Ibid.

## 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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