

**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 the Netherlands, almost 80 % 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 the Netherlands, 45 % of women have experienced violence, which is 12 % 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 the Netherlands could amount to EUR 3.6 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?

- The 2014 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights survey data results showed that:
 - since the age of 15, 45 % of women in the Netherlands have experienced physical and/or sexual violence and 26 % of women have been stalked;
 - 43 % of people in the Netherlands said they knew someone who had been a victim of domestic violence ⁽⁸⁾.
- From 2010 to 2012, an estimated 7.9 per 100 000 people in the Netherlands were victims of human trafficking, almost four times higher than the EU-wide figure ⁽⁹⁾.



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



Is violence against women a crime in the Netherlands?

The Netherlands has no law criminalising violence against women but does criminalise numerous forms of violence.

Rape, sexual assault and stalking are addressed in the Dutch penal code (Articles 242, 246 and 285b respectively) ⁽¹⁰⁾; domestic violence is prosecuted under different criminal offences.

Laws that criminalise forced marriage and female genital mutilation came into force on 1 July 2013 ⁽¹¹⁾.

What is being done to eliminate violence against women in the Netherlands?

The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport coordinates the government-wide approach on violence against women, together with the Ministry of Security and Justice, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. This government-wide approach aims to prevent, identify and stop domestic violence and provide assistance and after-care ⁽¹²⁾.

On 14 November 2011, the Netherlands signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention); the government ratified the convention on 18 November 2015 ⁽¹³⁾. The Istanbul Convention is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights.

Good practices show the way

Over the last decade, the Netherlands has built up an integrated method of addressing female genital mutilation ('The Chain'), which links key persons in the communities affected to professionals in education, prevention, health and social care, and law enforcement. Each link in the chain knows what role the other links play. Evaluation showed that the target groups were successfully reached and all actors involved knew their roles in the process and their counterparts in the chain ⁽¹⁴⁾.

How are women and girls protected?

Women victims of domestic violence in the Netherlands have legal access to emergency barring orders prohibiting perpetrators from the victim's home⁽¹⁵⁾, and temporary restraining orders in situations where there is an acute threat. The restraining order may also apply to child abuse cases. Violation of restraining orders is a criminal offence⁽¹⁶⁾.

What help is available in the Netherlands?

Besides help within shelters there is also so-called ambulatory help (social work, psychiatric care, care and treatment of drug addicts, debt assistance) for victims (locally organised).

Victim Support Netherlands (Slachtoffer Hulp Nederland) assists victims of rape, sexual assault and stalking⁽¹⁷⁾. This organisation also has a helpline for sexual abuse (hulplijn seksueel misbruik).

There are 26 support services for domestic violence and child abuse (Veilig Thuis) helping victims of domestic violence and child abuse, covering the whole country⁽¹⁸⁾. They can be reached 24/7 (free of charge).

There are 15 centres for sexual abuse, where victims of acute sexual abuse can get help (covering the whole country)⁽¹⁹⁾.

The Dutch Centre of Forced Marriage and Abandonment offers short links between knowledge, policy and practice, collects and shares knowledge and promotes good cooperation among all relevant parties⁽²⁰⁾.

The Netherlands also has another telephone line (0900 9999 001) and web-based helpline (<http://www.slachtofferwijzer.nl/organisaties/hulplijnseksueelmisbruik#>) that operates Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 17:00. Callers are charged at normal rates.



The Netherlands has 96 shelters with 1 608 beds⁽²¹⁾.



**Veilig Thuis: 0800 2000 (free of charge)
Website: www.vooreenveiligthuis.nl**

Endnotes

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- (³) European Commission (2016). *Eurobarometer*. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeky/18/groupKy/88>
- (⁴) 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>
- (⁵) Ibid. The level of disclosed violence in the EU overall is 33 %.
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- (⁷) *Cost of Domestic Violence in Estonia*: https://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Sotsiaal/Norra/vagivalla_hind.pdf
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- (¹⁰) [http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/regulatory-and-legal-framework/legal-definitions-in-the-eu?c\[\]=NL](http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/regulatory-and-legal-framework/legal-definitions-in-the-eu?c[]=NL)
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- (¹²) Sixth periodic report of the Kingdom of the Netherlands concerning the implementation of the international convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (2008-2013), 2014, p. 39. Available at: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2014D38529>
- (¹³) Council of Europe (2011). *Chart of signatures and ratifications of Treaty 210*. Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210/signatures?p_auth=j0WpqaY2l
- (¹⁴) European Institute for Gender Equality (2015). *Good Practices — Joined-up action on FGM, 2006—2015*. Available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/good-practices/netherlands/joined-action-fgm>
- (¹⁵) WAVE (2015). *WAVE report on the role of specialist women's support services in Europe*, p. 87. Available at: http://filesserver.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf
- (¹⁶) Wet tijdelijk huisverbod, Article 11, only available in Dutch: http://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0024649/geldigheidsdatum_05-12-2014
- (¹⁷) <https://www.slachtofferhulp.nl>
- (¹⁸) <http://www.vooreenveiligthuis.nl>
- (¹⁹) <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/brieven/2016/02/08/brief-aan-de-vng-over-extra-middelen-centra-seksueel-geweld/brief-aan-de-vng-over-extra-middelen-centra-seksueel-geweld.pdf>
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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.



European Institute for Gender Equality, EIGE
Gedimino pr. 16 LT-01103
Vilnius, LITHUANIA
Tel. +370 52157444
Email: eige.sec@eige.europa.eu

Contact details

<http://eige.europa.eu> 
<http://www.twitter.com/eurogender> 
<http://www.facebook.com/eige.europa.eu> 
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