

**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. Violence against women continues to be under-reported and stigmatised, meaning that what actually gets reported is only a fraction of the reality. In Portugal, just under 70 % 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 Portugal, 24 % of women have experienced violence, which is 9 % lower than in the EU overall (5).

The European Institute for Gender Equality has estimated that the cost of intimate partner violence against women in Portugal could amount to € 2.3 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, 24 % of women in Portugal have experienced physical and/or sexual violence, and 9 % of women have been stalked;
  - 37 % of people said they knew someone who has been a victim of domestic violence <sup>(8)</sup>.
- From 2010 to 2012, an estimated 0.1 per 100 000 people in Portugal were registered as victims of human trafficking <sup>(9)</sup>.
- In 2012, EIGE's study estimated that the number of girls resident in Portugal at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) was 1 365 <sup>(10)</sup>.

## Is violence against women a crime in Portugal?

Portugal has no violence against women law but does criminalise numerous forms of violence.

The Portuguese penal code defines rape as a criminal act by the use of force or threats or by using authority over a dependent. In the case of adult victims of rape, investigation and prosecution depend on the victims' complaints <sup>(11)</sup>.

The crime of domestic violence was introduced into the Portuguese penal code in 2007 <sup>(12)</sup>. This included crimes of marital rape and date rape <sup>(13)</sup>.

Law 83/2015, which introduces the 38th amendment to the Portuguese penal code, added three new crimes, namely FGM, stalking and forced marriage. Regarding this last crime, the so-called 'preparatory acts' are now also criminalised and viewed independently. This amendment also changed the punishment framework for sexual assault.

Article 144 A, of the penal code, made FGM an autonomous crime, and it is also punishable when committed outside of Portugal <sup>(14)</sup>.

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



## Good practices show the way

In 2009 Portugal created a multidisciplinary working group on FGM. The group's diversity allows it to tackle FGM from health, reproductive and sexual rights, justice, immigration, gender equality, development cooperation and education perspectives.

The measures are aimed at girls and women subjected to, or at risk of, FGM, their families, immigrant communities, professionals, policymakers, students, youth, civil society and international organisations, universities, religious leaders and the general public <sup>(15)</sup>.

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

Portugal has a national action plan (NAP) to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence (2014—2017) <sup>(16)</sup>. The NAP covers domestic and sexual violence. Also, Portugal is implementing four other important national action plans: for the promotion of gender equality and non-discrimination <sup>(17)</sup>; against FGM <sup>(18)</sup>; against human trafficking <sup>(19)</sup>; and to implement UNSCR 1325 <sup>(20)</sup>.

Portugal was the first European Union country to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) on 5 February 2013 <sup>(21)</sup>. The Istanbul Convention is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights.

## How are women and girls protected?

Women in Portugal have access to barring orders, 'no contact' orders, and other protection orders. Emergency protection orders are available, and domestic violence victims have a special status such that restraining orders can be issued within 48 hours of the indictment of the defendant <sup>(22)</sup>. Both electronic surveillance for perpetrators and tele-assistance for victims are available.



**Portugal has a national helpline (800 202 148 and 144) for domestic violence, the Serviço de Informação a Vítimas de Violência Doméstica. This service is free of charge, anonymous, confidential and available 24/7 <sup>(24)</sup>.**

## What help is available in Portugal?

For women and children experiencing domestic violence, Portugal has 39 shelters with 650 beds. There are also 130 vacancies for emergency situations.

The national network on supporting victims of domestic violence includes support services, shelters, emergency vacancies and some responses from Central Administration. This network is coordinated by the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality and the Social Security Services <sup>(23)</sup>.



## 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 Memorandum*. Council of Europe Treaty Series No 10.
- (<sup>2</sup>) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). *Violence Against Women: An EU Wide Survey, Main Results*. Publication 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/themeKy/18/groupKy/88>.
- (<sup>4</sup>) European Institute for Gender Equality (2013). *Gender Equality Index Report*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. 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*. Publication Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. Available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0414745EN2.pdf>
- (<sup>7</sup>) *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>) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). *Violence against Women: An EU Wide Survey, Main Results*, Publications Office of the European Union: Luxembourg.
- (<sup>9</sup>) Eurostat (2015). *Trafficking in Human Beings*, 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>10</sup>) [http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0215093ENN\\_Web.pdf](http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0215093ENN_Web.pdf)
- (<sup>11</sup>) EWL (2013). *Barometer on Rape in the EU*, p. 60. Available at: [http://eurogender.eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ewl\\_barometre\\_final\\_11092013%20%281%29.pdf](http://eurogender.eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ewl_barometre_final_11092013%20%281%29.pdf)
- (<sup>12</sup>) Law No 59/2007, of 4 September 2007.
- (<sup>13</sup>) Ibid.
- (<sup>14</sup>) [http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/current\\_situation\\_and\\_trends\\_of\\_female\\_genital\\_mutilation\\_in\\_portugal\\_en.pdf](http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/current_situation_and_trends_of_female_genital_mutilation_in_portugal_en.pdf)
- Article 144 A of the penal code establishes that 'Whoever mutilates part or whole of a person's female genital by clitoridectomy, infibulation, excision or any other harmful practice of female genital organs for non-medical reasons, is punished with imprisonment from 2 to 10 years'.
- (<sup>15</sup>) <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/good-practices/portugal/political-will-multistakeholder-governance-and-user-involvement>
- (<sup>16</sup>) V National Plan to Prevent and Combat Domestic and Gender-based Violence 2014-2017 (V PNPCVDG). Available at: [https://www.cig.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CIG-VPNPCVDG\\_2014-2017\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.cig.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CIG-VPNPCVDG_2014-2017_ENG.pdf).
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- (<sup>19</sup>) III National Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2014-2017 (III PNPCTSH). Available at: [https://www.cig.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CIG-IIIPNPCTSH\\_2014-2017\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.cig.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/CIG-IIIPNPCTSH_2014-2017_ENG.pdf).
- (<sup>20</sup>) II National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNCRC 1325 (2014-2018). Available at: <https://www.cig.gov.pt/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/II-National-Action-Plan-for-the-implementation-of-UNSCR-1325-2014-2018.pdf>.
- (<sup>21</sup>) [https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210/signatures?p\\_auth=j0WpqY2I](https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210/signatures?p_auth=j0WpqY2I)
- (<sup>22</sup>) <http://poems-project.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Portugal.pdf>
- (<sup>23</sup>) The existing resources in the national support network, with specific breakdown by categories (Assistance to Victims, Security Forces, Health, etc.) are provided here: <http://www.igualdade.gov.pt/guiaderecursosvd>
- (<sup>24</sup>) <https://www.cig.gov.pt/servicos/>

## 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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Publications Office

Paper	MH-04-16-664-EN-C	978-92-9493-561-8	10.2839/902873
PDF	MH-04-16-664-EN-N	978-92-9493-560-1	10.2839/33350