

**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 Slovakia, 47 % of the population tend to trust the police, which is significantly lower than in the EU overall (over 70 %) (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 Slovakia, 34 % of women have experienced violence, which is about the same as in the EU overall (5).

The European Institute for Gender Equality has estimated that the cost of intimate partner violence against women in Slovakia 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?

The 2014 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights survey data results show that since the age of 15:

- 34 % of women in Slovakia have experienced physical and/or sexual violence;
- 16 % of women in Slovakia have been stalked;
- 49 % of women in Slovakia have experienced sexual harassment (8).

From 2010 to 2012, an estimated 0.6 per 100 000 people in Slovakia were registered as victims of human trafficking (9).



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



## Is violence against women a crime in Slovakia?

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

Slovakia criminalised domestic violence in 1999 (10). Section 208 of the criminal code of the Slovak Republic covers physical, emotional, economic and psychological abuse (11). Section 127 of the criminal code broadens the definition to include ex-spouses and cohabitants.

Section 199 of the criminal code of the Slovak Republic prohibits rape or sexual violence through force, the threat of force, or taking advantage of 'a woman's helplessness', and punishes perpetrators with 5 to 25 years imprisonment (12).

Section 179 of the criminal code of the Slovak Republic prohibits trafficking in human beings and specifically mentions trafficking for 'prostitution or another form of sexual exploitation, including pornography' (13).

Slovakia has no specific law outlawing female genital mutilation (FGM), however the penal code outlaws any kind of mutilation in general, which includes FGM (14).

## Good practices show the way

Regarding preparation for ratifying the Istanbul Convention, in September 2014 the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family started a project setting up a Coordinating Methodical Centre for gender-based and domestic violence (CMC) for the consideration of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. The project is financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism.

The aim of the CMC is to create, implement and coordinate a comprehensive national policy in the area of preventing and eliminating violence against women. Training, education, research and monitoring are also among the planned activities of the CMC.

The CMC is one of the first examples within Council of Europe countries of how to implement Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention (15).

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

In 2004, the Slovakian government adopted a national strategy for prevention and elimination of violence against women and in families <sup>(16)</sup>. This strategy was followed by a series of national action plans, including the national action plan for the prevention and elimination of violence against women (2014—2019) <sup>(17)</sup>.

Slovakia signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) on 11 May 2011 but has not ratified it <sup>(18)</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?

Slovakia has both civil and criminal laws on domestic violence. Police have the power to ban perpetrators from a 'shared dwelling' for a 10-day period after a domestic violence report, which automatically includes restraining orders; longer protection orders are also available <sup>(19)</sup>.

Additionally, the office of the general prosecutor established a free helpline and an email address where a specific motion to investigate a case may be reported. The office refers the reported case to the relevant police department <sup>(20)</sup>.



**Slovakia has a National Helpline for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (0800 800 818), operated by the Slovak Crisis Centre Dotyk <sup>(23)</sup>.**

**Slovakia has a national women's helpline (0800 212 212) that is available 24/7, is free to call and provides support in Hungarian, French, German and Russian <sup>(24)</sup>.**

## What help is available in Slovakia?

Slovakia's National Helpline for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence started to operate in 2015. It offers counselling and emergency help free of charge to women, covering all forms of violence, on a permanent basis <sup>(21)</sup>.

There are no specific shelters or centres for victims of sexual violence in Slovakia but Slovakia does have 23 regional counselling centres that assist women and children experiencing domestic violence and about 121 family places in shelters for women and their children <sup>(22)</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 report*. Council of Europe Treaty Series No 10. Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210>
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- (<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>
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- (<sup>11</sup>) *Criminal Code of the Slovak Republic*, Section 208. Available at: <http://www.legislationline.org/documents/id/16895>
- (<sup>12</sup>) Ibid., Section 199.
- (<sup>13</sup>) Ibid., Section 179.
- (<sup>14</sup>) European Institute for Gender Equality (2013). *Female genital mutilation in the European Union and Croatia — Report*. Available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/eige-report-fgm-in-the-eu-and-croatia.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.

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