

**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 harm 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 Finland, 94 % of the population tend to trust the police, a figure that is significantly higher than in the EU overall (just 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 Finland, 47 % of women have experienced violence, which is also 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 Finland 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).



Finland signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) on 11 May 2011 and ratified it on 17 April 2015 ⁽¹⁸⁾. 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 Finland experiencing domestic violence can access a range of protection orders including emergency barring orders; mothers can also apply for such orders to cover minor children ⁽¹⁹⁾.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) are implemented in Finland. MARACs are based on multi-professional cooperation, and assessments focus on preventing murders of high-risk domestic violence victims. Besides risk assessment, MARACs also include planning and follow-up of protection measures. In 2016, there are 31 working MARACs in Finland ⁽²⁰⁾.

What help is available in Finland?

In early 2016, the National Institute for Health and Welfare published the national guidelines for helping victims of sexual violence. District hospitals are creating local care pathways for helping victims of rape and other forms of sexual abuse. The care pathway is aimed at creating a seamless continuum of treatment for rape victims, as well as generating more consistent and uniform nationwide services. The care pathway includes forensic examination of the rape victim using a national sexual assault examination kit, as well as the provision of both physical and mental treatment and support services. Furthermore, the legal status of the victim is improved by ensuring the victim's access to legal aid. The care pathway combines both public and third sector services. At the end of the year 2016, half of the hospital districts either have the care pathway or have started creating a local care pathway for victims of sexual violence.

Finland has one Rape Crisis Centre, run by a non-governmental organisation, which operates a helpline and provides legal consultations and face-to-face counselling in two cities (Helsinki and Jyväskylä) for victim/survivors who have been assaulted recently or in the past ⁽²¹⁾.

In 2017, the first Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) housed in a hospital will be launched in Finland. The SARC will offer medical and forensic examination, trauma support and counselling for victims reporting recent sexual assault.

In Finland, the Monika helpline (Multicultural Women's Association) is specifically for women who identify as being part of an ethnic, cultural or linguistic minority and do not speak Finnish. Based in the women's shelter Mona Koti, this helpline assists immigrant women and children who have been victims of violence and those living under the threat of violence ⁽²²⁾.

For women and children experiencing domestic violence, Finland has 19 shelters with 118 beds ⁽²³⁾.



Finland's new national helpline (080 005 005) against domestic violence and violence against women will be opened at the end of 2016. The helpline is free to call and is open 24/7 ⁽²⁴⁾.

At the moment, Finland has a national women's helpline (0800 02400) that is free to call but not open 24/7. Hours and languages are:

Finnish: Monday to Friday from 16:00 to 20:00; Saturday and Sunday from 12:00 to 16:00

English: Fridays from 16:00 to 20:00

Swedish: Wednesdays from 16:00 to 20:00 ⁽²⁵⁾.



Endnotes

- (¹) 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>
- (²) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey — Main results*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
- (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 %.
- (⁶) 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>
- (⁷) *The cost of domestic violence in Estonia*. Available at: https://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Sotsiaal/Norra/vagivalla_hind.pdf
- (⁸) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey — Main results*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
- (⁹) 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
- (¹⁰) Criminal Code of Finland, Section 1 — Rape (509/2014).
- (¹¹) Criminal Code of Finland, Section 16 — Right to bring charges (441/2011).
- (¹²) Action plan to reduce violence against women. Available at: <https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/112432>
- (¹³) Ibid.
- (¹⁴) <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/eige-report-fgm-in-the-eu-and-croatia.pdf>, p. 51.
- (¹⁵) http://valtioneuvosto.fi/artikkelit/-/asset_publisher/ihmiskaupan-vastaisella-toimintaohjelmalla-tehostetaan-uhrien-tunnistamista-auttamista
- (¹⁶) <http://www.nikk.no/en/news/methods-to-prevent-domestic-violence-not-always-used>
- (¹⁷) WAVE (2015). *WAVE report on the role of specialist women's support services in Europe*, p. 22. Available at: http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf
- (¹⁸) https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210/signatures?p_auth=j0WpqY2I
- (¹⁹) WAVE (2015). *WAVE report on the role of specialist women's support services in Europe*, p. 86. Available at: http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf; <http://poems-project.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Finland-final.pdf>
- (²⁰) Figure provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.
- (²¹) <http://www.tukinainen.fi/english>
- (²²) WAVE (2015). *WAVE report on the role of specialist women's support services in Europe*, p. 22. Available at: http://files.wave-network.org/researchreports/WAVE_Report_2015.pdf
- (²³) Ibid., p. 92.
- (²⁴) The telephone number and webpages of this service, which is coordinated by the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), will be made available in December 2016; the aim is to start activities before Christmas since during holidays peaks in violence are usually observed. Funding for the service will be collected through the so-called 'victim fees': offenders responsible for different crimes shall pay an extra fee. Available at: <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/a1476498155400>
- (²⁵) <https://www.naistenlinja.fi/en>

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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