



EIGE, Vilnius, 6 February 2015

#### EIGE Press Release

On the occasion of the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation<sup>1</sup>

### Partnerships between Governments and Communities show progress

To successfully eliminate the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) and safeguard girls and women at risk in the European Union, protection and prosecution need to be combined with prevention. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in its research highlights that strategies preventing FGM in the EU are effective. Their success however depends on cooperation between governments and the communities involved: “The legal framework prohibiting and prosecuting FGM at Member State level will effectively contribute to its end only if the concerned communities are informed about it and actively involved in the implementation of the policies”, EIGE’s Director Virginija Langbakk confirms.

EIGE will in April 2015 release its study “*Estimation of girls at risk of female genital mutilation in the European Union*” uncovering a methodology to help estimate the number of girls and women at risk or victims of FGM. This methodology has been developed and tested in Ireland, Portugal and Sweden, and offers an approach to measure the prevalence of FGM in the EU.

In recent years the European Institute for Gender Equality focused on supporting the European Commission and the Member States in their efforts to eliminate FGM in Europe. EIGE is constantly adding information on FGM to its knowledge centre on gender equality in the EU making available a broad scope of resources on FGM, including databases on good

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/events/femalegenitalmutilationday/>

practices, recommendations and guidelines on FGM applied in the Member States to combat the practice<sup>2</sup>.

A growing number of EU Member States are improving their legal and policy frameworks as reported by EIGE's study "*Female Genital Mutilation in the European Union and Croatia*" from 2013<sup>3</sup>: while Finland, Italy and Portugal are currently implementing a national action plan to specifically combat female genital mutilation, Belgium, Croatia, France, Slovakia, Spain, the UK and Ireland are including measures in national action plans and setting up awareness raising initiatives.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is an autonomous body of the European Union, established to support and to strengthen the promotion of gender equality and the fight against discrimination based on sex, as well as to raise awareness of gender equality in the EU and the Member States.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/resources/female-genital-mutilation>

<sup>3</sup> "Study to map the current situation and trends of female genital mutilation in 27 EU Member States (MS) and Croatia" <http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/female-genital-mutilation-in-the-european-union-and-croatia-report>