

**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 Romania, just under 50 % of the population tend to trust the police, significantly lower 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 Romania, 30 % 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 Romania could amount to EUR 4.3 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:
 - 30 % of women in Romania have experienced physical and/or sexual violence and only 23 % reported the most serious incident to the police;
 - 8 % of women have been stalked;
 - 32 % of women have experienced sexual harassment (8).
- From 2010 to 2012, an estimated 5.4 per 100 000 people in Romania 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 Romania?

Romania has no violence against women law but does criminalise numerous forms of violence. The law on preventing and combating violence in family in Romania (10) was amended in 2012 to provide for restraining orders: the new law includes verbal violence, psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence, economic violence, and social violence. The inclusion of spiritual violence is now under debate and the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (NAEOWM) is preparing a new project for amending this law in line with the Istanbul Convention (11).

Rape is a crime in Romania, including rape within marriage (12). In addition, as of 1 February 2014 the Romanian penal code criminalised sexual assault, defining it as 'an act of a sexual nature other than rape with a person, perpetrated with constraint, or rendering it impossible for the person to defend or to express consent, or taking advantage of an incapacitated state of a person' (13). The new code sets out definitions for rape (14) and sexual harassment (15).

Romania has no specific law outlawing female genital mutilation (FGM) and general criminal law includes no provision for crimes committed outside Romania. In this regard NAEOWM has already submitted to the Ministry for Justice a proposal for amending the penal code in order to introduce the concept, and the sanctioning of, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and so called 'honour' crimes. This proposal is under debate among governmental bodies. However, Romania has granted asylum in a number of cases based on fear of FGM (16).

Good practices show the way

Romania has made dramatic progress in expanding provision of shelters for those experiencing domestic violence, although many shelters are not run for women only.

Nine shelters are run by women's non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with a gender-specific approach, five shelters are run by faith-based organisations, 49 shelters are run by the state and 10 shelters are run by other NGOs (17).

What is being done to eliminate violence against women in Romania?

In 2012, the Romanian government published its national strategy for preventing and combating domestic violence (2013—2017) ⁽¹⁸⁾. As of February 2014, NAEOWM is the new responsible governmental body for developing and implementing public policies in the field of preventing and combating violence in the family.

During the period 2010 to 2012, Romania nearly doubled its number of prosecutions for human trafficking. Together with France, Romania accounted for around half of all prosecutions for human trafficking in the EU during that period ⁽¹⁹⁾.

Romania signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) on 27 June 2014 and ratified it on 23 May 2016 ⁽²⁰⁾. The Istanbul Convention is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of human rights.

How are women and girls protected?

In Romania, protection orders for survivors of domestic violence can be issued within 72 hours by the Court of Law ⁽²¹⁾.

For the first time, the government will finance programmes of national interest (PIN) in the field of violence, which will be available starting from the beginning of 2017 until 2019. The first PIN is targeted towards creating 42 information centres and 16 emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence, as well as training and awareness campaigns. The second PIN is targeted towards supporting 42 rehabilitation centres for perpetrators and also includes training and awareness campaigns.

What help is available in Romania?

The five sexual assault services in Romania are all run by NGOs and are part of the Breaking the Silence on Sexual Violence network. These services provide information, psychological counselling and legal assistance ⁽²²⁾.

For those experiencing domestic violence, Romania has 73 shelters with 828 beds ⁽²³⁾.

Romania has a national helpline for victims of family violence that is free of charge (0800 500 333) and available 24/7, which provides advice and referral ⁽²⁴⁾. (Women seeking crisis services should call the police.)



Numerous regional helplines are available:

Bucharest: 021 311 46 36 or 021 25 25 117

Iasi: 023 225 29 20

Targu Mures: 026 521 16 99

Sibiu: 075 389 35 31

Baia Mare: 0262 25 07 70

Timisoara: 0256 29 3183

National helpline: 0800 500 333



Endnotes

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- (¹³) Article 219.
- (¹⁴) Article 218.
- (¹⁵) Article 223. See: <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/regulatory-and-legal-framework/legal-definitions-in-the-eu/romania-sexual-harassment>.
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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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