

Free from Fear, Free from Pain: Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation in Europe



Wednesday 27th Jan 2016

NH Brussels Carrefour de l'Europe,
Brussels



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Overview

UNICEF estimates that more than 125 million girls and women around the world have undergone Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), a practice which consists in the partial or total removal of female genitalia for nonmedical purposes. FGM may lead to a variety of health consequences, including severe pain, shock, infection, complications during childbirth, as well as long-term gynecological problems. The practice of FGM is originally common in numerous African countries, as well as in parts of Asia and the Middle East. In these communities, FGM defines cultural identities and gender-roles, as the practice is thought to enhance the girl's femininity, often synonymous with docility and obedience.

During recent years, FGM has gained considerable attention in the EU, with the European Parliament estimating that 500,000 girls and women living in Europe have been subjected to FGM while 180,000 are at risk every year. As fighting gender-based violence and violence against children are core values of the EU, FGM has been recognised as a practice which violates human rights and attacks the dignity, equality and integrity of girls and women.

The Istanbul Convention, also known as the Council of Europe Convention, appears as the first European Treaty specifically devoted to specifically addressing violence against women, including female genital mutilation. Set in 2014, the Istanbul Convention obliges States Parties to accelerate preventive measures to protect and support FGM affected women and girls, and these obligations comprise areas such as health, education, social service, immigration and child protection in order to identify, protect and help the victims of FGM. Providing good quality services and multidisciplinary cooperation based on sound knowledge of FGM, as well as the importance of engaging stakeholders, health professionals and members of civil society is essential in order to successfully eradicate the phenomenon.

This timely symposium provides an invaluable opportunity to gain an understanding of the current EU legal framework and what more needs to be done to eradicate FGM. The symposium will examine how a multi-sector approach can be strengthened, and explore issues around prevention, the importance of specialist services and the greater role of health and education providers in ensuring better awareness and early intervention.

“ FGM is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women. It reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes, and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women. The practice violates a person's rights to health, security and physical integrity, the right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and the right to life when the procedure results in death.”

- World Health Organisation
2015

Venue and Accommodation

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre
Avenue du Boulevard 17
1210 Brussels
Belgium



Why Attend?

- ✓ Understand the current policy and legal framework for eradicating all forms of female genital mutilation in Europe
- ✓ Explore ways to fight FGM through better education and awareness raising campaigns
- ✓ Discuss strategies to improve the support chain of FGM victims through specialised services and multi-sector cooperation
- ✓ Examine ways to increase capacity building across sectors to fight FGM

Who Should Attend?

- Police
- Public Protection Units
- Adult's and Children's Social Care Services
- FGM Liaison Officers
- Child Protection Units
- Community Safety and Outreach Teams
- Crisis Response Teams
- Family Liaison Teams
- Victim Support Teams
- School Nurses and Health Visitors
- Domestic Violence Teams and IDVAs
- Directors of Children's Services
- Families Services Officers
- Schools and Children's Trusts
- Counselling Services
- Health Service Professionals
- General Practitioners
- Child and Educational Psychologists
- Family Planning Specialists
- Midwives and Health Visitors
- Social Workers and Social Services Officers
- Local, Regional and National Health Services
- Health Treatment/Advisory Services
- Community Cohesion and Development Organisations
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- BME and Refugee Support Services
- Refuges, Housing Services and Advice Teams
- Local Authority Officers
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- Criminal Justice Boards
- Legal Professionals
- Judges and Magistrates
- Faith Groups
- Equality and Diversity Practitioners
- Third Sector Practitioners
- Academics and Researchers

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Programme

- 09:15** Registration and Morning Refreshments
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- 10:00** Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks
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- 10:10** **The European Policy and Legislative Framework to Combat Female Genital Mutilation**
- European Efforts to combat Female Genital Mutilation: Effectiveness, Current Challenges and Future Ambitions of the Istanbul Convention
 - Understanding the Legal Procedure on the Prosecution of the Acts of Female Genital Mutilation in Europe
 - Current Tools to Harmonise the Systematic Data Collection on FGM across- Europe
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- 10:40** **First Round of Discussions**
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- 11:10** Morning Coffee Break
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- 11:30** **Combating FGM through a Better Informed and Educated Society**
- Analysing the Different Cultural and Religious Causes of FGM
 - The Role of Men on the Eradication of FGM
 - Supporting Young Individuals in Accessing Information, Advice and Protection in School Settings
 - The Role of Education in Changing Mind-Sets on Gender-Roles and Stereotypes
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- 12:00** **Second Round of Discussions**
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- 12:30** Networking Lunch
-
- 13:30** **Providing Accessible and Appropriate Support Services for Victims in Europe**
- Addressing FGM in host communities: Increasing Capacity Building and Information for Healthcare Professionals
 - Preventing the Practice of FGM and Identifying Victims: Raising Awareness Among Social Workers and Teachers
 - The Role of NGO's and Civil Society in Promoting Raising-Awareness • • Campaigns on FGM realities
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- 14:00** **Third Round of Discussions**
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- 14:30** Afternoon Coffee Break
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- 14:50** **Addressing Persisting Challenges and Sharing Best Practice**
- Female Genital Mutilation: A Case for Asylum in Europe - Towards Greater Security and more Dedicated Responses
 - Assisting Victims or Witnesses in Reporting to National Authorities and Improving Conviction Rates
 - Strengthening the Child Protection System: Example of Good Practice at National Level
 - Promoting Multilevel Partnerships: Strengthening Cooperation with Countries where FGM is Prevalent
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- 15:20** **Fourth Round of Discussions**
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- 15:50** Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
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- 16:00** Networking Reception
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- 16:30** Close

** Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice **

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or email info@publicpolicyexchange.co.uk

Event Details

- Date:** Wednesday 27th January 2016
Time: 10:00am – 4:30pm
Venue: NH Brussels Carrefour de l'Europe, Brussels



Speakers Include:

- ✓ **Assita Kanko**, Author of "Because you are a girl: story of a circumcised life", Municipal Councillor in Ixelles, Brussels

Forthcoming Events

- ✓ Smart Cities: Supporting an Innovative and Sustainable Development of Urban Areas
27th October 2015
- ✓ Addressing Europe's Drug Problem: Combating Drug Trafficking and Substance Misuse
28th October 2015
- ✓ Delivering on EU Food Safety: Promoting a Safe and Sustainable Agri-Food Chain
17th November 2015
- ✓ Tackling Youth Unemployment in Europe: Improving Outcomes for the Young Generation
25th November 2015
- ✓ 6th Annual International Symposium on Preventing Human Trafficking: Strengthening Cooperation, Developing a Multilevel Approach
1st December 2015
- ✓ Bridging the Digital Divide: Ensuring High-Speed and Quality Internet in Europe Beyond 2020
19th January 2016
- ✓ Unlocking the Potential of Mobile Health in Europe: Removing Barriers to the Empowerment of Citizens
20th January 2016
- ✓ Cultural and Creative Industries in Europe: Promoting Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth
21st January 2016