

COVID-19 and the Shadow Pandemic of Violence against Women

The European Commission will organize a webinar to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the increase in violence against women and EU actions against it. on Thursday, 17 December 2020 from 14:00-16:00 via Zoom. The webinar will also be shared live on the EU Infopoint Facebook page.

During the webinar, Carla Pambianco, Legal Officer in the Gender Equality Unit of DG Justice from the European Commission, will present EU actions and policy recommendations to address the impact of COVID-19 on violence against women. Kaca Djurickovic, Gender Programme Manager from UNDP Montenegro, will present UNDP's joint efforts with EU to end violence and discrimination. Dr. Gökhan Yıldırımka, the Coordinator of Reproductive Health and Population Development Programmes of UNFPA will present their latest report on the global effects of COVID-19 on reproductive health services and violence against women.

As part of the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community, the EU is currently funding two grant projects with a total budget of 1 million Euro to address issues relating to domestic violence against women: "Together We Are Stronger" project implemented by KAYAD aims contribute to the elimination of domestic violence against women and children, while increasing the capacity of organisations and institutions that work on the issues of gender equality and domestic violence. "United Against Violence" project, implemented by LTB, mainly aims to establish a new women's shelter and to improve protection and support services for survivors of domestic violence.

Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights, and has no place in the European Union, or anywhere else in the world. However, since the outbreak of COVID-19, emerging data and reports from those on the front lines, have shown that all types of violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, has intensified. The scale of the problem remains alarming: one in three women in the European Union have experienced physical and/or sexual violence. Violence against women exists in every country, culture and community. The EU is committed to continue to work tirelessly with its partners to investigate and punish acts of violence, ensure support for victims, and at the same time to address the root causes and reinforce the legal framework.

Background

EU has presented a new Action Plan on gender equality and women and girl's empowerment and called on Member States to ratify the Istanbul Convention - the first legally binding instrument at the international level to combat violence against women and domestic violence. As stated in the Gender Equality Strategy, the European Commission will facilitate the development of a new framework for cooperation with online platforms to tackle online violence against women, propose a recommendation on the prevention of harmful practices, and launch an EU network on the prevention of gender-based violence and domestic violence. In partnership with the United Nations, the EU launched in 2017 the Spotlight Initiative with a €500 million contribution, a global, multi-year initiative focused on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. In the light of upsurge in domestic violence triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spotlight Initiative was swift to boost prevention and increase support for victims in 26 countries in six regions, as well as support for women's grassroots organizations providing essential services. In the past months, almost €18 million of Spotlight funds have been redirected to address violence against women and girls. During 2018 and 2019, the EU allocated more than €62 million in humanitarian aid for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence worldwide under its protection and health programming.

For more information

https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-based-violence/ending-gender-based-violence_en

https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/factsheet-eu-action-combat-violence-against-women_en

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