

List of Demands

# Stop Femicide!

Ending Violence Against  
Women\* in the European  
Union

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**Responsible for all content**



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**Note on our gender sensitive notation**

As an intersectional feminist umbrella organisation of and for migrant women\* DaMigra e.V. adds an asterisk to vocabulary that refers to the binary gender system. It emphasizes the construction and diversity of gender.

# Current situation

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime statistics, 137 women\* and girls\* are killed every day worldwide by a member of their own family or an ex-partner, simply because they are women\* and girls\*.<sup>1</sup> This accounts for about 50,000 victims per year.<sup>2</sup>

These numbers, which are similar to the death toll of the Syrian civil war, i.e. 40,000 deaths in the first 20 months of the war, are appalling and reflect upon a global problem. However, the number of unreported murders of women\* and girls worldwide remains significantly higher due to systematically weak government data collection which fails to identify, and document women\* and girls affected by gender - based violence and gender-specific murder.

Femicides, killing and murder of women\* and girls\* on the basis of their gender<sup>3</sup>, as also described in the Council of Europe's Convention for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the so-called Istanbul Convention, have many faces.

Women\* and girls are victims of various forms of gender - based violence: they lose their lives in connection with escape and seeking refuge, they die in connection with sex work, female genital mutilation, organised crime, drug and human trafficking, intimate (ex-)partner\* violence, through torture or through suicide as a result of psychological violence, as the victim of an "honour" killing, or because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, etc.

Violence against women is an issue that transcends borders, and is not a private matter. It is a universal problem, rooted in inherited gender roles and patriarchal power structures.

The sharp increase in extremist and racist movements in the recent years represents an additional global threat to the integrity of women\* and girls\*. Whether it be right-wing extremist, anti-feminist or religious fundamentalist movements, they are all fundamentally united by an anti-women\* and anti-girl\* attitude.

These very vocal present-day antifeminist and racist movements also have a huge negative impact on the visibility and security of the LGBTQI community.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Drugs and Crime (2019) "Global Study on Homicide: Gender-related killing of women and girls, Vienna", S. 10, Link:

[https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet\\_5.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet_5.pdf) (Status: 15.07.2020).

<sup>2</sup> This emerges from the report "Combating violence against women" published in November 2016 by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE): (Status: 02.11.2020) <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/2/286336.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council (2013) "Vienna Declaration on Femicide", Link: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ\\_Sessions/CCPCJ\\_22/\\_E-CN15-2013-NGO1/E-CN15-2013-NGO1\\_E.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_22/_E-CN15-2013-NGO1/E-CN15-2013-NGO1_E.pdf) (Status: 10.09.2020).

"Recognizing that femicide is the killing of women and girls because of their gender, which can take the form of, inter alia: (1) the murder of women as a result of intimate partner violence; (2) the torture and misogynist slaying of women (3) killing of women and girls in the name of "honour"; (5) targeted killing of women and girls in the context of armed conflict; (5) dowry-related killings of women; (6) killing of women and girls because of their sexual orientation and gender identity; (7) the killing of aboriginal and indigenous women and girls because of their gender; (8) female infanticide and gender-based sex selection foeticide; (9) genital mutilation related deaths; (10) accusations of witchcraft; and (11) other femicides connected with gangs, organized crime, drug dealers, human trafficking and the proliferation of small arms... "

# Challenges in the Prevention of Femicide

There are many social factors that make the fight against femicide difficult. The five most important are:

## **Prevalence of gender inequality between men\* and women\***

As long as patriarchal, sexist images of women\* as objects predominate our society, so long will women\* and girls suffer under the gender-specific forms of violence mentioned above.

## **Media language and everyday language**

Gender-specific violence against women\* and girls is trivialized and normalized in our daily language and in the media landscape. Cases are too often played down as "family drama", "honour killings", "separation killings" or "killings out of jealousy". This makes it difficult to identify femicides and to comprehensively combat these murders and acts of violence.

## **(Non-)application of the term and lack of national but also pan-European strategies**

There is no generally accepted definition of the term femicide. Accordingly, the censuses differ and ensure that the problem is not perceived in its entirety. Furthermore, no European country has an overall national strategy for combating femicides. There is a

patchwork of local, regional, and country-specific solutions. An overall strategy is also missing at the European level.

## **Lack of awareness for the dimension of the economic damage**

Femicide and gender-specific violence also have immense economic consequences. The Council of Europe estimated the economic damage resulting from domestic violence alone at €555 per inhabitant a year.<sup>4</sup>

## **Inadequate implementation of tools to combat all forms of violence against women\* and girls**

The core mandate of the "Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence", the so-called Istanbul Convention pursues, among other things, the goals of protecting affected women\* and girls from violence, contributing to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women\* and, through comprehensive political and other measures, creating the framework for ensuring protection and support for those affected as well as the prosecution of perpetrators\*. The implementation of this women\* and girls' rights instrument is an essential component in the fight against femicide.

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<sup>4</sup> Council of Europe (2016): Handbook for parliamentarians. Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), p. 16

<http://www.assembly.coe.int/LifeRay/EGA/WomenFFViolence/HandbookParliamentarians-EN.pdf> (Status: 12.11.2020)

# Demands

As women\* and girls' rights organizations from different EU countries, we demand the legal adoption of the following measures with regard to the implementation of the Istanbul Convention without exception in order to stop femicides within the European Union.

## **A. Women\* and girls' rights organizations must be incorporated in all levels of advocacy work, developing new frameworks and decision-making processes for an effective implementation of the Istanbul Convention!**

Women\* and girls' rights organizations offer women\* and girls who are effected by violence safe spaces and access to social support in the form of psychosocial support, legal assistance, and medical services. They best understand the specific needs of women\* and girls affected by violence.

- The EU must extend the fullest recognition, cooperation and financial assistance to women\* and girls' rights organizations in order to strengthen intervention and prevention strategies in the fight against femicide! (Art. 9)

## **B. There is an urgent need for governments to systematically collect, inform and raise awareness about femicides.**

A sustainable and effective fight against femicide is only possible if governments adopt an intersectional approach to the investigation of gender-related killings of women\* and girls. We also need institutionalized information-sharing on the different forms of violence against women\*.

- There is a need for a uniform, far-reaching definition of femicides and the explicit naming of different groups of victims.
- Governments must provide adequate human and

financial resources to combat all forms of violence against women\* and girls mentioned in the Istanbul Convention, including cyber violence! (Art. 8)

- Systematic and governmental data collection from all authorities and inter- and transdisciplinary research on motives for violence is needed to provide efficient protection and support measures for women\* and girls\* who are affected by violence! (Art. 11)
- We demand an end to the culturalization of femicides in the language use and media reporting. We demand the recognition of the murder of women\* and girls as femicide!

## **C. We demand diversity and gender-sensitive protective measures in all areas of society!**

The best way to reduce femicide is by reducing gender-based violence! This requires that all levels of society receive training to better identify, document and report cases of gender - based violence and to promote changes in social norms and attitudes harmful to women.

- We need intersectional awareness campaigns combatting gender-based violence and advocating for women\* and girls' rights! (Art. 13) The effects of these campaigns must be evaluated constantly.
- We need gender-responsive teaching in schools with diverse and gender-sensitive books and teachers\*! (Art.14)
- We need diverse, gender-sensitive, and multilingual personnel who review and decide on gender-based asylum claims and who accompany the procedures (e.g. police officers, translators, social workers, health personnel)! (Art. 15)

- We need diversity-sensitive treatment programs for every form of violence against women\* and girls! (Art.16)
- We need diversity and gender-sensitive language monitoring instruments in the media and state sanctions against statements that threaten and shame women\* and girls, including social media platforms! (Art.17)

#### **D. We demand comprehensive support measures for people seeking protection!**

Effective measures against femicides include meeting the immediate basic needs of the women\* and girls affected by violence so that they can escape their violent relationship or family. A comprehensive program of assistance services requires multilingualism and audio-visual resources for barrier-free communication.

- We demand discrimination-free and barrier-free access to support structures and shelters for women\* and girls! Counseling centers (also in rural areas), shelters and law enforcement agencies are included! (Art. 18)
- We demand diversity-sensitive and multilingual specialized help services, especially psychological therapy for those seeking protection! (Art.22)
- Measures are needed that are adapted to the distinct health needs of women\* and girls\*, with special attention to the treatment and support of mental health. (Art. 22)
- We demand non-discriminatory access to shelters for women\* and girls'. (Art. 23)
- There is an urgent need for the adoption of legislative measures to provide adequate shelter, treatment, support, and protection for all women\* and girls who are victims of violence with special needs (e.g. physically or mentally disabled and elderly women). (Art. 23)
- We demand the establishment of a multilingual 24/7 helpline to access to information on gender-specific forms of violence! (Art. 24)
- Children and young people who are victims of violence must be able to be heard in the judicial proceedings that affect them to ensure their safety and that of their mothers. (Art. 26)
- Special protective measures are required in litigation. In particular, a risk assessment is needed in the context of contact and custody rights. It must be legally recognized that this must not harm either the children or the victims. Custody and visitation rights for children should be adapted to the specific situation of the victim and help to prevent relapses and femicides. (Art. 31)
- Many children are orphaned as a result of the crime against their mothers. The loss of their mother figure, especially when it is caused by another reference figure, has catastrophic consequences. In this sense, it is crucial to ensure a continuous, structured, and specialized support and accompaniment of children who are victims of femicide and especially orphaned children.
- In order to prevent femicides, those affected by violence or dangerously threatened should have the possibility to change their name and social security number.
- Equality and secure participation of women\* in the labor market must be ensured. Economic independence is a decisive factor in combating femicide\* and violence against women\*. (Art. 18)
- We demand appropriate end effective measures to eliminate all forms of female genital mutilation (FGM) among girls and women\*, and delegate specifically sensitized doctors\* and counseling centers for those affected! (Art. 38)
- All public institutions and non-governmental organizations working with women and girls\* who are victims of gender-based violence must carefully select and supervise the members of

their teams, giving preference to those who are more aware of these issues. These teams must receive appropriate training in the prevention and detection of violence, gender equality, the rights and needs of victims and the prevention of secondary victimization. (Art. 5 and Art. 15)

### **E. It is crucial that all women\* and girls have access to support measures!**

Women\* and girls with refugee- and/or migration background are affected by intersectional discrimination, such as racism and heterosexist discrimination. They also require a unique perspective with a focus on discrimination based on the residence permit they hold.

- We demand the non-discriminatory implementation of the Istanbul Convention – regardless of biological sex, gender identity, race, skin color, language, religion, political or other opinion, ethnic or social background, membership in a national minority, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, health status, disability, marital status, migrant or refugee status or any other status of the women\* and girls affected by violence – to be guaranteed! (Art. 4)
- A from marriage independent right of residence for women\* and girls with migration and flight experience is needed, so that no woman\* is illegalized and all women\* and girls are considered by the measures! (Art. 59)
- We demand that the signatory states to the Istanbul Convention adopt all necessary measures to ensure that women\* and girls affected by genital mutilation, rape, forced marriages and other forms of gender-based violence can actually exercise their right to asylum! (Art. 60)
- Urgent measures are needed to protect women\* and girls from obstetric violence. There is an urgent need to consider obstetric violence as gender-based violence. Unnecessary obstetric

procedures without consent must be denounced. (Art. 5)

- We demand an immediate end to deportations of women\* and girls to war and crisis zones where they cannot exercise their human rights! (Art. 60)
- We demand an end of discriminatory, harassing, inhumane and racist tests for LGBTQI refugees and we demand a fair and efficient asylum process! We demand an immediate end to deportations of LGBTQI refugees to all countries where they cannot exercise their human rights! (Art. 60)
- We call for coercive measures to remove offenders from the home once the crime is known. The revictimization of affected women\* and children must not be accepted, in order to primarily protect the rights of the suspected criminal. (Art. 52)
- We call for a sufficient number of emergency centers for victims of sexual violence, where they can receive trauma support and counseling, where evidence (forensic) and witness statements are collected, and where they can stay for a few days to recover. (Art. 25)
- We call for clear criteria for sexual crimes of violence, explicitly anchored in the law. The presence or absence of consensual acts must be considered in the context of the surrounding circumstances. Consensus must be given voluntarily, through the free will of the person. (Art. 36)

### **F. It is urgently necessary that measures are taken and checked in cooperation!**

- We demand the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the European Union. It should demand implementation in the member states and sanction (non-)implementation.
- Uniform, common guidelines are needed that



oblige the EU states to actively combat and prevent the use of femicides.

- We call for a sustainable financing and intersectional orientation of the data collection on the European level. The activities already started by the European Observatory on Femicide (EOF) must be taken into account.
- Interlocking policies and cooperation between all actors such as government agencies, national, regional and local parliaments and authorities, national human rights institutions and civil society organizations are needed to ensure the comprehensive protection of victims. (Art. 7)
- A regular review of the impact of measures at EU level is needed.

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