# Resolution zero tolerance for female genital mutilation (FGM)

2017/2936(RSP) - 07/02/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality on zero tolerance for female genital mutilation (FGM).

Members pointed out that FGM poses a problem in the European Union, as well as being traditionally practised in certain parts of the African continent the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, and has severe consequences for the women and girls affected. UNICEF's 2016 statistical report states that a minimum of 200 million girls and women worldwide has undergone FGM, but the exact figure remains unknown.

Parliament called on the Commission and Member States to **mainstream the prevention of FGM into all sectors,** especially health including sexual and reproductive health, social work, asylum, education, law enforcement, justice, child protection, and media and communication. Noting a drop by some 30% in the prevalence rates of FGM as a result of decisive actions and awareness-raising, it encouraged all actors to continue their efforts in order to preserve the momentum and called on international organisations and states to **create links** between different regions, stakeholders and sectors in order to actively work together to achieve the abandonment of this practice.

The resolution also called on the Commission and Member States to:

- guarantee strong preventive action in refugee camps;
- include prevention of FGM within integration procedures and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and to provide relevant information through the EU Asylum Agency;
- respond to the calls by civil society for funding to be flexible enough that grassroots organisations which carry out their work in the community can apply for funding;
- keep data on the prevalence of FGM and its types, and to involve academia in the process of data collection;
- assist practicing countries in setting up networks and integrated strategies for the prevention of FGM, including the training of social workers, medical personnel, community leaders, and police and justice officers;
- include the issue of FGM and other practices harmful to women and girls in its human rights dialogues and diplomatic outreaches. In this respect, the **EEAS was asked to step up cooperation with third countries** to encourage them to adopt national laws banning FGM and to support law enforcement authorities in ensuring implementation.

With regard to **enforcement,** whilst remarking that criminal law in all Member States protects girls and women from FGM either explicitly or implicitly, Members were extremely concerned about its apparent **ineffectiveness**, having witnessed only a handful of legal cases in the EU. Enforcement and prosecution being a challenge in all Member States and countries of origin, Parliament invited the Commission to **facilitate targeted training for relevant actors** on detection, investigation and prosecution of FGM, calling on Member States to exercise more vigilance on these issues.

Parliament welcomed the work of the End FGM European Network and its members, including through the Change Plus project, in training representatives of local communities to promote not only legislative change but also behaviour change in their communities.

Lastly, Members called on the EU and those Member States which have not yet ratified the **Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention** on preventing and combating violence against women to do so without delay, and recalled that under Article 38 of the Istanbul Convention, Member States have an obligation to criminalise FGM, as well as incitement, coercion or procurement of a girl to undergo it.