MYTH-BUSTING FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

February 2023

#EndFGM

FGM happens in a context of traditional norms – including in Europe. Justifications provided for this practice range from abiding by tradition, to the preservation of ‘virginity’, social pressure, alleged reasons of hygiene, the control of women’s sexuality and as a pre-requisite for marriage.

However, NONE of these stated reasons make it acceptable. FGM is a heinous form of violence against women and girls. It intentionally alters or injures the female external genitalia for non-medical reasons, and is performed against the will of the woman or girl. It takes away control over their bodies and is linked to traditions and customs based on family history, country and/or ethnicity of origin.

Is FGM a religious practice?

NO

There are no religions which make FGM a compulsory practice. Practising a certain religion DOES NOT indicate that someone practises FGM. There are no religions which make FGM a compulsory practice. Practising a certain religion DOES NOT indicate that someone practises FGM.

Is FGM a problem in Europe?

YES

Many believe that FGM only happens outside our borders, but it is a worldwide issue, which exists in Europe too. It is estimated that 190,000 girls and women are at risk of undergoing the harmful practice in 17 European countries alone and that over 600,000 women in Europe are living with the consequences of FGM.

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