

# European Network of Migrant Women



## KEEPING GIRLS SAFE

### Child Safeguarding Policy



EUROPEAN NETWORK  
OF MIGRANT WOMEN



# KEEPING GIRLS SAFE

## Policy Statement

As an organisation that works primarily with girls and young women among youth, our policy is focused on the well-being, safeguarding and protecting Girls. In the frames of this policy by Girls we mean adolescent females aged 13-18 years.

As a Network we are committed to safeguarding all Girls, irrespective of their cultural, ethnic/national, legal, a/religious, ability, health, economic, family or sexuality status.

Our Child Safeguarding policy extends to all our staff, volunteers, internal structures of the Network (e.g. board, working groups, committees) who come in contact and/or work with Girls of the aforementioned age range in the framework of the activities implemented by the Network. We are also committed to supporting our partners in adopting and implementing this Policy.

This Policy is underpinned by the following principles:



'Do No Harm'  
Best Interest of the Child  
Girl-Centred Approach  
Leave No Girl Behind



This Policy has been developed in accordance with the international and European standards on the Rights of the Child, the Rights of Women and Girls, the Values and Feminist Principles the European Network of Migrant Women upholds and the Mission it implements.

# Standards

## GLOBAL

All children have equal rights to protection from all forms of violence as declared in Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises fundamental human rights, the dignity, worth and equal rights of people at any age.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) prohibits all forms of discrimination against women on the basis of sex.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action recognises Girls as a particularly vulnerable to discrimination and violence group, and states that "All barriers must be eliminated to enable girls without exception to develop their full potential and skills."

## EUROPEAN

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU guarantees the protection of the rights of the child in all EU states, whereas the 10 Principles for Integrated Child Protection Systems, adopted by the European Union in 2015, states that "every child is recognised, respected and protected as a rights holder, with non-negotiable rights to protection".

The European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights aims to protect the best interests of children. It provides a number of procedural measures to allow the children to exercise their rights.

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) includes females below 18 y.o. in the category 'woman' (Art 3 (f) ) thereby extending the scope of the Convention to all Girls in order 'to protect them from all forms of violence'.

## EUROPEAN NETWORK OF MIGRANT WOMEN

As a feminist and secular platform, not affiliated with any political group, striving to protect, reinforce and promote the rights and freedoms of migrant women and girls, our Network is collectively committed to acting in the best interest of Girls . While being committed to safeguarding the rights of all children and all girls, in line with our Vision and Mission, in all our work with Girls we give particular attention to the situation, the needs and concerns of migrant, refugee and ethnic minority Girls.

# Principles

## DO NO HARM

The basis of 'Do No Harm' principle is to ensure that in all our interventions with Girls careful consideration is given so no harm is done intentionally or unintentionally. This includes consideration of the context and background of individual Girls, as well as the potential impact of interventions and activities and educational materials used in such interventions.

## BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

'Best Interest of the Child' is the primary consideration that should inform all actions and programmes in which Girls are involved or may be impacted by. This includes, first of all, the fundamental human rights, such as the rights to life, dignity, health and education. Additionally, this consideration should extend to the long-term interests of Girls as a social group disproportionately affected by discrimination. Finally, the principle of Best Interest of the Child, in particular of a Girl-Child, is primordial and cannot be nullified or impaired by the interests of religious, cultural, political or other groups.

## GIRL- CENTRED APPROACH

While all children require protection from violence and discrimination, Girls suffer disproportionate and specific forms of violence, based on sex. This includes male sexual violence, FGM, forced marriage, 'honor-crimes', discrimination in education and inheritance, the burden of family care. To address and remedy these violations it is paramount to adopt a Girl-Centred approach. This approach includes sex disaggregated data and methodology, female sensitive interventions, and feminist frameworks on patriarchal violence that Girls may be subjected to.

## LEAVE NO GIRL BEHIND

Girl-Children are not a homogenous group and their individual circumstances depend on many factors, including socio-economic, legal, family, ethnicity, culture or ability, to name just a few. Girls of migrant background, in particular, may suffer from specific and exacerbated forms of discrimination. It is paramount to acknowledge such differences and integrate a differentiated, case-to-case, approach in all actions and programmes with girls in order to ensure that no Girl is left behind and all Girls, regardless of their personal circumstances, provided an opportunity to benefit from such programmes.

# Implementation

## MAINSTREAMING

Our safeguarding approach and principles are mainstreamed in all stages of our programmes, activities, interventions and partner cooperation, thus ensuring that these are designed and delivered in a manner that safeguards the interests and rights of Girls. This is done through Girl-Child impact assessments, through informing our members and associates on this Policy and through coordinated engagement with Young Women in the Network.

## COORDINATION

In designing our programmes and actions for Girls, as well as those that may impact them, we take a coordinated approach by actively engaging the Girls and Young Women in the Network. In particular, the Radical Girlss group of ENOMW has a leading role to play in this process as the ENOMW members working with/for the Girls covered by this Policy and directly representing their interests. The Radical Girlss members are committed to contributing to mainstreaming, implementation, monitoring and reviewing the Policy.

## REPORTING

In case of violation of or questions regarding this Policy the Network and the Radical Girlss group have a procedural mechanism in place ensuring that the case or a question is dealt with, with due diligence and in compliance with the Policy. The Convenors of the Radical Girlss Group and the Young Women's Officer in the Network are the primary points of reference in such cases, followed by the Network's Board if necessary.

## REVIEWING

This Policy is reviewed every two years, by the Board, the Radical Girlss Group and the Young Women's Officer(s) of the Network. The next review date is June 2021 unless it is deemed appropriate to implement such a review earlier.