



23 November 2021 – The release of the new violence against women estimates in March 2021 confirmed what we already knew: violence against women and girls in the world, including our Region, remains devastatingly pervasive.

Across their lifetime, 1 in 3 women, around 736 million, are subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner – a number that has remained largely unchanged over the past decade. The Eastern Mediterranean Region has the third highest prevalence worldwide (31%)

This violence starts early: 1 in 4 young women (aged 15–24 years) who have been in a relationship will have already experienced violence by an intimate partner by the time they reach their mid-twenties.

This is why there is an urgent need to keep gender-based violence high on the international agenda, as one of the biggest threats to health, well-being, peace and stability.

This year – as every year – WHO is taking part in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, an annual international campaign that begins on 25 November – International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. This campaign offers an important platform for individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

The global theme of this year’s campaign is “Orange the World: End violence against women now!”. The campaign urges all actors to look at gender-based violence in its full complexity, how it interlinks with other factors such as humanitarian and health emergencies, like COVID-19, and calls on everyone to make a stand, take action and be an agent for change.

To mark this year’s 16 days of activism, the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean is running a 16-day social media marathon. Every day key messages, data, multimedia contents, useful tools and material will be shared through our social media platforms and WHO calls on everyone to engage.

Regional 2023 Vision “Health for All by All” is deeply committed to addressing violence against women as one of the social determinants of health, in order to achieve an equitable people-centred health system. In the Region, WHO has trained more than 5000 health providers on the health system response to gender-based violence and provides support to countries in developing national health protocols, assessing health facilities and providing them with what is needed to meet the minimum standards for survivors’ care.

We have achieved a lot but much more is needed. Our collective efforts can address this challenge, contribute to real change and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on health, gender and equity.

Join us in the 16 days of activism campaign. End violence against women now!”

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[Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018](#)

[Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018: WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region](#)

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