

REMEMBER

SGBV is NOT your fault

Worldwide many women, men, girls and boys experience physical or sexual abuse or other forms of SGBV in their lifetime. Anyone can become a victim of sexual and gender-based violence.

You are NOT alone. Help is available

There are people who can help you, such as doctors, police officers, and social workers. If you have or are experiencing SGBV, tell someone you trust or contact the organizations listed above.

HELP others stay safe as well

If someone who has experienced SGBV reaches out to you, listen to them and remind them that SGBV is not their fault and that they are not alone. Tell them that help is available and encourage them to seek assistance. If they agree you can contact the organizations listed above together.

Share the leaflet and the video so that it reaches more people!

<https://youtu.be/KsIE6Q7hXe8>



ABOUT US

The PROTECT project aims to strengthen national support services for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. PROTECT also aims to make these services available to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, be they children or adults and including people identifying as LGBTI.

<https://eea.iom.int/PROTECT-project>



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NOTE: FOR MORE AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Information on

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



THIS LEAFLET is designed for someone who has migrated to Malta from another country. You may have come here seeking protection, to study, or to be reunited with family members.

In Malta, EVERY child has the same rights, regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion or where they come from.

You have the RIGHT to enjoy a life free of any form of violence. If someone – anyone – hurts or threatens to hurt you or someone you know, remember that you have a right to receive help and protection.

You are not alone. HELP is available.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV)

What is SGBV?

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV) is any act which is perpetrated without a person's consent, based on gender norms and unequal power relations. It includes acts that may cause physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or economic harm or suffering. Perpetrators often use force, coercion, deception or manipulation. Most often SGBV is not recognised or reported.



What are the main types of SGBV?

SGBV may be physical or emotional and, among others, it can take the form of:

- **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** – takes place within the home or family between intimate partners or between other family members.
- **INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE** – occurs between couples (married, cohabiting, boyfriend/girlfriend or other close relationships) including physical aggression, sexual coercion, emotional abuse and controlling behaviours.
- **EMOTIONAL ABUSE** – causes emotional harm including threats of physical or sexual violence, intimidation, humiliation, forced isolation, stalking, verbal harassment, unwanted attention, remarks, gestures or written words of a sexual and/or threatening nature.
- **PHYSICAL ASSAULT** – violence including hitting, slapping, choking, cutting, shoving, burning, shooting or any other act that results in pain, discomfort or injury.
- **SEXUAL ABUSE** – actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.



- **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT** – a person intentionally sexually touches another person without that person's consent, or physically forces a person to engage in a sexual act against their will.
- **SEXUAL ASSAULT** – an act in which a person physically forces a person to engage in a sexual act against their will.
- **HATE CRIME** – prejudice-motivated crime which occurs when a perpetrator targets a person because of his/her membership of a certain social group or race such as violence against persons identifying as LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people).

What other types of SGBV exist?

There are many other types of SGBV including:

- CHILD/EARLY MARRIAGE** – when one or both people are younger than 18 years of age.
- FORCED MARRIAGE** – when one or both people have not personally expressed their full and free consent to the marriage.
- FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/ CUTTING** – partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
- HONOUR CRIME** – acts of violence, usually murder, committed by male family members against female family members who are perceived to have brought dishonor upon the family.
- TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS** – trade of humans that involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act and/or other forms of exploitation.

What is sexual consent?

Sexual consent is to agree to engage in sexual activity. Sexual activity without consent is considered sexual violence. Informed sexual consent is always voluntarily given. Consent cannot be given by a person who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs or by someone else on your behalf. There are cases when consent might not be possible due to physical or intellectual disabilities. Remember: you can always change your mind, even if you previously agreed to a sexual activity.

What is the difference between sex, gender and gender identity?

A person's **SEX** is the biological characteristics that are assigned when they were born, while **GENDER** is how society believes that people should behave (how they should dress and present themselves, what their roles and responsibilities should be, etc.) according to their biological sex.

A person's **GENDER IDENTITY** refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender. This may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.

To whom can SGBV happen?

SGBV can happen to **ANYONE** and it is **NEVER** the victim's fault. Women and men, girls and boys, adults and children, including people identifying as LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) can all become victims of SGBV. SGBV is **NEVER** justifiable.

Who can perpetrate SGBV?

ANYONE can perpetrate acts of SGBV. The perpetrator can be a complete stranger or someone you know, such as a family member, a friend or a romantic partner.

Where can SGBV happen?

SGBV can happen **ANYWHERE**: in your home country, during your journey to another country, and in the country you are currently living in. It can happen in private homes and in public places, such as at school and in reception centres.

Is SGBV my fault?

SGBV is **NEVER** the victim's fault. Gender norms and unequal power relations are the root causes of SGBV. The perpetrator is the only person to blame.

What if I did not fight back?

It is very common not to fight back during an assault because you may panic and feel hopeless or trapped and you don't know what to do to get out of the situation. This does not mean that you consented to the violence.

What are the consequences of SGBV?

SGBV can have both physical and emotional consequences. Physically, among other consequences, SGBV can cause bodily harm, pain, infections and unwanted pregnancy. Emotional consequences of SGBV can include trauma, nightmares, insomnia, headaches, and many different feelings such as anger, shame, sadness, guilt, or fear. Malta has professional and confidential services to support victims. You are **NOT** alone.

Even if you are away from home and you feel that you are by yourself, you are not alone and help is available.

REMEMBER

ANYONE can become a victim of SGBV

SGBV is **NEVER** the victim's fault

SGBV is always **UNACCEPTABLE**

You can ask for **HELP**



AVAILABLE SERVICES

What should I do if I or someone

I know experience or witness SGBV?

If you experience, witness, or suspect SGBV you can tell a family member, a relative or another adult you trust.

There are also other people who can help you in a confidential way, such as teachers, social workers, police officers and doctors.

If you have already been in contact with an organization supporting migrants and refugees, do not hesitate to ask for their assistance.

What can I do if I am in immediate danger and/or I need immediate assistance?

CALL THE TELEPHONE NUMBER 112
to contact emergency services of the
MALTA POLICE FORCE and FIRST AID.

The call and the services are free of charge and available
24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.

If you live in one of the open centres run by the

AGENCY FOR THE WELFARE OF ASYLUM SEEKERS (AWAS),

you can always ask your guardian or someone
from the staff to help you.

In Malta, any professional must contact the Police if any harm is done to a child.

What other services are available?

You can call the **NATIONAL SUPPORT LINE:**
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This is a 24-hour helpline which is free, anonymous and confidential.
Languages spoken are Maltese and English; you can ask for an interpreter.

You can visit **KELLIMNI.COM** -

an online support service (in English and Maltese) for teenagers and young adults
which is free, anonymous and confidential.

You can speak on a one-to-one live chat, send an e-mail through the website
or download the App.

You can contact **GBVSO/MIOLET SUPPORT ONLINE**

on www.vso.org.mt – confidential and free e-mail and chat service for any victim
of sexual and gender-based violence in several languages.

*You can ask for help even if you do not speak
Maltese or English or simply feel more comfortable
communicating in your own language.*

*Hospitals, police, social workers, reception centres
and other service providers may be able to arrange
for interpreters who can support you in getting the
help you need.*