



**DEMOCRACY**  
**TREE**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

# **Confronting the Epidemic: Understanding and Combating Violence Against Women**





## DEMOCRACY TREE

In a democratic society where human rights are respected, all individuals are supposed to be free from all kinds of violence and oppression.

However, violence against women is still widespread across the globe, it resembles a global epidemic that transcends boundaries of geography, culture, and socioeconomic status. It is a pervasive violation of human rights that inflicts profound physical, psychological, and emotional harm on millions of women worldwide. Despite decades of advocacy and awareness efforts, this insidious issue persists, highlighting the urgent need for sustained action and collective commitment to eradicate violence against women.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Violence against women is a multifaceted issue that spans a wide range of behaviors. While physical violence, such as domestic abuse, sexual assault, and femicide, garners significant attention due to its visible and often devastating impact, it is merely one facet of this pervasive problem. Other forms of violence against women include emotional abuse, economic coercion, reproductive coercion, and psychological manipulation. These forms of violence may not leave visible scars like physical abuse, but they can inflict deep and lasting wounds on survivors, affecting their mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

Moreover, the impact of violence against women extends far beyond the immediate physical and psychological harm inflicted on individual victims. It undermines women's ability to fully participate in society, perpetuating cycles of poverty, inequality, and marginalization.



**DEMOCRACY**  
**TREE**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Societal attitudes and systemic inequalities exacerbate the prevalence of violence against women, perpetuating cycles of abuse and discrimination. Thus, addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach that tackles not only the overt manifestations of violence but also the underlying cultural, social, and economic factors that enable and perpetuate it.

The root causes of violence against women are complex and multifaceted, rooted in deep-seated inequalities, power imbalances, and cultural norms that subordinate women to men. Furthermore, prevailing attitudes of misogyny, victim-blaming, and impunity for perpetrators perpetuate a culture of silence and complicity, hindering efforts to hold perpetrators accountable and support survivors.

In Europe, there are shocking statistics on the cases of violence against women – at least two women a week are killed in the EU by an intimate partner or family member (according to European Commission data). 1 in 3 women have suffered physical and/or sexual violence and 1 in 2 women have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15. 10% of women in the EU report having been victim of sexual violence. In addition to this data, it is important to emphasize that many cases of violence against women remain unreported due to various reasons.

Every year on 25 November, the EU marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women to renew its commitment to eradicate violence against women and girls in the EU and beyond, and call for action to stand in solidarity with victims and survivors.





**DEMOCRACY**  
**TREE**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

As global awareness of the pervasive issue of violence against women continues to grow, concerted efforts are being made across the spectrum, from grassroots initiatives to international policy frameworks. The ongoing battle against gender-based violence is fueled by a collective determination to create safer environments where women can live free from fear and oppression. Governments, NGOs, activists, and individuals alike are joining forces to implement multifaceted approaches, encompassing education, legal reform, social support systems, and cultural change. While the journey towards eradicating violence against women is undoubtedly arduous, the momentum generated by these diverse efforts offers hope for a future where every woman can live with dignity, equality, and security. Through sustained commitment and collaboration, societies can aspire to build a world where violence against women becomes an intolerable relic of the past, and where the inherent worth and rights of all individuals, regardless of gender, are fully recognized and respected.

**GIRLS JUST  
WANNA HAVE  
FUNDAMENTAL  
HUMAN RIGHTS**

