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# SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

IN A MIGRATION CONTEXT



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# SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

IN A MIGRATION CONTEXT

TRAINING TOOL FOR FIRST LINE RESPONDERS



[www.mondefemmes.org](http://www.mondefemmes.org)

This training tool was prepared in the framework of the PROTECT project - *Preventing sexual and gender-based violence against migrants and strengthening support to victims (2018-2020)*. PROTECT is funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union (2014-2020).

*Sexual and gender-based violence in a migration context*

Le Monde selon les femmes, Brussels, 2019

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Teaching tool for first line workers, who work with migrants and victims of SGBV.



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## ABOUT US



**IOM, the International Organization for Migration** is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. Established in 1951, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants. As part of its mission, IOM assists governments and civil society around the world, to develop and implement programmes, studies and information campaigns to combat SGBV against migrants.



**Le Monde selon les femmes** is a feminist NGO, dedicated to development cooperation, permanent education, and action research; it harnesses local knowledge systems to help build social movements. It strives to achieve a world in which the relations of dominance between men and women and between North and South are transformed into relationships that are founded on equality and solidarity. It acknowledges the interdependence of societies and mutual enrichment.

## THE PROTECT PROJECT

The PROTECT project, which is implemented in 12 Member States of the European Union (Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Malta, Poland, Spain and Slovenia), aims to:

- 1** Strengthen and adapt existing national support services for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) to coordinate better and include refugees and migrants;
- 2** Build capacity for professionals who work with and for refugees and migrants with the aim of identifying and addressing the needs of survivors of SGBV more effectively;
- 3** Empower and inform refugee and migrant communities about SGBV and its prevention through a regional awareness-raising campaign.

The project is implemented in Belgium in partnership with the NGO Le Monde selon les femmes. There are 7 other NGO partners involved in this project, Legebitra (Slovenia), Fundación EMET Arco Iris, Asociación Rumiñahui, Movimiento por la Paz (Spain), Arq Psychotrauma Expert Groep, Rutgers, and Pharos (Netherlands).





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# TO START

## GENERAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The aim of this tool is to provide information on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and on sexual violence in particular, and to build capacity of first line workers who are in contact with migrants and/or survivors of SGBV.

Participants to the training will familiarize with:

- The concepts of gender and violence (module 1)
- Migration and SGBV (module 2)
- The impact of sexual violence on health (module 3)
- How to provide assistance to survivors of SGBV (module 4)

Each module offers a **methodological fiche** for the trainer. These fiches provide information on how to deliver the training (timing, material needed, group exercises, additional material). The tool should be easy to use for all and is available online. For each module, further comprehensive documents and studies are suggested.

## APPROACH

Throughout the tool, a **gender lens** to the treatment of sexual violence is applied in order to develop strategic and empowerment responses for survivors, their families, the community liaisons and the professionals providing assistance. The idea is to combat impunity, while respecting the victim's rhythm, and whilst taking care of oneself. A gender lens helps provide **transformative answers, both on the individual and collective level**, to achieve an equal and more cohesive society.

Understanding SGBV means identifying the expression of such violence in different contexts, understanding the characteristics of domination, inequality, mechanisms of control and expected roles. It also implies a knowledge of the strategies of offenders and of the consequences of such violence on survivors and their relatives.

It means acknowledging that our society creates inequalities between men and women, and that the multiple forms of sexual violence are the result of this inequality. Finally, it means understanding that a combination of discriminations increases the risk of sexual violence. The approach is thus founded on a gender analysis and is intersectional (it overlaps with different aspects of discrimination).

SGBV continues to be **too commonplace, tolerated and unpunished**, in any context.



## OUTREACH

This tool can be downloaded and printed for free here:

- <https://www.mondefemmes.org/product-category/outils-pedagogiques/>
- <https://belgium.iom.int/protect>
- <https://eea.iom.int/PROTECT-project>

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The content of this manual and slides are correct and last updated as of December 2019.

As a trainer, you should endeavour to stay abreast of potential changes in policies, processes, data and contact information – and to update your training accordingly.

## STANDARD EQUIPMENT

- Laptop and projector
- Powerpoint of the training
- Audio speakers
- Name tags or sticky labels
- Flip chart and paper
- 5 Markers and 20 ball point pens
- Easy stick adhesive for walls and boards
- A black/white board
- A timer (phone)
- Small and big 'Post-it' (sticky) notes
- Attendance sheet
- Evaluation forms



## PUBLIC

This training is adapted for groups of +/- 20 general service providers or students in social work.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### REGARDING PARTICIPATION

In this training, every participant has the right to speak, to share experiences, to express opinions or to disagree. The first principle is active listening.

- Make sure to respect the others and to let them speak.
- Avoid negative feedback.
- Respect speaking time of everyone.
- Avoid interrupting someone who is speaking.
- Make sure the participants understand the confidentiality of the training.

### REGARDING THE TRAINING

Make sure that everyone participates – be it orally or through specific activities.

Therefore:

- Make sure everyone understands the exercises and make sure to re-centre the conversation when needed.
- Make sure to install a trusted environment so that everyone can freely participate and express him/herself.
- Don't force people to speak.
- Understand the different modules and the topics that will be tackled in order to be sufficiently prepared to give the training.

### QUALITIES AND APPROACH OF THE TRAINERS

The trainers should:

- Be welcoming and communicative.
- Be aware of their own values, beliefs, ideas in order not to influence the group.
- Accept judgements and values that differ from theirs.
- Be aware of the limits of the group.
- Be inclusive.
- Make sure that the most shy participants are able to participate and that the stronger participants do not control the training.
- Make sure to guide the group in their reflexions, instead of giving them the answers to the questions.
- Be confident enough to accept criticism and to be flexible.
- Respect the confidentiality of the participants.

# MODULE 0

## INTRODUCTION - ICEBREAKER

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To create the opportunity for participants to understand the context of the training and to get to know each other.

### TIMING

20 min

### MATERIAL NEEDED

- ✓ Standard equipment
- ✓ 1 big board with the words: identity - difference – role – injustice – other

### ACTIVITIES

#### Defining and discussing gender in a participative manner

##### Slides 3-6

- Open the activity by welcoming participants and by explaining who you are.
- If possible, ensure that all participants have a copy of the training tool, and that they have signed the attendance sheet.
- Present the context, the objectives, and the programme of today's training. Make clear that:
  - ✓ The trainer respects the expertise of the participants and that everyone is encouraged to share their experience and to be actively involved. The training provides an opportunity for peer learning.
  - ✓ Nobody knows the answers to all the questions.
  - ✓ The training might only cover partially the requests and concerns of participants.
  - ✓ The training is a safe space, where we treat each other with respect.
- Ask the public to write on a post-it: "for me gender means:...."
- Then, ask each participant to stand up and say who s/he is and where s/he works. Ask them to read their post-it out loud.
- Then, ask the person to put the post-it on the board, where they think it fits best.
- Put these answers in perspective with the definitions on the slides.



# MODULE 1

## THE CONCEPTS OF GENDER AND VIOLENCE

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To reflect upon and internalize how gender and power impact the relations between men and women.
- To understand how unequal power relations between women and men can result in violence (through the concepts of stereotypes and discrimination).
- To understand the concept of intersectionality which examines intersecting forms of discrimination.
- To strengthen knowledge regarding sexual violence.

### TIMING

1.5 h

### SPECIFIC MATERIAL NEEDED

- ✓ Standard equipment
- ✓ A few copies of Annex 1: “Gender squares”, cut in pieces.
- ✓ Big post-its

### ACTIVITIES

“Violence Squares” – Defining and discussing the concept of violence – 25 min

#### Slide 8

- Separate the group in 4. Provide each group with the “violence squares” and let them do the exercise for 15 minutes.
  - Ask a group to list the squares in cat. 1. Then ask the rest if they have other answers and to explain why. Do this for all 6 categories.
  - Question the group on their observations. How do they interpret the exercise?
- ✓ The exercise deconstructs the different types of violence and allows the group to identify the different types. It helps the participants to be conscious of violence and its banalisation in daily life: Violence is not a loss of control, it is taking control.

- Ask the group what they believe can/should be accepted. Do they think there is a global understanding of violence? Do they want to discuss possible different understandings of violence? What are these based on, and why?
- ✓ Conclusion: violence starts verbally and is very easily banalized. Before turning into physical violence. It is very important to identify it at an early stage and to discuss it openly with friends, family and colleagues.

### Making the link between **gender and violence** – 20 min

#### Slide 9

- Ask the public what they see here (gender inequality). Can they give examples of gender inequality, and what do they think lies at the basis of it?
- Gender is one part of other social categories and identities, and can be one of multiple reasons to be discriminated against.

#### Slides 10-11

Show the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1isIM0ytkE>

- ✓ 'Intersectionality' refers to the way that multiple forms of inequality can converge and compile. These can be linked to gender, but also to sexual identity, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, class, nationality, religion, ability, etc.

#### Slide 12

- Explain how gender inequality is interlinked with bias, discrimination and stereotypes.
- It is important to identify stereotypes to deconstruct them and to change attitudes.
- Ask the participants to share examples.

### Defining and discussing SGBV – 15 min

- Ask the public what they understand by “Sexual and Gender-Based Violence” and to share their thoughts with the group. Explain how this violence is a consequence of unequal power relations between men and women.

#### Slide 13

- Go over the definition of SGBV (p. 15).

## Slide 14

- Show the video on consent (cup of tea):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8>
- Provide the participants with the legal definition: “Consent is deemed to be absent when the act is imposed by means of violence, force or by a trick, or if the victim is suffering from a physical or mental disability.” (art. 375 of the Belgian penal Code)

## Slide 15-16

- Explain the different types of violence. Ask the public to put each type of violence in a section. Explain how some types of violence fit in different categories.
- Refer to IOM’s Institutional Framework for Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Crises for further information on SGBV.
- [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom\\_gbvic\\_framework.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_gbvic_framework.pdf)

## Defining and discussing Sexual Violence – 30 min

### Slide 17-18

- Define sexual violence

### Slide 19

- Go over the figures in Belgium and show the numbers regarding the perpetrator. Give the participant 5 minutes to write on a post it the elements that might hinder someone from filing a complaint (90% black number).
- Ask them to come and stick them on the board (cultural, lack of information, fear, loyalty, etc.). Ask 2 participants to read the post-its out loud per section.

### Slide 20

- Show the video on sexual violence against migrant workers.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jhKfyG1oU8>
- To conclude, ask them to add extra elements they thought of during the video, and that are particularly relevant for migrant women.





## WHAT IS GENDER ?

According to IOM, gender “refers to the socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to people based on their assigned sex. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women, men or other gender groups, but to the relationship between them. Although notions of gender are deeply rooted in every culture, they are also changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures” (IOM, 2015).

Gender influences reasons for migrating, who migrates and to where, how people migrate and the networks they use, opportunities and resources available at destinations, and relations with the country of origin. Risks, vulnerabilities and needs are also shaped in large part by one’s gender, and often vary drastically for different groups. The roles, expectations, relationships and power dynamics associated with being a man, woman, boy or girl, and whether one identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or intersex (LGBTI), significantly affect all aspects of the migration process, and can also be affected in new ways by migration.

Gender has 4 characteristics:

1. A social construct – Assigns the position of men and women in society
2. Asymmetrical – The assigned roles for women and men are not valued in the same way
3. Evolves in time, space, cultures,...
4. Institutionalized: not only within the family sphere, also society and political level.

## GENDER VS. SEX

Sex refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of males and females, such as reproductive organs, chromosomes, hormones, etc. Essentially, when we use the term sex, what we are really commenting on is “male” vs. “female”. Sometimes, a person's genetically assigned sex does not line up with their gender identity. These individuals might refer to themselves as transgender, non-binary, or gender-nonconforming.

Gender determines the roles, responsibilities, privileges, expectations and limitations of males and females in each culture. These perceptions and beliefs are influenced by social factors, such as history, tradition, religion and social norms. Gender applies to both males and females and is a neutral term, neither right nor wrong.

# SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV)

## WHO, WHAT, HOW, WHERE, WHY?

SGBV is a human rights violation and refers to any act perpetrated against a person's will based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. SGBV can be of a physical, psychological, social and economic nature. It includes intimate partner violence, sexual harassment and violence, harmful practices, sexual exploitation and trafficking of human beings. Men and women, girls and boys, of any sexual orientation or gender identity, may be the victim of such violence. SGBV can occur in any context and affects both men and women of all ages. **Sexual violence is part of the continuum of GBV and, moreover, is often transversal and present in other forms of GBV. In this tool we will use the broader term SGBV.**

SGBV can be both a reason for migrants to leave their countries of origin, and a reality along the migration route. Within the framework of IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix activities, along the Central Mediterranean route **36%** of adult and **32%** of child respondents reported to have witnessed someone traveling with them having been threatened with sexual violence during the journey (IOM, Flow monitoring surveys: the human trafficking and other exploitative practices indication survey, 2017).

Women and girls fleeing conflicts and traveling to or settling in Europe are at higher risk of suffering from violence on route ([www.fra.europa.eu](http://www.fra.europa.eu)). Women are overall more vulnerable to the violence inflicted by smugglers, authorities or isolated individuals, in their country of origin, transit countries, or the host country (for example, in reception and/or detention facilities). According to a report by UNHCR, UNFPA and WRC, single women traveling alone or with children, pregnant and lactating women, adolescent girls, UMC, early-married children — sometimes themselves with new-born babies — persons with disabilities, and elderly men and women are among those who are particularly at risk. LGBTI persons, who are routinely discriminated against, are also particularly vulnerable for SGBV (Initial Assessment Report: Protection Risks for Women and Girls in the European Refugee and Migrant Crisis, UNHCR, UNFPA, WRC, 2016).

This violence continues in Europe, where migrant women are at higher risk of financial and administrative dependence and social or physical isolation, which only increases their vulnerability to violence. This is especially the case in family reunification, or for women in irregular situation. The language barrier and the lack of knowledge of field organisations increase the lack of access to assistance in case of violence. In Belgium, 53% of the women in women's shelters are migrants (Ella vzw: Omgevingsanalyse intrafamiliaal geweld en 'eengerelateerd geweld', 2013).

## SGBV: WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS?

SGBV is characterised by a wide range of domination mechanisms:

- Which are all founded on **unequal power balances (between men and women)**.
- Where violence (physical, emotional, psychological and sexual) is used to **impose control**.
- Where violence is **intimately linked to the roles that are assigned** to men and women, to the space they interact in, and to the historical context.

## SGBV: CONTRIBUTING FACTORS?

### 1. SOCIAL CONTEXTS OF MARGINALITY AND PRECARIOUSNESS THAT GIVE RISE TO DISCRIMINATION AND VULNERABILITY

Women who experience discrimination and are vulnerable are more at risk of being the victim of sexual violence. **Female migrants** run a greater risk of being a victim of exploitation and abuse, including trafficking.

### 2. RAPE CULTURE

The social context, which is characterised mechanisms of dominance and submission, that especially affect young girls. Sexualisation and commercial sexual exploitation contribute to the trivialisation of SGBV and reinforce sexist and racist prejudice (Bouchard, 2005 : 7, Perspectives de genre dans la lutte contre les violences sexuelles, Maquestiau P., Duysens C., Coll. Focus genre, Le Monde selon les femmes, Brussels, 2016).

### 3. SEXUALISATION

“Is to make a behaviour or product sexual in nature or quality, even though it is not”. A sexualised society consequently is a society “in which **sexualisation invades every aspect of our daily life** and references to sexuality are omnipresent in public space: on TV, on the radio, online, in courses, in the objects we buy, the attitudes and behaviours of our peers, and so on” (Ibid.)

# CONSENT

## WHAT IS CONSENT?

The concept of consent is inextricably linked with the fight against sexual violence. That being said, consent presents challenges, because it can be situated a **continuum between resignation and adhesion**. But **giving in is not the same as giving consent!** Moreover, the concept raises questions about the victim's ability to give clear answers, while not questioning the perpetrator's capacity to feel empathy. Consent does not require men to be caring or respectful.

Fighting false ideas: "when a woman says no, she means yes" - "She asked for it, just look at the way she was dressed"

<b>CONSENT</b> The permission for sexual activity with another person, based on a relationship of equality and in a context of non-vulnerability. <b>THE QUESTIONS TO ASK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ In which context was the consent obtained?</li><li>✓ Is there an equal power relationship between the consenting persons?</li></ul>	<b>PROBLEMATIC CONSENT</b> <b>Paid consent</b> Pay to have sexual relations <b>Coerced consent</b> Threaten to leave someone if they refuse sexual relations <b>Negotiated consent</b> Survival in exchange for sexual relations
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## WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR HEALTHY CONSENT?

For further information: Sensoa Flag System: [www.sensoa.be](http://www.sensoa.be)

- ✓ Mutual consent: clear and informed consent, meaning both parties experience pleasure.
- ✓ The notion of freedom: this implies the absence of any constraints.
- ✓ Equality: the partners are equals and there are no major social distances between them.
- ✓ Adequate age and development.
- ✓ Adequate context. Based on self-respect.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE: WHAT IS IT?

Any sexual act that is carried out without a person's consent. This also includes cases in which the assaulted person is incapable of refusing or showing her/his disagreement (because the victim is inebriated, drugged, asleep or mentally incapable of doing so). Sexual violence is part of the continuum of GBV.

This is a crime that is punishable by law.



This is an act that is reliant on intimidation, threats, blackmail, and verbal, physical, or psychological violence, and even confinement and coercion.



The main victims are women, adolescents and children but men and boys can also be victims



In most cases, the victim knows the perpetrator

This act has consequences for the victim's sexual, family and professional life.



This is not an individual problem or the result of uncontrollable urges.



The problem is inherent in our society, which produces and continues to promote unequal power balances between women and men.



This act exploits the contexts of marginalization and isolation and other factors that contribute to vulnerability in order to abuse and control victims.



All too often these acts go unpunished.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE: IN WHICH CONTEXTS?

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE CAN TAKE ON VARIOUS FORMS:

- Individual in the case of self-harm
- Interpersonal in the case of incest, sexual harassment, rape
- Collective in conflict and post-conflict situations, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced and early marriages, honour-related violence or prostitution.

### IT CAN OCCUR IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS

- In the private space
- In public spaces
- In daily life
- During the migration journey
- During armed conflicts, wars and post-conflict situations.

### IT CAN OCCUR AT EVERY STAGE ON ONE'S LIFE:

- Early childhood (sexual abuse, incest, rape...)
- Childhood, 6-10 years (incest, FGM, child prostitution, rape...)
- Adolescence (sexual harassment, forced marriage, prostitution, rape...)
- Reproductive age (rape [within a marriage], honour-related crime, rape...)
- Elderly women (forced marriage of a widow, rape...).

## HOW IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE EXPRESSED?

SEXUAL VIOLENCE CAN TAKE ON VARIOUS FORMS, INCLUDING:

- Incest in childhood
- Sexual mutilation
- Sexual intimation in school
- Sexual exploitation by gangs or loverboys
- Sexual harassment at work or on the street
- Rape
- Sexual assault by one's partner
- Inappropriate touching
- Exhibitionism
- Voyeurism
- Obscene calls
- Online grooming and exploitation for pornographic purposes
- Prostitution
- Human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation

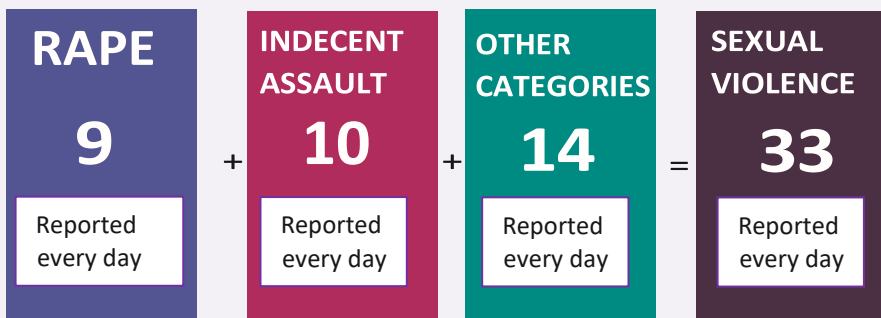
**Female migrants** are particularly at risk. They already face a **triple discrimination**: as women, as migrants and as workers, depending on the nature of their job in their host country.

SPECIFIC EXPRESSIONS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION:

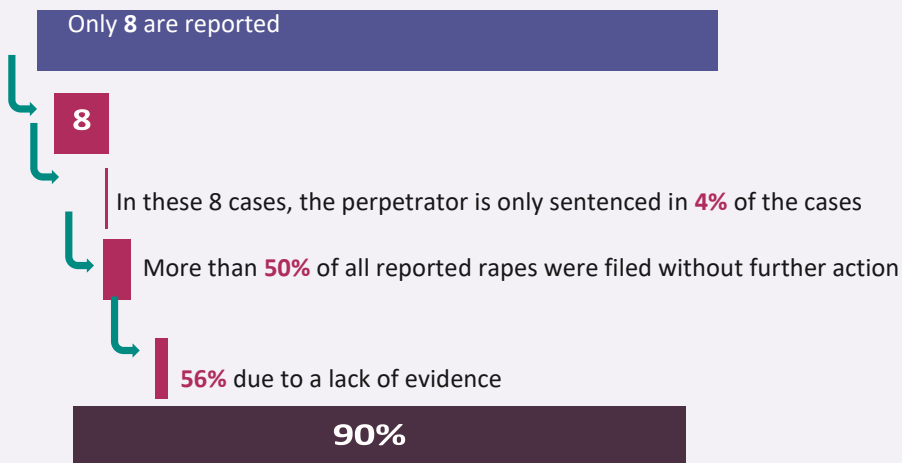
- Female genital mutilations (FGM)
- Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation
- Forced marriage
- Honour-related violence
- Transactional sex
- Rape
- Sexual intimidation
- For further information: page 26.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN BELGIUM: FIGURES ?

For further information: <http://www.besafe.be/fr/themes-de-securite/violence/la-violence-sexuelle>



Out of every **100 rapes** committed in Belgium



There is an important 'unrecorded' crime rate:  
**90%** of all victims **do not press charges**

\*gross indecency, child pornography, inciting debauchery, voyeurism and so on.



**The degree of impunity is very high:** out of 100 rapes that are committed in Belgium, only 8 are reported. In these 8 cases, the perpetrator is only sentenced in 4% of the cases. More than 50% of all reported rapes are filed without further action, 56% due to lack of evidence.

**There is an important ‘unrecorded’ crime rate: 90% of all victims do not press charges.**

#### WHAT EXPLAINS THE LACK OF POLICE REPORTS?

At the individual level:

- Fear of the offender/perpetrator
- Feeling of unwarranted guilt
- The victim is ashamed to discuss what happened or-to request assistance
- Fear of not being believed
- Loyalty to family, dependence on the partner.

Other important things to know about why it is difficult to press charges.

- In the framework of family reunification, where the female migrant’s legal status depends on her husband’s status, the risk of expulsion makes it difficult to press charges for domestic violence. This also applies to undocumented female migrants.
- A general lack of knowledge of the law and their rights, and a lack of knowledge of protection services, makes it more difficult for female migrants to press charges.
- Language can also constitute a barrier when it comes to pressing charges, just like cultural practices.
- The lack of trust in the authorities can also potentially be linked to the migration journey.



When the person does not immediately wish to press charges, they can ask a GP to fill out a medical certificate. It is imperative that they do not wash their clothes and that they keep them in a paper bag so they can be used for a trace analysis afterwards.

## REGARDING THE AVAILABLE DATA:

<http://www.stat.policefederale.be/criminaliteitsstatistieken/rapporten/>

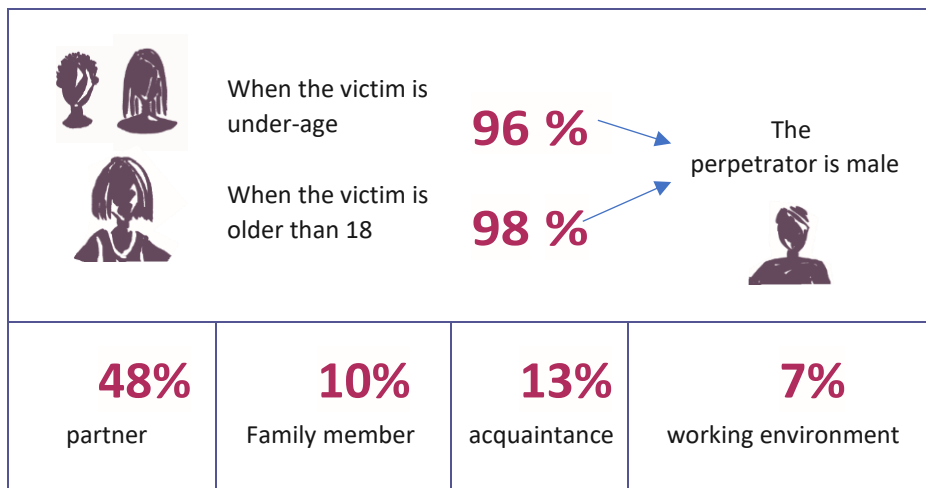
**First finding:** the lack of gender-specific data of the federal police (2018 figures).

- gang rape: 220 complaints
- cases of sexual intimate partner violence: 141 complaints
- cases of physical intimate partner violence: 21.858 complaints
- human trafficking: sexual exploitation: 419 complaints

**Second finding:** the lack of data on violence endured by female migrants: data on forced marriages, on trafficking for sexual exploitation, on prostitution or the porn industry, sexual violence, abuse in the context of family reunification, etc.

There is nevertheless an estimation of the prevalence of girls and women who have undergone or who are at risk of undergoing FGM in Belgium. This study was carried out by GAMS in 2018 and allows for improved actions and services involved in the protection of (potential) victims of FGM (<https://gams.be/ressources-2/etude-de-prevalence/>).

## SGBV: WHO IS THE PERPETRATOR / OFFENDER ?



When the victim is under-age, the perpetrator is a man in 96% of the cases. This increases to 98% when the victim is of age.

[www.fondation-enfance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/memoire-traumatiquevictimologie\\_impact\\_violences\\_sexuelles.pdf](http://www.fondation-enfance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/memoire-traumatiquevictimologie_impact_violences_sexuelles.pdf).

In Belgium, in the official police statistics for 2018, the perpetrator is the women's partner in 48% of the cases, a family member in 10% of all cases, an acquaintance in 13% and a person in the victim's working environment in 7% of the cases.

### WHICH POWER AND CONTROL MECHANISMS DOES THE PERPETRATOR USE?

- Blackmail
- Threats
- Coercion
- More insidious mechanisms based on domination

### WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOMINATION STRATEGIES THE PERPETRATOR USES?

- Isolation of the victim
- Degradation of the victim
- Victim blaming
- Creation of a climate of fear and insecurity
- Putting in place the means to ensure impunity (impose secrecy)

## WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE VICTIM?

- Loss of self-esteem and devalorisation
- Fear of reprisals, against themselves and/or relatives
- Loss of confidence
- Fear of not being believed
- Shame
- Guilt
- Isolation, lack of knowledge about one's rights.

## WHAT DO THE RELATIVES AND PROFESSIONALS OBSERVE IN THE VICTIM?

- Confusing statements and/or accounts
- Omissions
- An account of the events that is always identical
- Contradictory non-verbal behaviour: letting oneself go whilst saying that everything is fine. Or dressing up and smiling whilst explaining what happened.
- Minimizing what happened
- Blaming oneself: being convinced that it is one's own fault • not interested in pressing charges.

## WHICH BEHAVIOUR SHOULD THE SIGNIFICANT OTHERS AND PROFESSIONALS ADOPT IN RESPONSE TO THE OFFENDER/PERPETRATOR'S STRATEGIES?

### **Link the consequences for the victim to the strategies of the offender/perpetrator:**

- Stressing that the offender/perpetrator is responsible
- While avoiding confusion between traumatic emotional anaesthesia and dissociative amnesia when the victim does not express any suffering or seems indifferent.

## MODULE 2

# MIGRATION AND SGBV



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Participants learn key migration terms.
- They have a basic understanding of migration figures globally and in Belgium.
- They understand the vulnerabilities linked to migration for both women and girls, and boys and men.

### TIMING

1h15

### MATERIAL NEEDED

- ✓ Standard equipment
- ✓ Annex 2: Case studies

### ACTIVITIES

#### Key Migration Terms – 15 min

- Explain to the audience that we will now discuss migration and the links between SGBV and migration.
- We will start by making sure everyone has a basic knowledge of key migration terms.

#### Slide 22

- Ask everyone to write down the right combination of letters and numbers. Give them a few minutes to do the exercise in small groups and then discuss the results (1F, 2B, 3G, 4A, 5H, 6C, 7D, 8E). Remind them that more theory can be found in the booklet.

#### Slide 23-25

- Go over both slides and provide some general information on refugees and migrants globally and in Belgium.

## Linking SGBV and migration - 20 min

### Slide 26-27

- Show the video. Ask the participants to identify the violence they face.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWgKBA87kP4>
  - Which type of violence do you think was a reason for them to leave, and which violence do they face during their journey, and upon arrival?
  - Discuss this in plenary and ask what other types of violence was not in the video, and could have been met in their home country, and *en route*?
- ✓ Think about sexual abuse by border guards, trafficking, institutional violence, transactional sex, etc.

### Slide 28

#### Discussing cultural relativism - 20 min

- When providing assistance to migrants victim of SGBV, one has to avoid cultural relativism. Ask the public if they know what this means?
  - Explain the concept and give advice to the participants on how to avoid cultural relativism
- ✓ There is always the risk of falling into the trap of cultural relativism: the actions and beliefs of an individual are solely understood and analysed from the perspective of their culture. Cultural relativism is ethnocentric and goes against the universality of Human Rights.
- ✓ It paves the way for a comparative interpretation of cultures, giving rise to tolerance about actual discrimination against women (including notions of custom, tradition, religion) because they are women of another culture. None of these should ever justify violence against women.

### Slide 29

#### Analysing a practical case 1 (annex 2) – 20 min

- Which elements of the story refer to the vulnerability of Maria?
- What kind of violence did Maria experience?
- How do you assist her? What would you suggest her to do?

# THE MIGRATION CONTEXT

## KEY MIGRATION TERMS

For further information:

- ✓ IOM Glossary on Migration, 2019 <https://www.iom.int/glossary-migration-2019>
- ✓ IOM Key Migration Terms <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>.

### MIGRANT

IOM defines the term migrant as follows: An umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally-defined, such as smuggled migrants; as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students.

The majority of migrants in the world actually do not cross borders. Many of them move within their own country. According to the most recent global estimates, there are now 740 million internal migrants on the move within their country of birth ([www.hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr\\_2009\\_fr\\_complete.pdf](http://www.hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr_2009_fr_complete.pdf)).

In 2017, the total number of international migrants globally – i.e., migrants living in another country than the country in which they were born–reached an estimated 258 million ([www.un.org/fr/sections/issues-depth/migration/](http://www.un.org/fr/sections/issues-depth/migration/)), or 3.4% of the world’s population. 48.8% of all international migrants are women ([www.annualreport.unwomen.org/en/2018](http://www.annualreport.unwomen.org/en/2018)).

68.5 million people have been displaced because of persecution, conflict, violence, or violations of human rights ([www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html](http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html)).

### APPLICANT FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (“ASYLUM SEEKER”)

An individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every recognized refugee is initially an asylum seeker.

## REFUGEE

A person who, "owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol). In addition to the refugee definition in the 1951 Refugee Convention, Art. 1(2), 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention defines a refugee as any person compelled to leave his or her country "owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country or origin or nationality." Similarly, the 1984 Cartagena Declaration states that refugees also include persons who flee their country "because their lives, security or freedom have been threatened by generalised violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order."

## INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSON

Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or humanmade disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. At the end of 2016, there were 40.3 million internally displaced persons in the world, due to conflict or generalised violence (IOM, World Migration Report, 2018 [www.iom.int/wmr/world-migration-report-2018](http://www.iom.int/wmr/world-migration-report-2018)).

## UNACCOMPANIED MIGRANT CHILD (UMC)

Children, as defined in Article 1 of the Convention on the Right of the Child, who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so (Adapted from Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 6: Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside their Country of Origin 1 September 2005 CRC/GC/2005/6, para. 7).

Note: In the context of migration, children separated from both parents or other caregivers are generally referred to as unaccompanied migrant children (UMC).



## TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Term designating "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation" (see art. 3(a), UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000). Unlike smuggling which has a transnational character, trafficking in human beings can take place within the borders of a state.

Human trafficking is separate from human smuggling. The latter can be defined as the act of helping people to illegally cross a border for one's own financial gain.

<https://www.myria.be/en/traff-and-smuggling/human-trafficking-smuggling>

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

FGM is a form of SGBV. This type of violence is perpetrated with the idea of controlling women, both on the physical and mental level. This violence can have grave consequences on the victim throughout her life. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines female genital mutilation (FGM) as all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. This practice occurs around the world, in Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, the Middle East, Asia and even Latin America. The host countries in Europe, Australia and North America also have to deal with FGM (<https://gams.be/ressources-2/etude-de-prevalence/>).

## MIGRATION IN FIGURES – WORLDWIDE

UNHCR Figures at a glance, 2019.

UN Women, Annual Report 2017-2018.

IOM, Global Migration Report 2018.



**272 million (2019)**

International migrants globally.



**70.8 million (2019)**

People have been displaced because of persecution, conflict, violence, violations of human or other rights.



**57%**

Of all refugees worldwide come from 3 countries: South Sudan, Syria Afghanistan (2019).



**3.4%**

Migrants represent 3.4% of the global population.



**85%**

Of refugees live in developing countries.



**14%**

Are less than 20 years of age.



**48.8%**

Of all migrants are women.



**39 years**

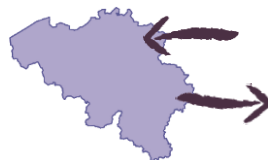
Is the average age of migrants worldwide.

## MIGRATION IN FIGURES – IN BELGIUM

In 2018, 166.894 persons migrated **TO** Belgium via administrative channels.

116.714 persons emigrated **FROM** Belgium.

Net migration is 50.180 persons.



**46% of all newly arrived migrants in 2017 were female.**

The percentage has steadily decreased over the last 20 years, and can be explained in particular by the sharp increase of newly arrived migrants from the new EU member states (self-employed male workers from Romania, Bulgaria, Poland) and the recent increase of migrants from Western Asia (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan).

The acceptance rates for female applicants for international protection are, however, slightly higher than for men (59% of all applications accepted in 2017, compared with 51% for men, all nationalities combined). Here again, the fact of being a female migrant tends to decrease mobility, particularly because of the dangerous nature of the exile. But the need for protection remains of utmost importance ([www.myria.be/fr/publications/femmes-et-migrations-en-belgique](http://www.myria.be/fr/publications/femmes-et-migrations-en-belgique)).

Total population of Belgium (2017): **11.322.088**

Foreign-born: 2.318.807

Belgian

Foreign

Belgian

1.259.091

991.031

9.003.281

11,7%

8,8%

79,5%

For more information: Myria, [www.myria.be/fr/publications/la-migration-en-chiffres-et-en-droits-2018](http://www.myria.be/fr/publications/la-migration-en-chiffres-et-en-droits-2018) and <https://www.myria.be/files/FR2018-2.pdf>.

## WOMEN AND GIRLS ON THE MOVE

Women migrate as much as men. But female migrants are at much greater risk of exploitation and abuse than male migrants, and this at every stage of their journey. Their journey can be multi-traumatic.

### DIFFERENT STAGES:

- **Before the departure:** the reason for fleeing, such as an early or forced marriage, risk of FGM, honour-related violence
- **During the journey:** rape, sexual exploitation, sexual touching
- **Upon arrival:** rape, sexual touching, sexual harassment, discrimination
- **In the host country:** prostitution, sexual harassment, rape, also in case of forced marriage through family reunification
- **In case of return:** exclusion, prostitution for survival, stigma, etc.

Various manifestations or various contexts of violence can occur. But the impact of sexual violence on a person remains the same. Every victim is entitled to the same support, even though it may take some time before a relationship of trust is established between the victim and the caregiver.

### CAREFUL: AVOID AN INAPPROPRIATE INTERCULTURAL APPROACH

There is always the risk of falling into the trap of cultural relativism where the actions and beliefs of an individual are solely understood and analysed from the perspective of their culture. Cultural relativism is ethnocentric. It is contrary to the notion of universalism and the universality of rights. It paves the way for a comparative interpretation of cultures, giving rise to tolerance about actual discrimination against women because they are women of another culture.

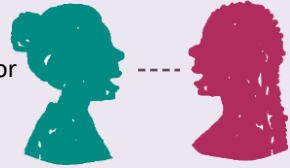
# HOW TO OVERCOME OR AVOID THE RISK OF CULTURAL RELATIVISM?

IN EVERY CONTACT WITH A PERSON FROM ANOTHER CULTURE

Source : [www.otavzw.be](http://www.otavzw.be)

**1** Apply the basic values as a psycho-medical-legal-social counsellor

- ✓ Be sincere
- ✓ Show understanding and respect
- ✓ Work towards a relationship without dominance
- ✓ Show empathy
- ✓ Show interest, curiosity
- ✓ Be genuine



**2** Understanding the other person's culture can be useful but is not indispensable.

You sometimes win time when it comes to decoding messages or conveying messages.



**3** Never forget that there are differences within one and the same culture.



**4** Understand that a person's identity consists of a multitude of social identities, including age, social status, family culture, profession, regional identity, socio-economic status, religion, and so on.



**5** Understand and apply the non-negotiable framework: European Convention on Human Rights, Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women : (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child, national legislation...



**6** In all cases of violence: the victim's safety is always a priority.





## MODULE 3

# THE IMPACT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON HEALTH



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Throughout this module, participants will discuss the impacts of violence on (mental) health of victims.
- They will have an understanding of the concept of traumatic memory

### TIMING

25 min

### ACTIVITIES

#### Defining health – 10 min

- Ask the participants how they would define health
  - ✓ WHO: Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- Ask the participants what impact SGBV can have on the health of migrants.

#### Slide 31

- Go over all consequences SGBV can have on health

#### Understanding **traumatic memory** and its impact – 15 min

##### Slide 32-33

- Explain the concept of traumatic memory
- Show the video “Trauma and the Brain”:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=21&v=4-tcKYx24aA&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=21&v=4-tcKYx24aA&feature=emb_title) and ask the participants for feedback.
- Ask the participants, if they are first line workers, for examples in their daily work of the impact SGBV can have on beneficiaries. How did they deal with this and how did they provide specific assistance to the beneficiary? Make sure everyone participates in the exercise.





# SEXUAL VIOLENCE: HEALTH CONSEQUENCES?

Health consequences can be physical, somatic and psychological.  
SGBV can impact the victim sexually, affectively, socially and economically.

## IMMEDIATE PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES

- Unwanted pregnancy
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- Genital and anal lesions
- Lesions on other parts of the body

## SOMATIC CONSEQUENCES

- Muscle tensions
- Weight gain or weight loss
- Frequent and chronic pain (back, abdomen, migraines)
- Dermatological problems (eczema, allergies)
- Genital and urinary problems

**The majority of the consequences of SGBV are psychological.**

**The memory of the trauma of SGBV can be triggered up to six months after the event.**

## WHAT IS TRAUMATIC MEMORY?

1

When a person is in danger, the brain starts to produce adrenaline and cortisol



2

The heart rate increases...

3

... Fight or run faster to escape. And the person escapes



4

This is a difficult time, but the person recovers

5

In the case of sexual violence, the person is unable to escape



6

This provokes a state of shock



7

The brain continues to produce adrenaline

8

There is a risk of overload



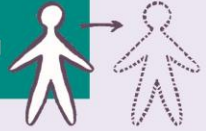
9

To avoid this overvoltage, other hormones, called endorphins, are produced in high quantity



10

The person feels "dissociation" from their body and feels nothing at all anymore



11

The person's ability to analyse the situation and respond is paralyzed

12

Dissociation prevents the aggression from being incorporated in the autobiographic memory



13

The aggression is almost locked away in another part of the brain



14

That is where the traumatic memory develops



15

The memory can be revived at any time, with the same intensity, by any event that is similar to the aggression that was perpetrated

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE : PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

## THE FIRST 6 MONTHS

Victims can experience any of the following:

- **Flashbacks:** re-living the aggression
- **Avoidance behaviour :**
  - fear of going out
  - fear of certain situations
- **Dissociation:**
  - being there, without being there
  - sense of strangeness
  - emotional detachment
- **Hypervigilance :** state of constant alert – jumping at the slightest noise

## FROM 6 MONTHS

### Psycho-traumatic disorders may occur

Traumatic memories or post-traumatic stress disorder

- For adult victims : **80%**
- For child victims: **100%**

## AFTER 6 MONTHS

### Traumatic memory symptoms

Victims can experience any of the following:

- a continuation of the symptoms of the first 6 months (flashback, avoidance, detachment, hypervigilance)
- destructive behaviour
- sense of hopelessness
- failure to concentrate and memory loss
- feelings of shame, guilt
- various somatisations
- disorders : sexuality, sleep, feeding behaviour, mood, anxiety, obsessive and compulsive behavior
- risk behaviour (running away, marginalisation, addiction)
- unsafe sexual practices:
  - unprotected sex
  - succession of abusive partners

# MIGRANTS IN IRREGULAR SITUATION

## AND THEIR ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

**The number of irregular or « undocumented » migrants in Belgium** is unknown, but according to an estimate, they were between 100,000 and 150,000 in 2017 ([www.smes.be](http://www.smes.be)). **The irregular situation has a huge impact on daily life.** Irregular migrants face, among other things, difficulties in accessing healthcare (they only have the right to the Emergency Medical Assistance (AMU), undeclared work (underpaid, unpaid overtime work, often dangerous work without insurance for work accidents, dependence to the employer) and a constant fear of being denounced, arrested or deported.

The Emergency Medical Assistance (AMU) (attested by a medical certificate, [www.medimigrant.be](http://www.medimigrant.be)) gives access to healthcare including paramedical care (physical therapy, orthodontia, psychology,...) and covers the costs of eyeglasses or dental prosthesis for irregular migrants in need (in serious and persistent economic distress). This does not include financial social assistance or housing. The assistance provided can involve curative, preventive and even palliative care.

Every person who receives social assistance (AMU), is registered in the national database called Crossroads Bank for Social Security. The required identifying data are the name, age, nationality, filiation, address, etc. No information regarding the pathologies or the covered costs is included. The Immigration Office has access to this database but the use of the information of undocumented migrants is unknown.

**There are two eligibility requirements for the Emergency Medical Assistance (AMU):**

- In a significant emergency situation, for example in the case of rape with potentially severe injuries that have to be treated rapidly. The person goes to the emergency service of a hospital.
- In case of disease, for instance in case of post-traumatic stress disorder developed following sexual abuse. The person goes to a psycho-medico-social centre (*Centre psycho-médico-social PMS*).

After verification of the place of residence of the person ( it can be a building entrance, a park or under a bridge), a visit from a CPAS (Public Welfare Centre) worker is planned. The latter conducts a « social investigation » to determine whether the person is « in real need » and thus eligible. If this is the case, the assistance is granted.

**Situations in which the Emergency Medical Assistance (AMU) is allocated:** all forms of violence including sexual violence (unwanted pregnancy, assault and battery, rape).

# MODULE 4

## HOW TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SURVIVORS OF SGBV

### TIMING

1h20

### OBJECTIVES

- After this module, participants will know the legal framework covering SGBV globally and in Belgium specifically.
- They will understand how to assist and refer a victim of SGBV.
- They will also understand the concepts of empowerment and self-care.

### MATERIAL NEEDED

- ✓ Standard equipment
- ✓ Annex 2: Case studies

### ACTIVITIES

To start, let's define the policy & legal framework – 20 min

#### Slide 35-38

- It is crucial for those who provide assistance to victims to understand the legal framework.
- Explain the role of the Institute for Equality between women and men, UNIA, the police and CPVS/ZSG.
- Give an overview of the Belgian and international legal framework.
- Explain the 3 types of offences (minor offence, major offence, crime).
- Explain the procedure to press charges: [www.violencessexuelles.be](http://www.violencessexuelles.be).

#### Slide 39

Case Studies: split the group in two and hand out case study 2 and 3 to each group – 30 min

- What kinds of violence do you identify?
- How do you assist the person? What do you say and ask?
- What would you suggest the person to do?

- Do you feel comfortable assisting this person? If not, why?
- Have you ever experienced such a situation? Please discuss.

## Slide 40-41

### The importance of **self-care** – 30 min

- Explain the concept of self-care
- Ask every participant to write down on a post-it what are his/her strategies of care (1 post-it per idea). There are 2 types of self-care strategies: the daily ones, more banal, but that keep us going, and the urgent ones to protect ourselves but that are not part of daily habits.
- On a big paper, draw a mountain with a sea underneath. Each participant sticks his post-its where they fit best: long-term strategies on top, urgent strategies below that keep us from drowning. This exercise is based on a practice by Audre Lorde, a civil rights activist and feminist.
- To conclude, you can discuss the strategies and ask the participants if they found inspiration through others.

## ARE ALL ACTS ALWAYS PUNISHABLE?

How to classify such violent practices?

- Meaningful looks, comments on one's physical appearance or clothing.
  - Exhibitionism, public masturbation.
  - Exposure to pornographic images, sexual advances, obscene sexual gestures.
  - Forced kissing, groping/being touched on the buttocks, rubbing, sexual aggression.
  - Rape.
- ✓ When a victim presses charges, the sexual assault is placed on record. An act is considered an offence or a punishable act when it is explicitly defined as such in the law. In Belgium, the law recognises three different types of acts (or offences): **a minor offence, a major offence or a crime**. Minor offences are the least serious infractions, crimes are the most serious offences.  
[www.belgium.be/fr/justice/victime/plaintes\\_et\\_declarations/types\\_d\\_infractions](http://www.belgium.be/fr/justice/victime/plaintes_et_declarations/types_d_infractions)
- ✓ The difference between these three types of offences is important because the severity of the offence determines which court will hear the case and defines the degree of severity of the penalty ([www.questions-justice.be/Infractions](http://www.questions-justice.be/Infractions)).

**All forms of sexual aggression are serious and punishable**

Examples	Potential sentences	Types of offences	Name of the suspect	Competent courts
Illegal parking	1 to 7 days of prison and/or a fine between 5.50 and 137.5 €	Minor offence	Contravener	Police court
Theft	8 days to 5 years in prison and/or a fine of at least 143 €	Major offence	Defendant	Criminal court
Rape and murder	More than 5 years in prison	Crime	Accused	Assize court (popular jury) or criminal court

[www.violencessexuelles.be/je-suis-victime](http://www.violencessexuelles.be/je-suis-victime)

# FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE: WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

Source: [www.besafe.be/fr/themes-de-securite/violence/la-violence-sexuelle](http://www.besafe.be/fr/themes-de-securite/violence/la-violence-sexuelle)

## RAPE

“Consent is deemed to be absent when the act is imposed by means of violence, force or by a trick, or if the victim is suffering from a physical or mental disability.”  
(Article 375 of the Belgian penal Code)

Rape is also possible between partners

Under the age of 14: This is considered rape, even if the victim consents (a child under 14 years of age cannot give valid consent to sexual acts)

## INDECENT ASSAULT

Coercing someone into performing sexual acts

Under the age of 16 : even if there is mutual consent, this is always considered indecent assault

Usually acts of a sexual nature (e.g. touching breasts)

Always acts that require the victim's physical involvement (obscenities are not considered indecent assault)

The offender doesn't have to physically touch the victim (e.g. force the victim to undress so that the offender can take photos or force the victim to masturbate)

## OTHER FORMS

Gross indecency

Child pornography

Incitement to indecency

Voyeurism

Exploitation of others' indecency

Grooming (online contact with children under 16)

Pornography

Violation of a court ruling by sexual offender



# SEXUAL VIOLENCE: IS THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS IMPORTANT?

## WHY MUST YOU TAKE THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS INTO ACCOUNT?

A victim can press charges at different times after the sexual assault but a statute of limitations applies. The statute of limitations is the time that the police or the judicial authorities have to record an infringement, find proof, apprehend the offenders and secure a conviction in court. Different statutes of limitations apply for minor and major offences and crimes.

- For **crimes**, rape, murders, the statute of limitations is 10 years, sometimes 15 years and exceptionally it can be extended to 20 years.
- For **major offences**, assault, robbery, the statute of limitations is 5 years.
- For **minor offences**, which are essentially related to driving, the statute of limitations is one year.

Source: [www.rtl.be/info/belgique/societe/90-secondes-pour-comprendre-le-delai-de-prescription-des-crimes-762813.aspx](http://www.rtl.be/info/belgique/societe/90-secondes-pour-comprendre-le-delai-de-prescription-des-crimes-762813.aspx)

## WHEN DOES THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES BEGIN?

- If the victim is of age when the sexual offence occurred, the statute of limitations begins on the date on which the offence was committed.
- If the victim was under-age when the sexual offence occurred, the statute of limitations begins on the day that the victim turns 18.

Offence	Age of the victim at the time of the offence	Statute of limitations for prosecution	Date on which the statute of limitations begins <a href="http://www.sosviol.be/aide/demarches-juridiques.php">www.sosviol.be/aide/demarches-juridiques.php</a>
Rape or indecent assault leading to the victim's death	Under 18 years of age	20 years	At the time of the offence
Rape or indecent assault, leading to the victim's	18 years or older	15 years	At the time of the offence
Rape or indecent assault	Under 18 years of age	15 years	Victim has reached the age of majority
Rape	18 years or older	10 years	At the time of the offence

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE: WHAT ARE THE PENALTIES FOR SEXUAL OFFENCES?

Unfortunately the penalties that are prescribed for these types of offences do not automatically imply a sentence. As a rule, sexual violence is often not sanctioned. Moreover, certain offences are not outlined in legislation, such as incest for example. The penal code qualifies this as follows: rape or indecent assault with aggravating circumstances (committed by an ascendant or a person who has authority over the victim, and age of the victim).

Offence	Description	Penalty
<b>Sexism and sexual harassment in public spaces</b>	Wolf-whistling, comments on the victim's physique or attire, meaningful looks, sexist remarks, intrusive questions, insults.	Fine between of 50 and 1,000 euros and/or prison sentence of 1 month to 1 year.
<b>Sexual harassment in other spaces, e.g., at work.</b>		Fine between 50 and 300 euros and/or prison sentence of 15 days to 2 years.
<b>Trafficking in human beings</b>	<p>The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.</p> <p><u>Aggravating elements:</u> fraudulent actions, violence, threats or any other form of constraint.</p>	<p><u>Attempted human trafficking:</u> Fine of 100 to 10,000 euros and/or a prison sentence of 1 to 3 years.</p> <p><u>The basic penalty :</u> Fine of 500 to 50,000 euros and/or a prison sentence of 1 to 5 years.</p> <p><u>If the victim was under-age, or a vulnerable person:</u> Fine of 1,000 to 100,000 euros and/or a prison sentence of 10 to 15 years.</p>

<b>Offence</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
<b>Indecent assault</b>	Forced kisses, groping, rubbing, victim forced to undress for photos.	Fine of at least 143 euros and/or a prison sentence of 8 days to 5 years.
<b>Rape</b>	Any penetration, whether vaginal, anal or oral, with a body part of the offender or an object, without the person's consent.	If the victim is under 10 years of age: prison sentence of 25 to -30 years. Victim is 18 years or older: prison sentence of 15 to 20 years.
<b>Female genital mutilation</b>	All procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.	In case of an attempt: prison sentence of 8 days to 1 year. If carried out: prison sentence of 3 to 5 years.
<b>Honour-related violence</b>	All acts designed to prevent or avenge slights to the sexual or family honour.	The penalty will depend on whether the victim was deprived of their liberty, whether the victim was beaten or injured, murdered or pushed to commit suicide.
<b>Forced marriage</b>	Force someone to get married without their consent.	Fine of 250 to 5,000 euros and/or a prison sentence of 3 to 5 years.
<b>Voyeurism</b>	Threat to post photos of the victim online, distribution of images of a sexual nature of a person, without their agreement or without their knowledge, even if the person consented to their creation.	Prison sentence of 6 months to 5 years. If the victim is 16 years or older: prison sentence of 5 to 10 years. If the victim is younger than 16: prison sentence of 10 to 15 years.
<b>Revenge porn</b>	Often linked to a break-up: online sharing of photos or videos of a sexual nature without the consent of the person in the images.	Fine and suspended prison sentence.
<b>Pimping</b>	Recruitment, training, or forcing a person to engage in prostitution.	Fine of 500 to 25,000 euros and/or a prison sentence of 1 to 5 years.

## THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF LEGISLATION

### WHICH COVER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- Since 2001, FGM has become a specific offence under Belgian law (Article 409 of the penal Code).
- Since the law of 4 July 1989 was changed, partner rape is now also recognised.
- Law of 16 December 2002: the establishment of the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men.
- Law of 10 August 2005 on smuggling and trafficking in human beings: trafficking in human beings consists of the exploitation of individuals for one's own gain. This is a form of modern slavery. The exploitation can be of a sexual nature (e.g., prostitution).
- Law of 10 May 2007: fight against discrimination between women and men.
- Law of 30 November 2011 of the Council of Europe ("Convention of Istanbul") to prevent and combat violence against women and intimate partner violence.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention>

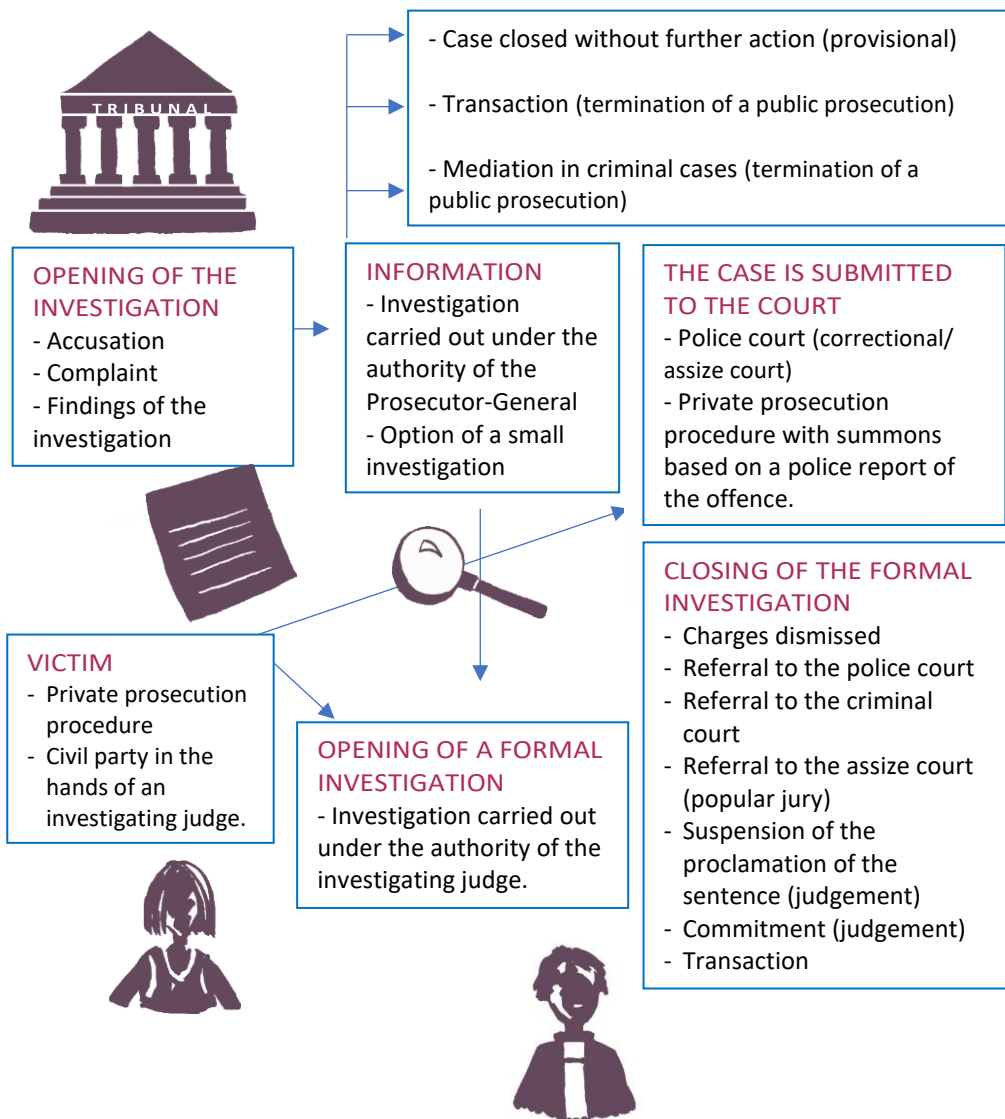
- Law of 30 November 2011: improvement of the approach to sexual abuse and paedophilia in a relationship based on authority.
- Law of 14 December 2012: improvement of the approach to sexual abuse and paedophilia in a relationship based on authority.

- Law of 22 May 2014: fight against sexism in public spaces, amendment of the law of 10 May 2007 to combat discrimination between women and men.
- Law of 1 February 2016: amendment concerning indecent assault and voyeurism.
- In 2016, Belgium ratified the Istanbul Convention to prevent and combat violence against women and intimate partner violence. Translation of the commitments in the National Action Plan 2015-2019.
- Decree of 26 September 2016 on assistance to victims and specialised support to victims.
- Decree of 13 July 2018 creating the commission for the recognition and mediation for victims of historical abuses.
- Articles 239 to 250 of the penal Code relate to violence and sexual abuses.
- Circulars COL 4/2017 regarding the Sexual Assault Kit (S.A.S.) and COL4/2006 regarding the penal policy on partner violence.
- The Law of 1 March 2016 recognises the Istanbul Convention and applies the Convention in full force in Belgian legislation.

Source : [www.besafe.be/fr/themes-de-securite/violence/la-violence-sexuelle](http://www.besafe.be/fr/themes-de-securite/violence/la-violence-sexuelle)

# SGBV : JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS?

## PROCESS OF PRESSING CHARGES



Tool : Protocole Commun de Mise en Sécurité des Victimes, Maison Plurielle.

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE: WHO CAN ASSIST AND TAKE CARE OF THE VICTIM AND HOW?

1. First or second-line psycho-medical-legal-social counsellors.
2. The community services (neighbourhood associations and organisations, e.g., street workers, homework help).
3. Relatives (family members, friends, colleagues, entourage).

Source: [Care for victims of sexual assault. Guide for significant others, Ines Keygnaert, and Inse Van Melkebeke, UGent, 2019.](#)

## WHICH ATTITUDE SHOULD ONE ADOPT WHEN PROVIDING COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT TO VICTIMS?

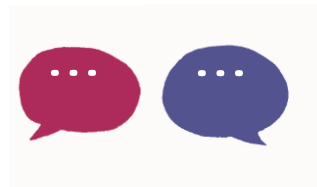
### As a psycho-medical-legal-social counsellor

#### The essentials

- Clearly show that these are voluntary acts that can be prosecuted.
- Link the effects of psychological trauma to violence.
- Be aware that for the victim, understanding the sexual violence and its consequences helps to take control and that taking control contributes to the healing.
- Promote the development of a comprehensive public health policy and social action policy to provide support to professionals.

#### Some examples of phrases:

- ✓ You are not responsible.
- ✓ He is the guilty one.
- ✓ He does not have the right.
- ✓ This is a crime that is punishable by law.
- ✓ I can help you.
- ✓ You are not alone.
- ✓ You can press charges, you decide when you want to.
- ✓ What could help you now?



### Why self-care is so important. The counsellor might:

- Find it difficult to think about this violence, to imagine and admit that it exists.
- Develop various strategies, to avoid, deny, conceal and can tolerate the kind of violence that our society unfortunately still has to tolerate all too often.
- Have preconceived ideas about violence, women, female migrants and a biased view on sexuality.
- Be afraid of being intrusive, afraid of unleashing suffering. Fear of being in a difficult situation, of not knowing what to do, fear of being alone and not knowing the network.
- Feel impacted by the account of the violence that a person underwent.
- Have lived through violent situations themselves, the memories of which may be triggered by the other person's account.

### Believing the story, what does this mean?

Avoid denial: "this is impossible", "what if it wasn't true?".

This avoids the pitfall of three very widely held ideas after someone reveals that they were the victim of a sexual aggression:

1. Nothing happened.
2. She consented, she wanted it or she loved him.
3. She is responsible for what happened.

These ideas have a very negative impact on the victim:

- They prevent the victim from confiding, from seeking help.
- Inspires a feeling of not being understood, which is only enhanced by the impact of the trauma.
- Prevent adequate support.

Source: Muriel Salmona, Violences sexuelles - Les 40 questions-réponses incontournables, Dunod, 2015.

# SGBV: THE STAGES OF SUPPORT, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PSYCHO-MEDICAL-SOCIAL-LEGAL COUNSELLOR

## DIALOGUE

- Believe the victim.
- Do not judge.
- Be understanding and respectful.
- Ask open questions (no “Why?” questions).
- Respect silences.
- Ask questions about the person’s feelings, what they felt.



## INFORMATION

- Inform the victim about their rights, the option to press charges.
- Help the victim understand their emotions and behaviours.
- Explain the link with the aggressor’s strategies.
- Explain the consequences of sexual violence.



## EVALUATION

- Be capable of adapting the aid and assistance modalities and provide adequate protection.



## RISK MANAGEMENT

- Develop strategies for protection with the victim.
- Anticipate on future violence.
- Ensure the people involved are safe.
- Intervene in case of imminent danger.



## SELF-CARE (SELF-HELP)

- Training.
- Work in a network.
- Have informal places at work where you can “unwind”.
- Work in supervised teams.
- Individual supervision (counseling).
- Stabilisation exercises (e.g., yoga, relaxation...).
- Perform rituals to end the working day.





## AS COUNSELLOR WORKING FOR A COMMUNITY SERVICE

### The essentials

- Training about SGBV.
- Solidarity with the victim.
- Ability to refer them.
- Take care of oneself.

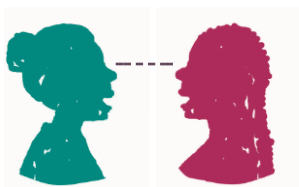
### WHAT TO DO IN PRACTICE?

- Assistance
- Dialogue
- Information
- Risk evaluation to protect the victim.

These services play a very important role in the diagnosis and referral to support services. Because of their proximity, they enable the victim to:

- Break through the isolation.
- Break free from the control of a violent situation.
- Find information about the first steps to take.

In general, these services are largely unknown and not sufficiently used by many psycho-medical-social-legal counsellors. It is always worth **mapping which local services are available**.



## AS A RELATIVE

### The essentials

- Understand that the aggression has had an impact on the victim's (mental) health. Let the victim decide: throughout the process, relative is on hand to help, but always stands back. He/she can advise the victim to take steps, but ultimately the victim must make the decision when they are ready.
- Take care of oneself: sexual aggression can have an emotional impact on the victim, but also on relatives. This is perfectly normal. If necessary, request help from a therapist, a psychologist or a support group.

### WHAT TO DO IN PRACTICE?

- Be there for the victim.
- Give the victim the time they need to calmly resume what happened and express their emotions.
- Accept the confusing account, which is linked to the impact of what happened.
- Ask questions such as "what, when, where, how" (never "why").
- Avoid asking questions such as "Why were you there?" (To avoid exacerbating the shame or guilt. To avoid giving the victim the impression that they could have avoided the assault).
- Avoid asking "Why didn't you defend yourself?".
- Do not accept that the victim blames themselves: "What would have happened if I had done this or that?".
- Do not interrupt the victim while they are explaining what happened.
- Do not get angry.
- Express understanding.
- Try to put yourself in the victim's position and see things from their perspective.
- Express concern and worry.
- Help the victim with any steps he/she wishes to take.
- Help them find a doctor or go with them to the consultation.
- Treat the victim in the way you would expect to be treated if you had problems.
- Find a quiet place to talk.
- Be as discreet as possible, but take action when the victim is in danger.

### SPECIFICALLY AS A PARTNER

- Be aware that it is perfectly normal to encounter problems during sexual intimacy: do not feel slighted or worried if there is a period without any sexual relations. A body needs time to relax in situations of sexual intimacy after sexual violence. Just holding hands is also an intimate gesture, without a sexual connotation. Show that you are willing to follow the victim's rhythm.
- Do not take the initiative on the sexual level.
- Reassure your partner that nothing will happen on this level unless she indicates that she feels like it.

### SPECIFICALLY AS A COLLEAGUE AT WORK

- Check with the victim how to avoid sexual violence from having consequences such as dismissal, financial problems or becoming homeless. Adapt the workplace if possible.
- Filter any direct calls to the victim, have them go through the secretary or a colleague, if the aggressor is persecuting the victim.
- Ensure that no personal information is communicated to externals (mobile phone number, private address, e-mail) so the colleague can cut the ties with the (former) partner if they wish to do so.
- Give the victim time off to meet with a lawyer, move to a new place.
- Check that the colleague receives their salary (rather than the partner).

In these types of cases, working with the employer is clearly in the interest of the victim. Many victims indicate that they received help from their managers.

Source: [Care for victims of sexual assault. Guide for significant others, Ines Keygnaert, and Inse Van Melkebeke, UGent, 2019.](#)

# SGBV: WHAT TO DO AFTER THE AGGRESSION?

<https://www.violencessexuelles.be/je-suis-victime>

A victim of SGBV can ask help or press charges **at different times after the assault happened**. In any event, regardless of the time and place where the victim chooses to divulge the sexual assault, it is vital that the following is carried out:

- ✓ A medical exam
- ✓ A psychosocial assessment
- ✓ Put in place the necessary preventative measures
- ✓ Prepare the follow-up.

The victim has limited time to press charges. Different statutes of limitations apply to sexual violence (e.g., in the case of incest, the statute of limitations ends 15 years after the victim comes of age).

The victim can undergo a medical-legal exam up until 72 hours after the sexual assault.

A victim can turn to:

- ✓ A person in their entourage
- ✓ A person they trust who works for a community service
- ✓ A police station
- ✓ Outpatient clinic or a health clinic (GP, family planning centre, specialised centre for victims of sexual assault (CPVS/ZSG), GAMS, SOS-viol, and so on).
- ✓ The emergency department of a hospital
- ✓ A specialised centre for victims of sexual assault (CPVS/ZSG) or emergency department where a medical-legal examination can be performed

## LESS THAN 72 HOURS AFTER THE SEXUAL ASSAULT

1. Possibility to press charges
2. Possibility to undergo a medical-legal examination

The victim must be informed of the option to undergo a medical-legal examination. The SAK, Sexual Assault Kit, must be used in that case. The SAK is available in reference centres for victims of physical and sexual violence and in some emergency departments of hospitals. To use the SAK, the police and the public prosecutor's office must be informed, either by the victim themselves when they register a complaint with the police, or by the emergency department (but only if the victim agrees). A police officer will be on hand, will register the complaint and will request the authorisation of the public prosecutor's office to perform a medical-legal examination.

## WHAT IS THE SAK?

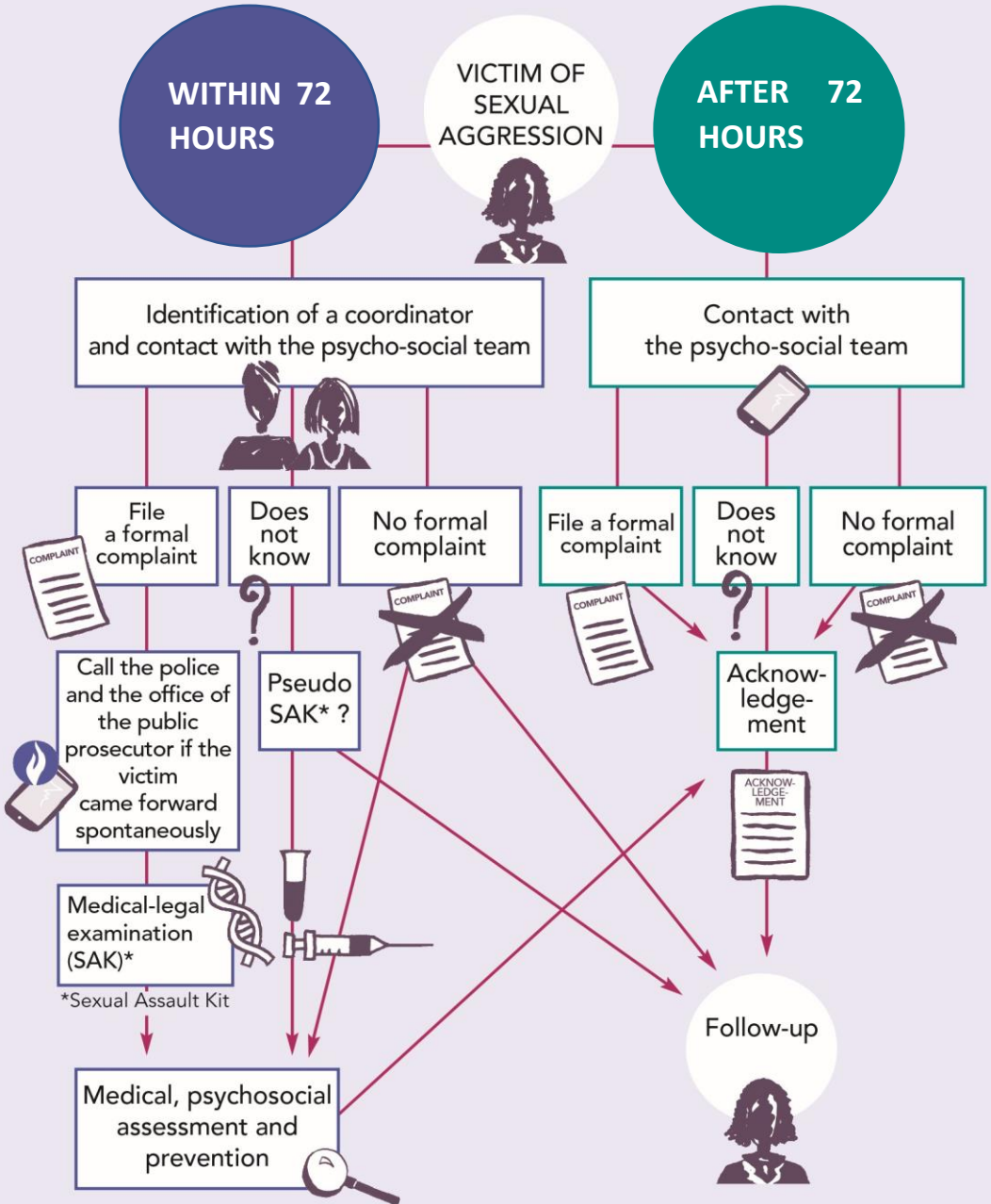
The Sexual Assault Kit (SAK) is the medical tool that is used to gather evidence of sexual assault, within 72 hours after the assault occurred. The SAK is a box that contains a file and numbered samples (clothes, gynaecological and oral swabs, hair).

If the victim decides to press charges, the different samples will be used as evidence during the judiciary proceedings.

If the victim does not (yet) decide to press charges, the samples will be kept until the time that the victim decides to press charges. In that case, the victim undergoes a pseudo SAK. The public prosecutor's office can use these samples in later judiciary proceedings.

1. Possibility to press charges.
2. Medical examination and follow-up: care for physical injuries, infections and prevention of an unwanted pregnancy.
3. Psycho-social counselling and follow-up.
4. Safety assessment.

# SGBV: THE ASSISTANCE PROCESS



## SGBV: ASSISTANCE PROVIDED IN AN OUTPATIENT CLINIC OR A HEALTH CLINIC

The treatment is essentially of a psychotherapeutic nature. However any intervention must enable the:

- Application of the “dialogue, information, evaluation, risk management” process.
- Refer the victim so they can press charges.
- Refer for the SAK if less than 72 hours after the assault.
- Avoid suicide risk.
- Avoid new violence.
- Care for or refer the victim to a caregiver to take care of physical injuries.
- Draw up a certificate of assault and battery or refer the victim to a GP.
- Provide medical care for the psychological suffering and symptoms of anxiety and depression or refer the victim.
- Avoid “triggering” of traumatic memory and the suffering associated with it.
- Identify and treat dissociative risk behaviour.
- Help the victim with the administrative aspects of the process.

## SGBV: PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC SUPPORT

**To alleviate the victim’s psychological suffering and symptoms of anxiety and depression, medical treatment can help with:**

- Treating pain.
- Medical treatment of anxiety and/or depression.
- Physiotherapy, relaxation, hypnosis, body therapy, and so on.

**Various psychotherapeutic therapies can be used to alleviate psychological suffering:**

EMDR, dynamic psychotherapy, systemic therapy, cognitive and behavioural therapy (CBT), hypnosis, psychoanalysis, emotional therapy, body therapy, art therapy, play therapy for children, group therapy, and so on.

## WHAT IS GOOD CARE?

**The relationship must be respectful, caring, reassuring, without any relationship of power, face to face, based on empathic listening** (see the dialogue, information, evaluation, risk management chart).

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**Every therapy must combine these techniques with work that focuses on the links between the violence that the victim experienced and the current symptoms**, on the understanding of these mechanisms, the treatment of traumatic memory, the analysis of the violence and the behaviour of the offender/perpetrator.

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**The idea is to treat the traumatic memory and never stop trying to understand what happened, or attributing meaning to it.**

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**It is vital that the victim regains their self-esteem.**

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**The mechanisms of the perpetrator must be explained** so the victim can better understand their behaviour (and the link to their traumatic memory). This is also the case for the strategies of control used by the perpetrator (so they can better defend themselves).

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Identify the aggression, **referring to the law.**

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Provide **different treatments** for single cases of violence or violence that is limited in time, or for ongoing, repeated, long-term violence such as incest or prostitution. In the latter case, not just the emotions and the symptoms have to be treated but the person also needs to free themselves from a traumatised personality that they developed around the psychotraumatic symptoms.

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**Support groups** such as SOS Incest can be very useful and can help victims discuss their history and their experiences, by confronting their own experiences with those of other victims, so they feel less alone, stop blaming themselves, find other resources and exchange know-how.

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All **creative activities** such as at GAMS or *Collectif des femmes* in Louvain-la-Neuve (writing, poetry, drama, dance, singing, music, drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, cinema) can also be valuable resources to help victims express and understand themselves. They are both factors of resilience and therapeutic tools.



# SGBV: WHAT TO SAY TO THE VICTIM?

- ✓ Bear in mind that a person's outfit, manner, or attitude do not in any way justify sexual harassment or violence.
- ✓ Bear in mind that when a person is the victim of sexual violence they are for the most part in shock and no longer have the capacity to analyze the situation or respond adequately.

## IN CASE OF AN ATTACK

if the victim is capable of a response and can take action for their own safety, they can:

### Flee the scene

Go somewhere safe.



### Take the perpetrator by surprise

Say they are sick (AIDS), sing, vomit, fart, pick their nose, act as if they were crazy.



### Request help

Find people, explain the problem, phone the police or friends.



### Defend oneself

Hit the other person where it hurts, throw objects at them.  
WEAK POINTS where to hit the perpetrator:  
Adam's apple, eyes, solar plexus, testicles, knees, feet.

### Set boundaries

Look the perpetrator straight in the eye, say no, avoid smiling, speak in a firm tone of voice, make oneself taller.



### Make noise:

Scream ("fire!" is more effective than "help!"), ring doorbells, whistle, honk.



### Call the police

Dial 101 or 112. It's free! !

Explain:

- 1 – where they are
- 2 - what is happening
- 3 - whether anyone is injured



101



## EVEN THOUGH IT MAY BE DIFFICULT, WHAT CAN A VICTIM DO AFTER BEING ASSAULTED?

Source: [https://justice.belgium.be/fr/publications/u\\_bent\\_slachtoffer](https://justice.belgium.be/fr/publications/u_bent_slachtoffer)

- Safety is the first priority. **Leave the place where the assault took place.**
- Seek someone whom they trust (e.g. a friend, family member, colleague...).
- **Visit a GP** for treatment and to receive a medical certificate. This is needed for work, for insurance and for the police.
- **Collect proof:** medical certificate, ripped or soiled clothes IN A PAPER BAG, photos of injuries, broken items, names of witnesses.
- **Take the time to think carefully:** report the assault to the police or not? They can also make a statement to the police so the incident goes on file. This can be of use later on if they decide to press charges.

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE: WHAT TO SAY TO A WITNESS?

Any person has already witnessed scenes of violence and sexual harassment, on various levels, in different forms.

**Anyone can intervene, with a few basic reflexes and simple gestures.**

THE WITNESS CAN:

- **Approach** the person in difficulty in case of any doubt and ask them if they need help.
- **Cause a diversion** by asking the perpetrator or the victim a random question, such as “do you know what time it is?” or intervene if possible.
- **Involve other witnesses**, i.e., passengers on a bus, and request their assistance.
- **In case of an emergency: dial 101 or 112.**
- Offer the victim **to go with them** to press charges
- **Provide contact details to the victim** in case they need a witness statement.

For more information:

<https://justitie.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/VOUS%20%C3%80TES%20TEMOIN.pdf>

## SGBV: WHAT TO SAY TO A (FUTURE) OFFENDER/PERPETRATOR?

- Know, understand, sense that they alone are responsible for the sexual assault.
- Pay attention to consent.
- **It has a therapeutic effect if offenders do not go unpunished and must answer for their actions before the law**, both under penal and civil law.
- They must realise that they did **not have the right to commit violence** and that everyone's physical and mental integrity must be respected.
- It is vital that they are treated in the context of an order to undergo treatment.

### **Perpetrators must:**

- Understand the psycho-traumatic consequences of violence on victims, the mechanisms that are involved in the production of emotional and violent behaviour.
- Must reflect on their relationship with others, their duty to renounce to relationships of influence and instrumentalization, understanding the concepts of respect for the rights and dignity of people, equality between men and women, children's rights, sexist stereotypes about men and women, false ideas about femininity, virility, children's education, sexuality, the use of prostitution and pornography.

In Belgium, perpetrators may contact or may be referred to Praxis  
[www.asblpraxis.be](http://www.asblpraxis.be)

# SGBV: THE GENDER-BASED APPROACH AND EMPOWERMENT

## SGBV: WHY APPLY A GENDER LENS?

THIS RELATES TO MEN AND WOMEN AND ENABLES US TO:

- Analyse social relations between men and women
- Examine the resulting differences and inequalities between people in terms of roles, tasks, responsibilities
- Detect the development of unequal and unjust relationships of power
- Detect violations of rights
- Study equality between men and women.

## SGBV: WHY ADD THE NOTION OF EMPOWERMENT?

The gender lens is not just an analysis tool. It also provides us with a strategy to find transformative solutions and answers, that promote equality between men and women. In situations of SGBV, the idea is to promote the empowerment of women and think about new forms of masculinity in men.

## WHAT IS EMPOWERMENT?

Anything that enables men and women to be in control of changes in their daily life, to take action and contribute to a more equal and just society.

The idea is to modify the relationships of power so that everyone can make decisions about their own life, develop their identity and role, to bring about collective change in society and politics.

Empowerment is an **individual and collective** process, which has an impact at the economic, political and social level. It is multisectoral.

Increased empowerment is also important for people who work in the reception, counselling and support of victims.

Like the victims, their relatives, the community liaisons and psycho-medical-legal-social counsellors also suffer from:

- A sense of isolation
- A fear of not being adequately informed
- A sense of helplessness when it comes to transforming the knowledge they jointly acquired into political action
- The impact of the account of the violence. This can hinder moving onto something else.

#### WHAT DOES EMPOWERMENT BRING?

- The valorisation of the person's lived experience.
- The ability of victims and professionals to take action when faced with injustice and helplessness.
- Increased knowledge through jointly acquiring knowledge.
- The joint development of strategies for personal and societal change, through the participation in citizen actions, research/action, training and advocacy.

#### HOW?

- ✓ Have an **impact** on information and knowledge.
- ✓ **Change** the support that is provided.
- ✓ **Raise the awareness of professionals** and provide training on all levels.
- ✓ **Involve new stakeholders**, including the target group.
- ✓ **Advocacy** in terms of rights.
- ✓ **Provide support** with a dynamic approach, consisting of a constant interaction between the individual and the collective.

This applies to all the stakeholders.

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>The dimensions of the <b>“power within”</b></p> <p><b>DESIRE</b></p> <p>individual and collective power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Self-esteem</li><li>○ Impression of being (something, someone)</li><li>○ Reinterpretation of social roles and cultural values</li></ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>The dimensions of the <b>“power to”</b></p> <p><b>HAVE-KNOW</b></p> <p>individual and collective power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ability, aptitudes, competences (know-how)</li><li>○ Ability to develop a critical conscience (critical knowledge)</li><li>○ Capacity to influence, to bring about change, to situate oneself in relation to the people around you (soft skills/know how to be)</li></ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>The dimensions of the <b>“power with”</b></p> <p>A political function</p> <p><b>POWER</b></p> <p>individual and collective power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ability to develop a collective critical conscience</li><li>○ Ability to organise oneself to bring about social-economic change/gender change</li><li>○ Impact on (local, national) development to bring about political change</li></ul>

# USEFUL ADDRESSES

## Hotlines

### Dutch

General helpline for victims of violence : 1712

Violence against LGBTQI: 0800 99 533 (Lumi), 0800 12 800 (Unia)

### French

- Intimate partner violence: 0800 30 030 - 0800 555 52 in Spanish (Ecoute violences conjugales)
- Forced marriage: 0800 90 901 (Mon Mariage M'appartient)
- Rape: 0800 98 100 (SOS Viol)
- Incest: 02 6466073 (SOS Inceste)
- Violence against LGBTQI: 0800 12 800 (Unia)

## Reference centres for victims of sexual violence

These centres provide different services under one roof. The victim can receive medical, legal, police, and psychosocial assistance. Their friends, relatives and professionals can also rely on assistance. The centres are open 24/7.

- **ZSG Gent**: 09/332.80.80, zsg@uzgent.be, C. Heymanslaan 10, 9000 Ghent.
- **ZSG Brussel/CPVS Bruxelles**: 02/535 45 42, CPVS@stpierre-bru.be, Rue Haute 320, 1000 Brussels.
- **CPVS Liège** : 04/284.35.11, cpvs@chu.ulg.ac.be, Rue de Gaillarmont 600, 4000 Liège.

## Websites

[www.ecouteviolencesconjugales.be](http://www.ecouteviolencesconjugales.be): domestic violence

[www.cvfe.be](http://www.cvfe.be): domestic violence

[www.cpvcf.org](http://www.cpvcf.org): domestic violence

[www.mariagemigration.org](http://www.mariagemigration.org): forced marriage

[www.vzwzijn.be](http://www.vzwzijn.be): Flemish centre of expertise, for domestic and honour-related violence

[www.sensoa.be](http://www.sensoa.be): Flemish centre of expertise for sexual violence

[www.caw.be](http://www.caw.be): assistance to victims of violence in Flanders and Brussels

[www.isalaasbl.be](http://www.isalaasbl.be): support for sex workers

[www.myria.be/fr/traite/centres-daccueil-pour-les-victimes](http://www.myria.be/fr/traite/centres-daccueil-pour-les-victimes): list of shelters for victims of trafficking

[www.unia.be](http://www.unia.be): discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation

[www.igvm-iefh.belgium.be](http://www.igvm-iefh.belgium.be): discrimination and violence based on gender

[www.nupraatikerover.be](http://www.nupraatikerover.be): for youngsters with questions on sexual violence

[www.violencessexuelles.be](http://www.violencessexuelles.be): sexual violence

[www.awel.be](http://www.awel.be): for youngster with questions on sexuality, violence, etc.

[www.gams.be](http://www.gams.be): for questions on FGM

[www.adde.be](http://www.adde.be): legal assistance for migrant victims of SGBV

[www.praxis.be](http://www.praxis.be): work together with perpetrators on their rehabilitation

[www.garance.be](http://www.garance.be): prevention of violence

## FURTHER READING

### PUBLICATIONS FROM LE MONDE SELON LES FEMMES

Collection Les essentiels du genre, Le Monde selon les femmes

- Issue 1 : Approche genre - Concept et enjeux actuels
- Issue 10 : Genre et empoderamiento
- Issue 11 : Violences basées sur le genre
- Issue 15 : Genre et migration internationale

Collection Focus genre, Le Monde selon les femmes

- Perspectives de genre dans la lutte contre les violences sexuelles
- Brochure Prostitution : Point de rencontre entre l'exploitation sexuelle et l'exploitation économique

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## ANNEXES

## Annex 1 – Gender Squares

SGBV is a control instrument that maintains women and men in their traditional role expected by society.

Copy and cut the attached squares and put them in each of the below categories. Watch out, some squares for in multiple categories!

### **Cat. 1 Denying, Minimizing**

Refusing to admit bad treatment, not feeling responsible for violent behaviour.

### **Cat 2. Isolating, Sequestering**

Monitoring everything the victims do, with whom they talk, who they see, limiting their external activities, forbidding them to go out.

### **Cat 3. Making them feel guilty, Blaming, Humiliating**

Saying that it's the victim's fault, depreciating them so they lose their self-confidence, blackmailing, ...

### **Cat 4. Harassing, Threatening, Beating**

Terrifying the victim by particular looks, words, acts, verbal or physical assault, knocks and sexual abuse, ...

### **Cat 5. Prostitution, Pornography, Hyper Sexualization**

Considering the body as an object, conveying the image of “the strong man”, using his physical appearance and sexuality to boost self-esteem, overly mediatize sexual conducts.

I am sorry for the slap, I didn't know what I was doing. I was drunk

Why did you "like" his/her photo?

When a girl says no, it often means yes

I think that prostitution reduces the number of rape cases



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Men and women have to remain virgin until marriage

I don't pay alimony because my ex uses it to go out

Men are also victims of violence

In my couple, there has to be sex almost every day

You're exaggerating. I am only joking!

I don't want you to work, you must stay at home

She asked for it

Where are you?

For me, there is no such thing as rape in a couple

When no one is around, my boss tries to kiss me

Why are you going to this activity, it's pointless

Shut up, it's not the moment

Boys don't cry

Since our separation, I am afraid to bump into my ex on the streets

Wolf-whistling is a compliment.

I didn't hurt her that much

A girl who has had many boyfriends is a slut

Women love it when you do that to them! I saw it on the internet

I think jealousy is as sign of love

## Annex 2 - Case Studies



### Case Study 1:

Maria is 43 women from Latin-America. She came to Belgium 6 months ago with her twelve-year-old daughter and her Belgian husband (who is not the father of her child). She met her husband two years ago when he travelled to her country on holidays. They got married a couple of months later. At the start, they were in a long-distance relationship until Maria accepted to relocate to Belgium upon the request of her husband. They got married in Belgium.

Very quickly, her Maria's husband's attitude towards her changed. He suddenly became very violent and abusive towards her and her daughter. He restricts them of many things, including food at times. The only thing he accepts is to let her daughter go to school. He is keen to keep a good appearance to outsiders; therefore, he only gives them the strict minimum to cover the public transportation expenses to and from school. He tells her that he needs to control the economy as they are producing additional expenses for him.

Following this, Maria decided to sleep separately from her husband, with her daughter. Maria has caught her husband masturbating close to where she and her daughter sleep. This behaviour, Maria sees as a sort of bullying or control strategy. Her daughter lives in fear and constant stress and is failing at school. Maria has a very poor social network and her economic resources are scarce. She is completely dependent on her husband. She does not speak the language, which considerably limits her possibilities to ask for help or advice around. At school, a mother approached her because she heard rumours about Maria and her daughter. She provided her with a phone number of an organization that could provide support.

Maria contacts you over the phone.



## Case Study 2:

Levan is a 38 years old divorced man from Georgia. He is the father of two, a daughter of nine and a son of six. He travels to Europe in order to protect and seek assistance for his daughter who has suffered sexual abuse from the new partner of the mother.

According to his daughter, the new partner has touched her on multiple occasions. Her cousin of twelve also expressed similar stories. The two girls stated that these behaviours have been happening for two years already. When the partner is alone with the girls, he forces them to show their bodies and then touches them. Due to this situation, the mother and her partner have been arrested by the police, however, he is now conditionally released while awaiting the formal procedure, this renders Levan very worried, he is afraid that his daughter will once more suffer sexual abuse.

Levan therefore decides to migrate to Belgium in order to protect his children. He travels with a visa but soon after his arrival he loses all his belongings. Very soon, his economic status becomes precarious. He has difficulties to find a place to live as a single father with 2 children. He spends most nights at a friend, but he also spends some nights in the streets with his children. He is very worried that his children will be taken away from him. He wants to find help to understand his options but struggles because he only speaks Georgian. Because of the lack of stability, the constant fear to lose his children and the lack of decent food, Levan starts to feel more and more depressed. He slowly loses all hope to get out of the situation he is in.

After a few weeks, Levan meets a nice volunteer from a local organization who works at a shelter for homeless people. She suggests bringing him to a social service where he will be helped with the support of an interpreter. Levan accepts and follows her.



### Case Study 3:

Chen is a 28 years old Chinese national. She was approached by a recruitment agency in her hometown with a promising well-paid job offer. She flew to Belgium with a man from the agency. Upon disembarkation of the flight she realized that her phone had been taken away from her. At the arrivals, she was greeted by a well-mannered man who asked for her passport, stating this was for administrative purposes and that a work contract would be provided.

The man drove her to her accommodation from the airport. She dropped her luggage as the man walked towards the door. On his way out he mentioned that he only had one pair of keys and would have to lock the door, he promised her that a key would be given to her as soon as possible. Chen did not receive any food that evening.

The following day, the same man arrived to bring her to work. The initial promise from the recruitment agency was untrue, she was asked to clean a house. She started to clean the house. Occasionally, he would raise his voice and physically abuse her. Chen asked about her phone, passport, keys, and salary. The man replied that all was on hold and that she would be paid soon. At night, she returned to her accommodation. The week continued in a similar pattern. Chen felt very isolated.

On Saturday afternoon the man showed up to her accommodation drunk, locked the door, and started to verbally abuse Chen. She felt belittled and froze. He started to touch her in inappropriate ways, she couldn't move, she couldn't scream, she felt completely powerless. That afternoon Chen was victim of rape. These incidents continued for a while. Chen lost track of time.

One day when she was brought to another house. The man started yelling at her and kicking her. A neighbour saw what was happening through the window and called the police. The police arrived and asked for their ID cards and noticed that Chen was undocumented. She was brought to the police station for questioning. The police officer referred Chen to your service.









This publication suggests a basis for training professionals and stakeholders, working with migrants who are victims of sexual and gender-based violence. It aims to improve the capability of these professionals and stakeholders, to provide tailored support and direct the victims and witnesses of sexual violence and their families to the right people and organisations. This tool helps readers better understand the concepts and mechanisms of sexual and sexist violence, the legal frameworks in force in Belgium and the available support services.

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