



BUILDING BRIDGES TO END FGM

2017

THE END FGM EUROPEAN NETWORK

VISION



A world free of all forms of female genital mutilation (FGM) where women and girls are empowered and can fully enjoy their human rights.

MISSION



To be the driving force of the European movement to end all forms of female genital mutilation (FGM), joining the forces of communities and civil society organisations, and building synergies and cooperation with all relevant actors in Europe and globally.



This guide has been produced with the financial support of the European Union's Rights, Equality and citizenship programme, the Wallace Global Fund and the Human Dignity Foundation. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the End FGM European Network and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of our funders.

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END FGM
MEMBERS



END FGM
EUROPEAN NETWORK



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the work of The End FGM European Network. 2017 was The Networks most active year to date. With a firmer structure in place by the end of 2016, End FGM EU has continued to grow as a network becoming a stronger, more recognized movement in Europe and globally against female genital mutilation (FGM).

Thanks to a fully staffed secretariat, a greater amount of ground was covered enabling End FGM EU to expand its outreach; establishing more connections using our Building Bridges approach both across sectors and regions of the world.

Our connections with affected communities was further consolidated through events with grassroots communities and EU level decision makers. Our new focus on engaging young women from the Diaspora has just sparked off and we aim to consolidate this critical area of work in the coming year.

Stakeholders have continued to be supportive and satisfied with the work of The Network in relation to an increase of awareness-raising, capacity building and policy and advocacy work as well as achieving its objectives in all activities and projects. Our members have started to collaborate better through the twinning programme and joint European projects such as the United to End FGM and CHANGE Plus.

End FGM EU continues to develop its reputation as being a recognized body for mutual exchange and learning experiences where expertise is being shared and built.

The work programme 2017 focused on the following key areas of our strategic plan:



Strengthen the Network's operations, membership and financial sustainability



Being a source of expertise for the provision of strengthening prevention measures, stronger protection mechanisms and support services



Helping shape better transnational and transcontinental cooperation



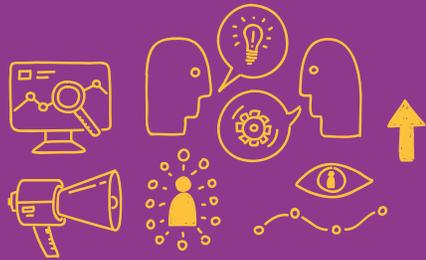
Supporting the implementation of capacity-building actions for professionals



Enabling girls, women, families and communities to become agents of change



Building the capacity of members on effective policies, strategies and practices



End FGM pursued advocacy at EU level supported at national level by the Network's members through their engagement with national decision makers. This was reinforced by the implementation of the communication strategy and development of tools adapted to various audiences and public mobilisation at key moments. The Network development and capacity building of the members enabled involvement in advocacy and communication work.

This Annual Report provides information on our work and outlines the progress made in 2017. In the past year we worked towards a new strategic plan to guide the growing phase of the Network and we are pleased to share our new vision with you.

Finally, the work of the Network has been made possible through generous support from a number of European institutions including the European Commission Operating Grants, the Wallace Global Foundation, Human Dignity Foundation and Sigrid Rausing Trust. I would like to express my thanks also to the staff of the Network and the Board who have provided valuable technical support and governance oversight throughout the year.

NAANA OTOO-OYORTEY

End FGM European Network President



THE END FGM EUROPEAN NETWORK

WHAT WE DO



BOARD

Board meetings: Four physical Board meetings in Brussels; in some cases, Board members joined via Skype.



PRESIDENT
Naana Otoo-Oyortey
Executive Director
Forward UK



SECRETARY
Christina Kaili
Project Coordinator, Mediterranean
Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS),
Cyprus



VICE-PRESIDENT
Clara Caldera
Programme Officer
AIDOS, Italy



MEMBER
Zahra Naleie
Senior FGM Project Manager,
Federation of Somali Associations
in the Netherlands (FSAN)



TREASURER
Fabienne Richard
Director, GAMS Belgium



MEMBER
Aurélie Hamelin-Desrumaux
Project Manager
Equilibres & Populations, France

SECRETARIAT (2017)

Director
Policy and Advocacy Officer
Administrative & Finance Officer
Communications Officer
Communications Intern
Programme Intern



Liuska Sanna
Chiara Cosentino
Florence Boivin
Lisa O' Leary
Sara García de Blas
Edwige Martiale Douagni

COMING TOGETHER

NETWORK GROWTH ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶

The Network continued to grow in 2017, welcoming two new members:



The Finnish League for Human Rights (FLHR), Finland (Full membership)



AITIMA, Greece (Observer membership)



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NEW MEMBERS

31 MAY
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



2018

STRATEGIC
PLAN



GENERAL ASSEMBLY



The Annual General Assembly took place on the 31st of May 2017 and approved the annual work plan and budget 2018 and the technical and financial reports 2017, including the external financial audit report.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 2022



A new strategic plan framework was discussed with the members in a two-day workshop prepared with and facilitated by an external expert. A small working group involving members was set up to follow the next steps in the development of the new strategic document 'Strategic Plan 2018-2022'.

2017 AT A GLANCE...



IMPACT 2017

IMPACT ON TARGET GROUPS

The training of French-speaking Ambassadors improved our outreach capacity to certain communities.

Youth engagement: The Youth Programme Meeting was the first step in engaging young people from FGM-affected communities into our activities and empowering younger ages to play a role in promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls.

With the dissemination of our position paper on the use of language around FGM to media we furthered our work towards empowering those affected by FGM by offering alternative narratives and messaging which are positive and non-stigmatising.

EU and national policy makers and stakeholders benefited from the Network's contribution to policy consultations and the provision we made of information, evidence, good practices and resources.



Networks of professionals in contact with women and girls at risk of or living with FGM benefited from the Networks' dissemination work on tools and resources for professionals and from the advocacy work targeted towards making training for them available.

Media and general public have increased their awareness and understanding of FGM as a form of VAWG and have received alternative narratives, language and visuals thanks to our communication approach that is based on human rights, empowerment and non-stigmatisation.

End FGM EU members received information and communications on legal and policy developments, FGM-related initiatives, news, resources, events. Moreover, their capacity was increased thanks to the exchange visits, the two events on our Building Bridges approach and the tools produced (briefings, toolkit, infographics, etc.).

CSOs/NGOs from Europe, Africa, the US and Asia benefited from the work linked to our annual campaign on the building bridges approach, which contributed to strengthening connections between actors operating in different parts of the world to end FGM.





End FGM EU's main themes in 2017 were the EU accession and national implementation of the Istanbul Convention, child rights, victims' rights and building bridges between EU internal and external action.

In the European Year of focused action against violence against women, End FGM EU advocated for **the EU ratification of the Istanbul Convention**, which the EU signed in June 2017, with all relevant EU institutions. Moreover, we helped Network members to increase their advocacy on **ratification and/or implementation of the Istanbul Convention capacity at national level**, through the creation of an **Advocacy Toolkit** on the Istanbul Convention as a Tool to end FGM.

- ▶ Building on past work on the best interest of the child, End FGM EU created a Briefing Paper framing the **European Commission's 10 principles for integrated child protection systems in the context of FGM** and presented it to key stakeholders in EU institutions.
- ▶ We advocated for the implementation of the EU Victims' Rights Directive, based on the paper produced in 2016, including through the development and dissemination of an **Infographic targeting FGM survivors and their rights as Victims of VAWG**.
- ▶ Finally, in the framework of our annual theme on **Building Bridges to end FGM**, we advocated for cross-border interventions to tackle the issue of FGM during several international fora: a parliamentary consultation on FGM-CM gathering European and African parliamentarians, held in Morocco in October 2017; the 7th EU-AU civil society seminar and the 34th session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

- ▶ To support the implementation of EU policy commitments, we organised **3 study visits for EU representatives** to Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. The visits aimed at bridging the gap between the EU institutions and the local realities in EU member states to put together efforts to end FGM. They provided policy-makers and civil servants in charge of relevant dossiers with evidence from the ground on the reality of girls, women and communities affected by FGM. The EU representatives were able to meet with grassroots communities, see services available, and meet local and national stakeholders. The study visits were facilitated by End FGM EU members.

CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC POLICY AND DEBATES

End FGM EU made various contributions to public policies and debates surrounding issues relating to FGM in 2017 including: prevention of violence against women and children, forced marriage, monitoring gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and asylum.

Our contributions ranged from consultation responses, open letters and amendments to parliamentary reports to face-to-face meetings and roundtable debates with key policy-makers and alliance building initiatives. These contribution opportunities were hosted by various related bodies and organisations including:





EUROPEAN COALITION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

a network of over 25 European NGOs working towards the EU ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention

ROTATING PRESIDENCIES OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU

meetings on semester priorities and recommendations on the elimination of all forms of VAWG, including FGM.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S STEERING COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Drafting Group on Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage, publication of a Guide on good practices to end FGM and FM.

INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS CONSULTATION

on ending Female Genital Mutilation & Child Marriage, to strengthen parliamentarians' engagement to end FGM. Organised by UNFPA and EPF.



EU HEALTH POLICY PLATFORM

Migration & Health thematic working group, recommendations including the need to address the vulnerabilities of FGM-affected migrant women and girls.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EU-NGO Round Table Meeting on Victims of Crime

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights 2017 "Women's Rights in Turbulent Times".

EEAS
Contribution to the 7th Civil Society Seminar prior to the AU-EU Human Rights Dialogue, to produce recommendations addressed to African and European institutions

EASO
Contribution to the 2017 Annual Report to strengthen the gender-sensitivity of the CEAS to better protect FGM-affected women and girls who seek asylum



COMMUNICATIONS

Communications continued to grow in 2017, placing specific emphasis on spreading awareness through **positive, empowering and non-stigmatising imagery and language** throughout communities including the wider-public and national & European-level decision makers and stakeholders. This was done primarily through the mobilization of the **Building Bridges Art Exhibition**, the **How to talk About FGM** position paper and raising the profiles of the **End FGM Ambassadors** who helped strengthen the voice of those affected by FGM. These efforts also brought a human-rights based approach to the conversations being had about FGM at EU and national level.

A blog was developed as part of the End FGM EU website (www.endfgm.eu/news-en-events/blog) as a means to discuss and address issues relating to FGM informally featuring contributions from Ambassadors, journalists and professionals in the field of FGM.

The Network's messages continued to circulate and expand across its **social media** platforms fetching 1,759 new subscribers collectively across both Facebook and Twitter reaching the general public, affected FGM communities, journalists, film makers, EU decisions makers and stakeholders.

The increased communication across all channels has lead to a broader landscape of groups and individuals being further aware of the Network's strategic priorities, positions and messages.



COMMUNICATIONS 2017 AT A GLANCE

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ISSUES OF
THE END FGM
NEWSLETTER



1,488

RECIPIENTS OF
THE NEWSLETTER

SOCIAL MEDIA



5,522

PAGE LIKES



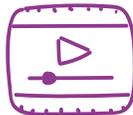
8,889

FOLLOWERS



NEWS COVERAGE

- **Pan European Networks:**
Ending FGM
- **MO Magazine:** Strijden tegen vrouwelijke genitale verminking met religie en muziek
- **Media de Bruxelles:** Journée de la fille: une expo pour l'abandon des mutilations génitales féminines
- **European Commission No Non Nein:**
Ending The Silence on FGM



VIDEOS

- ▶ European Forum to Build Bridges on FGM
- ▶ Building Bridges Seminar
- ▶ Building Bridges Travelling Exhibition
- ▶ Youth Programme Meeting



All videos found on the End FGM European Network YouTube channel.



JOINT INFOGRAPHIC WITH VICTIM SUPPORT EUROPE

'FGM as a form of VAWG (Violence against women and girls) & victims support'

SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION/VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

FGM - VAWG
Female Genital Mutilation is defined as a form of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in accordance with the 2011 Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

FGM SURVIVORS ARE VICTIMS OF VAWG
Women and girls who are survivors of FGM are also victims of violence against women and girls. As a female victim of VAWG you are protected by EU and international law.

VICTIMS OF VAWG HAVE RIGHTS
Any person who has been the target of violence as a victim of violence against women and girls is entitled to a number of rights under the EU including the right to support and an effort to resolve their situation.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A VICTIM OF VAWG?
Victim support services must:
- Inform victims of their rights
- Provide procedural and practical information
- Provide referrals to specialised services
- Provide emotional support

Victims have the right to confidential, free support, whether they reported the crime or not, irrespective of their residence status.

HOW CAN I ACCESS THESE SERVICES?
Visit www.endfgm.eu or www.endfgm.eu/members for further information on victims rights.

RIGHTS SPECIFIC TO VICTIMS OF FGM

I SUFFERING FROM RECEIVED AND AM EXPERIENCING MANY TYPES OF NON-MEDICAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, WHO CAN I TURN TO FOR ADVICE?

Persons experiencing these issues are entitled to free information, advice, emotional, psychological and practical support from their health services. Victim support services are also provided by specialised NGOs. See www.endfgm.eu for more information.

WHICH CAN I FIND AN NGO CLOSE TO ME FOR REFERRAL?
For any information concerning access to such services, interested persons are invited to contact the End FGM European Network and its partner organisations.

CAN THE POLICE HELP ME GET SUPPORT?
Yes. The EU member states are obliged to facilitate the referral of victims to support services.

I DO NOT WANT TO LOGIC A COMPLAINT WITH THE POLICE, AM I STILL ENTITLED TO ACCESS VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES?
Yes. FGM survivors are not obliged to file a formal complaint in order to have access to victim support services.

MORE QUESTIONS?
For further information and answers to questions concerning victim support for survivors of FGM you can refer to the "Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on their rights, support and protection of victims of crime" available on endfgm.eu website.



DEVELOPMENT OF END FGM BLOG



AMBASSADOR ACTIVITIES

The End FGM Ambassadors are either survivors and/or representatives of affected communities and activists within their own community. The training of French-speaking End FGM Ambassadors improved our outreach capacity reaching more communities. Furthermore, the participation of our Ambassadors in European-wide advocacy and communication work helped strengthen the voices of those affected by FGM at EU level.



BELGIUM



ITALY



PORTUGAL

BUILDING BRIDGES IN ACTION

2017 saw the mobilizing of various events and activities based around the concept of Building Bridges to end FGM. The “Building Bridges” concept is defined by “Synergies and cooperation between actors from different sectors in EU countries of residence and in countries of origin to implement actions, policies and legal frameworks to end FGM tackling the transnational nature of this practice”

Building Bridges Knowledge Sharing Seminar

A knowledge-sharing seminar on Building Bridges was held on May 30th on the Network’s priorities to address the cross-border nature of FGM. The seminar featured the sharing of promising practices by select members of the Network participating in the building bridges approach as well as external organizations, professionals and policy-makers based in the EU and working with diaspora communities on the cross-border nature of FGM. Seminar participants presented projects, intuitional perspectives, pilot programmes, efforts on building action plans and using communication as a tool to build bridges between the EU and countries of origin to end FGM.



European Forum to Build Bridges on FGM

The “European Forum to Build Bridges on FGM” was held on the 28th of November in Brussels by End FGM EU in cooperation with DG JUST and DG DEVCO, and with the support of the Human Dignity Foundation and the Wallace Global Fund.

The Forum gave the opportunity to more than 100 actors working to end FGM - including NGOs, IGOs, service providers, practitioners, donors, researchers, experts, lawyers, academics, civil servants, activists, survivors and community representatives - from worldwide (Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia, US) to share experiences, exchange good practices and discuss future trends in the field of FGM.

The objective of this Forum was to give a platform to all actors involved in working to end FGM worldwide to explore how to build bridges and strengthen cooperation between different regions of the world, between different sectors and how to foster actions that address various forms of gender-based violence against women and girls (VAWG) through a holistic approach.

The outcome of the Forum was a set of conclusions and recommendations having the added value of being formulated by a multi-stakeholder audience coming from different parts of the world. This preliminary document was presented directly to the FGM Donors Working Group that had its 2017 annual meeting in Brussels right after the Forum. This intended proximity brought another added value to the Forum itself, since it gave the opportunity to all participants to interact face to face with donors and express to them their concerns and suggestions.

BUILDING BRIDGES PHOTO EXHIBITION

The Building Bridges photo exhibition was implemented in four different member countries: The Netherlands, Cyprus, The UK and Belgium, with the objective of promoting behavioural change, raising awareness on the issue of FGM, spreading positive, non-stigmatising language and imagery and working with affected communities to shift behaviours and work towards ending the practice.

Exhibitions were launched by either End FGM Ambassadors or community representatives at exhibition launches hosted by members.



Building Bridges position paper

A position paper developing the Building Bridges concept was produced on behalf of the Network.

Visit www.endfgm.eu/resources/end-fgm-publications to read more.



CAPACITY BUILDING

YOUTH PROGRAMME MEETING



Our commitments to end FGM in Europe and beyond would be incomplete and unsustainable without mobilizing and preparing the next generation of activists for the tasks ahead. We believe that children and young people have a unique perspective and potential to drive this change if they are educated and empowered to play their future role promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls. The Youth Programme Meeting was the first step in engaging young people from FGM-affected communities into End FGM EU's annual activities. The two-day workshop was based on a participatory approach aimed at giving ownership to the young participants. This select group of young people will be strategic in influencing our work on advocacy and awareness raising, by taking the lead and/or cooperating with older generations of activists to plan and implement activities that promote human rights and protection from FGM.





CHANGE PLUS

The CHANGE Plus project is aimed at promoting behaviour change towards the abandonment of FGM in practising communities across the EU.

On September 26th, End FGM EU organised for community representatives who were trained via the Change Plus programme to gather in the European Parliament and meet with EU institutions' representatives to discuss the role communities

play and the challenges they face in ending FGM in Europe.

The event was a crucial opportunity for EU decision and policy-makers in Brussels to listen to community representatives from the grassroots level within EU member states, with the aim to elaborate common flexible and innovative solutions to achieve the common goal of putting an end to the practice of FGM in Europe and beyond.

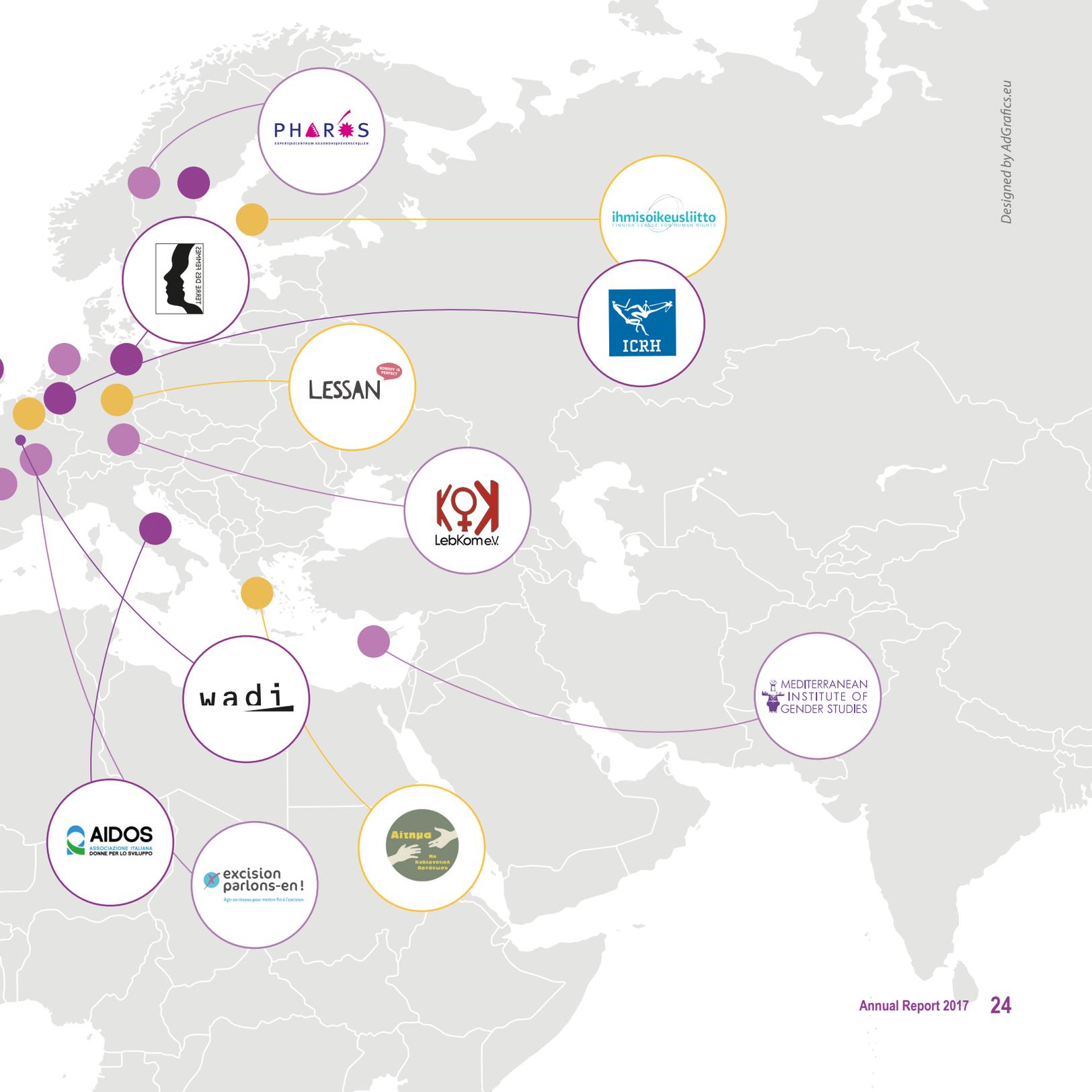


MAIN RESULTS

- ▶ Increased guidance for relevant actors on effective and promising prevention measures, programmes and services
- ▶ Advances in the implementation of protection mechanisms and support services
- ▶ Better awareness on and action towards transcontinental cooperation
- ▶ Better implementation of relevant EU, national and international commitments
- ▶ Strengthened partnerships and alliances
- ▶ Empowerment of girls, women and communities
- ▶ Professionals are better equipped to address FGM
- ▶ Improved capacity of members in specific thematic areas and advocacy
- ▶ Youth-focused engagement
- ▶ Increased awareness among media and general public of empowering discourse
- ▶ Effective organisational management and governance
- ▶ 2 new members

MEMBERS OF END FGM EU





End FGM European Network

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