



Resolution 2480 (2023)¹

The role and responsibility of men and boys in stopping gender-based violence against women and girls

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Gender-based violence against women and girls, which finds its origin in and reflects profound gender inequalities, is widespread and harmful. It affects society as a whole and should be recognised as a global human rights issue. In Europe, it is estimated that one in three women is a survivor of gender-based violence. No country and no sector are immune to this violence. A few years ago, the #MeToo movement went viral and contributed to a lifting of taboos. It has created a greater awareness of the urgency of preventing and combating gender-based violence.

2. The fight against gender-based violence has been historically led by women and women's rights organisations. However, men and boys, in all their diversity, also have an important role to play. Men can be agents of change by speaking out against harmful practices, acting as role models and challenging sexism. They are often best placed to call on other men to be active in the fight against gender-based violence and to set an example for future generations. All genders, including men in all their diversity, can and should be allies and partners in the fight for gender equality and against gender-based violence.

3. The Parliamentary Assembly recognises the responsibility of men and boys in preventing and stopping gender-based violence against women and girls and urges them to be proactive in this regard. It acknowledges that not all men are perpetrators of gender-based violence but that the majority of perpetrators are men. It welcomes the adoption of the Dublin Declaration on the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence on 30 September 2022 by 38 Council of Europe member States, which committed to “ensuring that strategies aimed at preventing and combating violence against women also address the specific role of men and boys in preventing violence against women” and to developing specific measures aimed at involving them. It recalls its [Resolution 2027 \(2014\)](#) “Focusing on the perpetrators to prevent violence against women”, its [Resolution 2274 \(2019\)](#) “Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment” and its [Resolution 2405 \(2021\)](#) “Revision of the Code of conduct for members of the Parliamentary Assembly: introducing the explicit prohibition of sexism, sexual harassment and sexual violence and misconduct”. The Assembly's #NotInMyParliament awareness-raising initiative was launched to prevent and combat sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments.

4. Men and boys are not a homogeneous group and masculinities are multiple. Actions targeted at men and boys need to take this diversity into account. The Assembly stresses that promoting mindful masculinities and respectful relationships, as well as the equal sharing of care responsibilities between women and men, will be a step towards more gender equality and will be beneficial to society. To this end, education and raising awareness of men and boys can play an important part. Talking about the pyramid of violence could also be a starting point of the discussion.

5. The Assembly recognises that men and boys can also be affected by gender stereotypes and models of harmful masculinity and stresses the importance of adopting a gender perspective that is inclusive. Men, including men in positions of political, economic or social power, must be part of the response and participate

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 January 2023 (6th sitting) (see [Doc. 15678](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Petra Stienen). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 January 2023 (6th sitting).



in changing mindsets, behaviours and social norms in order to prevent and combat gender-based violence. Parliamentarians, as influential public figures and legislators, hold a special responsibility for contributing to gender justice and society's mobilisation against gender-based violence.

6. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, "Istanbul Convention") states in its Article 12, paragraph 4, that all members of society, especially men and boys, should be encouraged to contribute actively to preventing violence. The Assembly has relentlessly called for the ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention. It recalls that the fight against gender-based violence is closely connected to the fight against gender-based stereotypes and patriarchal values, and reiterates its full support for the convention. The deconstruction of systems of patriarchal privileges will be a key step to reaching gender equality and ending impunity for perpetrators of gender-based violence. The Assembly deplores the development of anti-gender movements which deny the reality of gender-based violence and calls for a resistance against the backlash.

7. The Assembly welcomes the adoption by the United Nations Human Rights Council of Resolution A/HRC/35/10 "Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: engaging men and boys in preventing and responding to violence against all women and girls". It supports the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe and welcomes its work towards adoption by the Committee of Ministers of guidelines on the place of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women.

8. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member and observer States, as well as all States whose parliament enjoys observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly to:

- 8.1. ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention, if they have not yet done so;
- 8.2. adopt strategies or national action plans to prevent and combat gender-based violence and provide for measures with a dedicated budget that promote responsibility and the role of men and boys;
- 8.3. adopt legislation on defining rape by the absence of consent, if this has not yet been done, in line with the requirements of the Istanbul Convention, which states that "consent must be given voluntarily as the result of the person's free will assessed in the context of the surrounding circumstances" (Article 36);
- 8.4. implement Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 to member States on preventing and combating sexism;
- 8.5. launch awareness-raising campaigns on the responsibility of men and boys in preventing and combating gender-based violence, including as bystanders;
- 8.6. promote a gender-balanced representation in the cultural, economic, media, public and political sectors;
- 8.7. create, if they have not already done so, preventive intervention and treatment programmes for perpetrators of gender-based violence against women and girls, based on existing international standards in this area;
- 8.8. provide comprehensive training for professionals, including members of the police, lawyers, judges, prosecutors, healthcare professionals and social workers, on all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls, on detecting and responding to gender-based violence, on assistance to survivors and on the rights of victims;
- 8.9. adopt policies and measures encouraging the equal participation of men in care activities;
- 8.10. improve data collection on gender-based violence in line with existing standards and good practices in this area;
- 8.11. support research into the costs of harmful masculinity for society and the costs of gender-based violence;
- 8.12. publicise the harmful effects of gender-based violence on survivors and on society in general;
- 8.13. adopt an intersectional approach, taking into account all diversities and intersecting forms of discrimination, in the fight against gender-based violence;
- 8.14. encourage discussions on gender equality, the sharing of care responsibilities and combating sexism and gender-based violence in workplaces;

8.15. support male role models engaged in the fight against gender-based violence and in the promotion of mindful masculinities;

8.16. provide financial support to non-governmental organisations working on preventing and combating gender-based violence, including providing assistance to survivors, and additional financial support to non-governmental organisations promoting gender equality through combating harmful masculinities and arranging activities focusing on the responsibility of men and boys in this fight.

9. With regard to preventing and combating gender-based stereotypes, the Assembly calls on these States to:

9.1. invest in education on gender equality from the youngest age, and in the training of teachers on gender equality, and ensure that gender equality is discussed at school on a regular basis;

9.2. develop toolkits designed to challenge stereotypical gender roles;

9.3. ensure the provision of comprehensive sexuality education that includes discussions on gender-based stereotypes, the meaning of consent and respect in intimate relationships;

9.4. ask sports clubs and federations to contribute to the fight against gender-based stereotypes and to promote gender equality;

9.5. encourage the production of cultural programmes that address gender roles and masculinities;

9.6. encourage media outlets to react to sexist remarks and behaviour, take responsibility and step up prevention efforts.

10. The Assembly calls on national parliaments to ensure that they are free of gender-based violence and sexism and encourages them to organise awareness-raising events on the responsibility of men and boys to prevent and stop gender-based violence and on mindful masculinities.

11. The Assembly calls on political parties to make the fight against gender-based violence a political priority and to promote the participation of women in their decision-making bodies. It also calls on them to adopt a zero-tolerance policy on gender-based violence and initiate seminars on preventing and combating it.

12. The Assembly calls on all its members, including men, in all their diversity, to speak up against manifestations of gender-based violence, to be proactive in preventing and fighting gender-based violence, to counter misogyny in politics and to initiate debates on gender equality in their national parliaments.