

# **Political Efforts and Experience to Fight FGM in Austria**

A Decade of Good Cooperation between  
Parliament, Government, Platform „Stop FGM“,  
Public Health Care Units, and Different NGOs

- Survey by the African Women's Organisation:
- 30% of parents coming from 28 African states: did or planned to exercise FGM
- 90% out of them during holiday in country of origin, 9% within EU, 1% in Austria

**2000 | empiric basis**

- Amendment to the Austrian criminal law, where FGM constitutes the crime of (serious) injury:
- FGM is also liable to prosecution, if the victim consents to the mutilation and
- if the mutilation takes place abroad

**2001 | penalty code**

- The Austrian development cooperation implements a film project with villagers at the Afar region in Ethiopia
- The “Waris Dirie Foundation” is established in Austria

**2002 | project in Ethiopia**

- Feb 2003: Conference Zero tolerance on FGM/Addis Abeba, international day
- Foundation "Austrian Platform Stop FGM"
- Homepage [www.stopFGM.net](http://www.stopFGM.net)
- Online support: 1230 signatures meanwhile

**2003 | foundation of platform**

- First press conference around Feb 6 – introducing international day combating FGM, massive media response
- Cooperation with Female Health Agent of the City of Vienna
- Knowledge about FGM becomes part of the curriculum for midwife education

**2004 | midwife trainings**

- The Austrian Platform organizes a survey among doctors and midwives:
- Much ignorance among doctors, more knowledge among midwives, but:
- High readiness to get more information
- Offer of medical information – full house

**2005 | survey knowledge**

- All party motion at the parliament: 6<sup>th</sup> February should become an international day of UN, Minister of foreign affairs mentions this need at UN
- FGM is pursuing an official offense, without the consent of the victim
- The limitation period only begins with the majority age of the victim (18 years)
- “Bright Future”: first information centre in Vienna

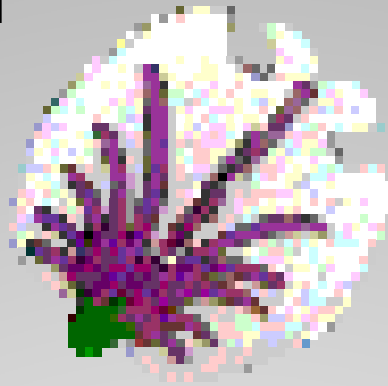
**2005 | international day, law**



- More information offered to doctors, evening events
- Cooperation with Muslim religious leader: FGM is not required by the Koran, some hundred parents just before the summer holidays
- Focus on harmful traditions during EU presidency of Austria

**2006 | more information & law**

- Launching a pin



- Flower Clitoria, right to physical integrity
- FEM South medical counselling unit – focus on women with migration background

**2007 | make the fight visible**

- Invitation of the speaker of the Austrian Parliament: Information for kindergarten teachers– legal background, possible activities, responsibility
- Information folder for parents: five languages (German, English, Arabic, Somali, French), hundreds of medical practices who offer it
- Presentation of National Action Plan

**2008 | parents & pedagogues**

- Cooperation with UN special rapporteur on torture: FGM is a form of torture
- Panel discussion about FGM as human rights abuse
- Medical training for surgeons at hospitals and ambulances with gynaecological ambulances
- City of Vienna: Guideline for doctors, nurses, teachers, ... how to react on FGM

**2009 | focus on human rights**

- Instruction for staff members of women's counselling centres about different opportunities for affected women
- Introduction of the ai campaign "end fgm" at the Austrian Parliament
- Parliamentary questions on the implementation of the National Action Plan combating FGM

**2010 | prevention, end FGM**

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**Thank you for your commitment!**