

16 Days 2024

Curb the rising tide of radical misogyny - invest in prevention

Extreme misogyny is spreading rapidly and across borders.

Misogyny and gender inequality cause violence against women.

We know how to end it.

Extreme misogyny is not new, but online spaces are facilitating a resurgence and re-entrenching of attitudes and behaviours that seek to justify and incite violence against women and girls. **Men are using the internet to spread misogynistic views rapidly and across borders** [1].

Misogyny can be an entry-point through which boys and men are exposed to wider hateful views, including **antisemitism, neo-Nazism, and anti-migrant activism** [2]. Sexist online 'jokes' embedded in hate can quickly turn into extremism.

Men's violence against women and girls is facilitated and justified by widespread misogyny. Migrant and minority ethnic women, disabled women, and LGBT women are even more at risk.

Misogyny is a public safety threat. It is a violation of human rights, extremely costly to society, and deeply harms a significant number of women and girls. [3]

- There were **14,417** sexual crimes recorded in Scotland in the year ending June 2024. [4]
- The police recorded **64,807** incidents of domestic abuse in 2021-22. **Four in five** incidents had a female victim-survivor and a male perpetrator. [5]
- Men's violence against women and girls causes long term physical and mental health problems, reduced participation in the workforce, substance abuse, and death. [6]
- The emotional cost is immeasurable. The estimated financial cost to the Scottish public is **£6.6 billion** per year. [7]

Brought to you by Zero Tolerance, Scotland's primary prevention experts, working to end men's violence against women and girls by tackling the root cause: gender inequality.



The solution? Gender equality.

Extreme misogyny does not exist in a vacuum. It must be understood as **a symptom of the wider patriarchal attitudes and rigid gender norms that permeate society.**

To prevent radicalisation, extremism and violence against women and girls, we must **invest in primary prevention to tackle the root cause: gender inequality.**

Effective primary prevention:

- Focuses on structural, cultural, attitudinal, and behavioural change.
- Is a long term, holistic strategy to ensure all women and girls - especially marginalised women - share equal power with men and boys.
- Challenges attitudes that condone violence against women and girls, promote harmful masculinity, enforce rigid gender stereotypes, and emphasise men's dominance. [8]
- Engages people of all genders, particularly men and boys, in local communities.
- Is developed in collaboration with expert women's organisations.

What MSPs can do

We need cross-party support for safeguarding and progressing women's equality, and redoubling efforts to end violence against women and girls.

This 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, we call on the Scottish Government to invest in primary prevention. We need investment in holistic, expert-led, long-term prevention activity that tackles the root cause and multiple drivers of men's violence and misogyny at all levels of Scottish society.

References

- [1] Duffy, C., El-Salahi, Z., Horsburgh, K., and Wartnaby, J. (2024). 'Many Good Men: young Scots' experiences of online misogynistic extremism and radicalisation,' Zero Tolerance and Civic Digits.
- [2] Deo, A. (2024) Plugged in but disconnected: young people and hateful attitudes. Hope Not Hate.
- [3] Oliver, R., Alexander, B., Roe, S., and Wlasny, M. (2019) The economic and social costs of domestic abuse.
- [4] Scottish Government (2024) Recorded Crime in Scotland: year ending June 2024.
- [5] Scottish Government (2022) Domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland, 2021-22.
- [6] European Institute For Gender Equality (2021) EIGE Gender Equality Index 2021 Report: Health.
- [7] This figure that violence against women and girls costs £6.6bn per year was established using the same approach used in the Scottish Government (2009) Safer Lives – Change Lives: A Shared Approach to Tackling Violence Against Women in Scotland. Using information provided in Oliver, R., Alexander, B., Roe, S., and Wlasny, M. (2019) The economic and social costs of domestic abuse.
- [8] Our Watch. (2021). Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia (2nd ed.). Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

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