



Female genital mutilation: estimating girls at risk in the EU

A focus on Belgium

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Female genital mutilation

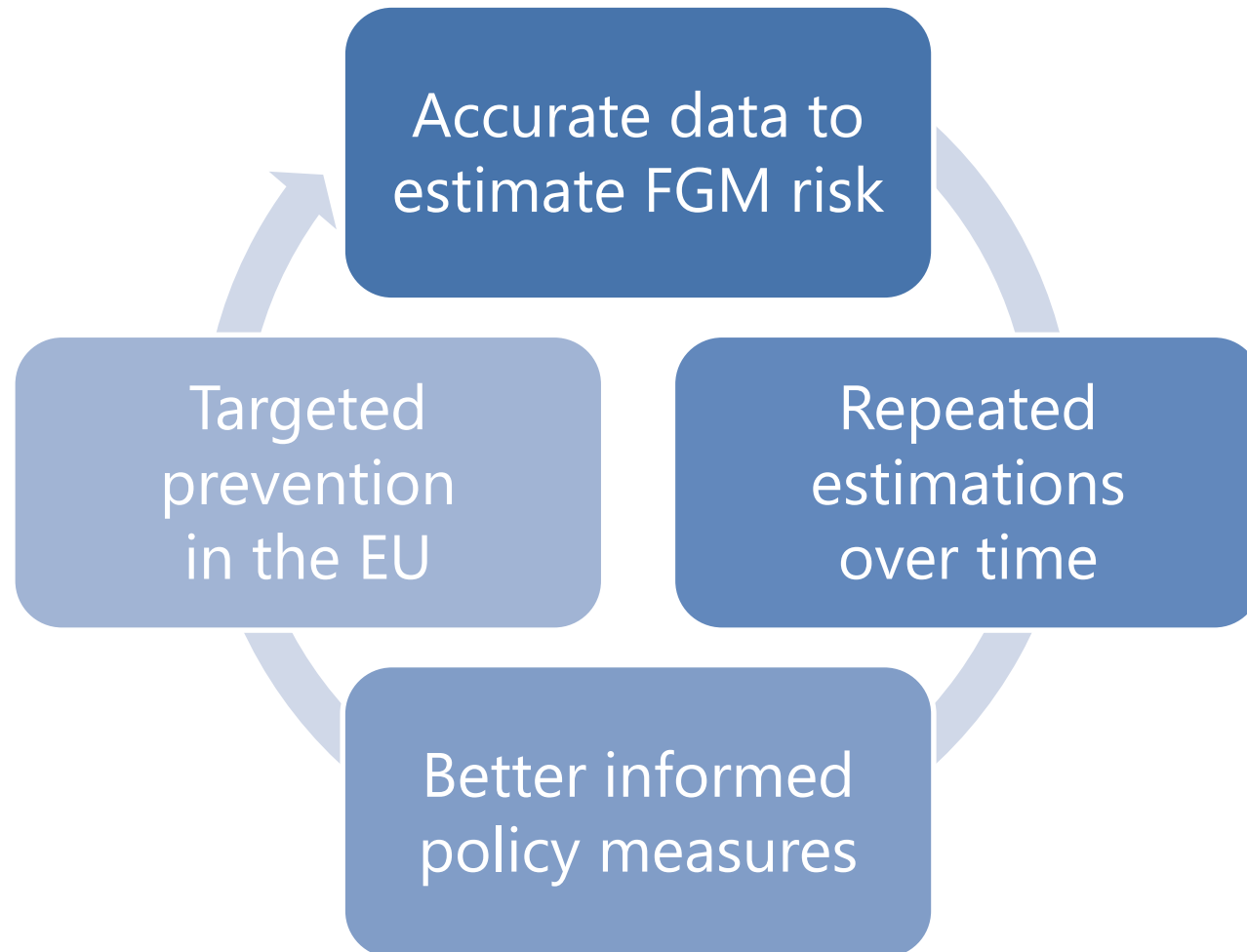


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A severe form of **gender-based violence**, leaving deep physical and psychological scars on the lives of victims around the world.

A violent form of subordination of women and girls standing in **gross contradiction to the principles of gender equality**.

Supporting policies



Proportions of girls at risk

Italy



15 – 24 %
at risk of FGM

Belgium



16 – 27 %
at risk of FGM

Greece



25 – 42 %
at risk of FGM

Ireland



1 – 11 %
at risk of FGM

Portugal



5 – 23 %
at risk of FGM

Cyprus



12 – 17 %
at risk of FGM

Malta



39 – 57 %
at risk of FGM

France



12 – 21 %
at risk of FGM

Germany



6 – 17 %
at risk of FGM

Sweden



3 – 19 %
at risk of FGM

Girls are at risk

2015

IE 14 577 girls, 1-11% at risk
PT 5835 girls, 5-23% at risk
SE 59 409 girls, 3-19% at risk

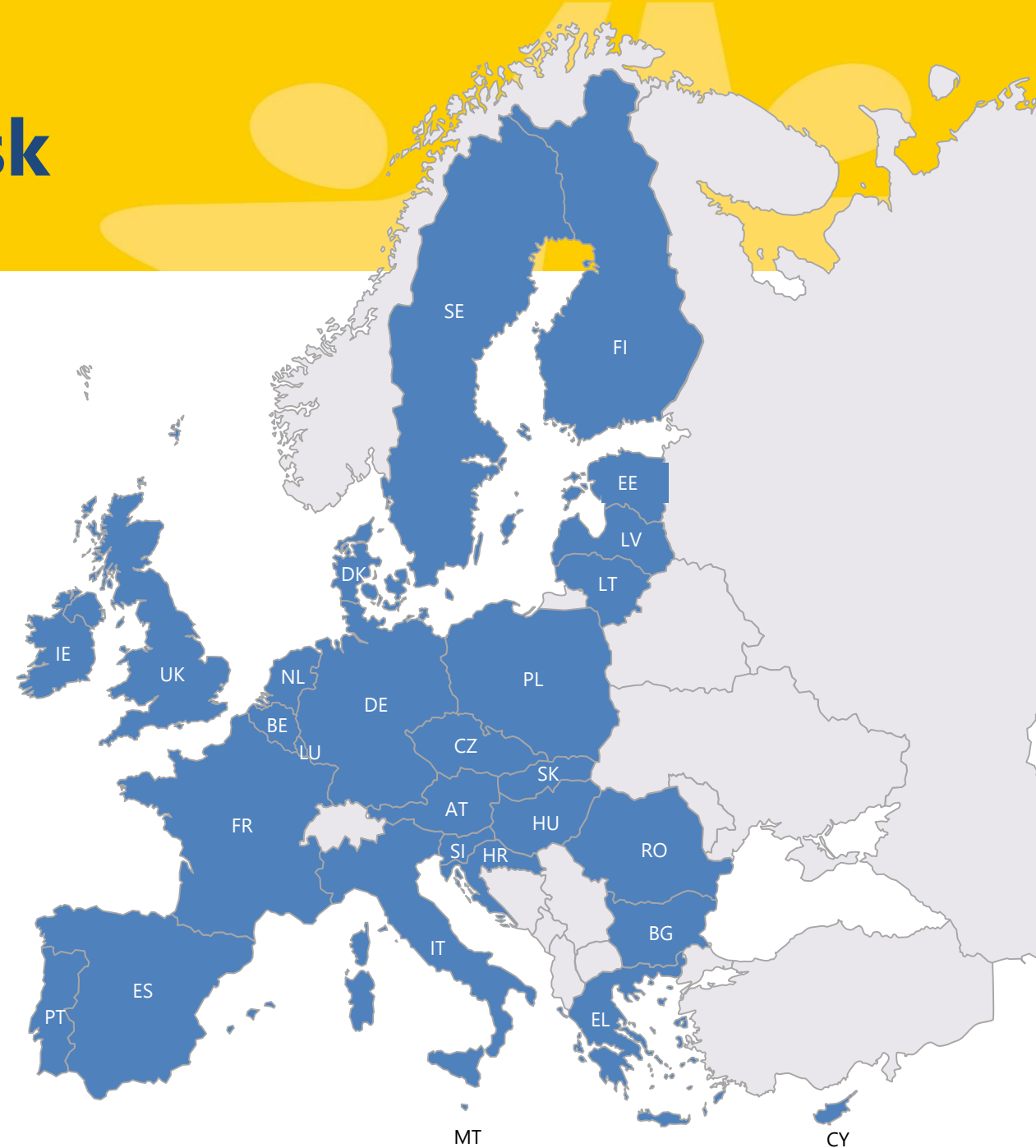
2017 **DE** 25 325 girls, 6-17% at risk

2018

BE 22 544 girls, 16-27% at risk
EL 1787 girls, 25-42% at risk
FR 205 683 girls, 12-21% at risk
IT 76 040 girls, 15-24% at risk
CY 758 girls, 12-17% at risk
MT 485 girls, 39-57% at risk

2018 **FI** 3,000 girls

2019 **NL, AT**



Estimations and trends

Member State (Year)	Total population of girls (aged 0–18) from FGM-practising countries	LOW SCENARIO: Proportion of girls at risk		HIGH SCENARIO: Proportion of girls at risk		LOW SCENARIO: Number of girls at risk		HIGH SCENARIO: Number of girls at risk	
Belgium (2011)	14 815	7 %	19 %	23 %	28 %	1 100	2 762	3 400	4 124
Greece (2011)	1 896	8 %	32 %	43 %	54 %	161	615	817	1 020
France (2011)	41 552	5 %	16 %	14 %	20 %	1 936	6 473	5 875	8 444
Italy (2011)	59 720	5 %	18 %	20 %	27 %	2 953	10 541	11 675	16 392
Cyprus (2011)	758	4 %	12 %	13 %	17 %	29	88	102	132
Malta (2011)	485	10 %	39 %	38 %	57 %	47	189	183	279
Belgium (2016)	22 544	3 %	16 %	20 %	27 %	597	3 579	4 618	6 122
France (2014)	205 683	1 %	12 %	12 %	21 %	2 266	24 660	23 885	44 106
Greece (2016)	1 787	5 %	25 %	25 %	42 %	92	453	454	748
Italy (2016)	76 040	3 %	15 %	15 %	24 %	2 499	11 382	11 515	18 339

New

New

New

New

Understanding the practice in the EU

Discouraging factors

- Criminalisation
- Awareness campaigns
- Stigmatisation
- Health consequences

Motivating factors

- Social pressure
- Cultural beliefs and traditions
- Purity and aesthetics



Traveling to the country of origin = major risk factor

BELGIU

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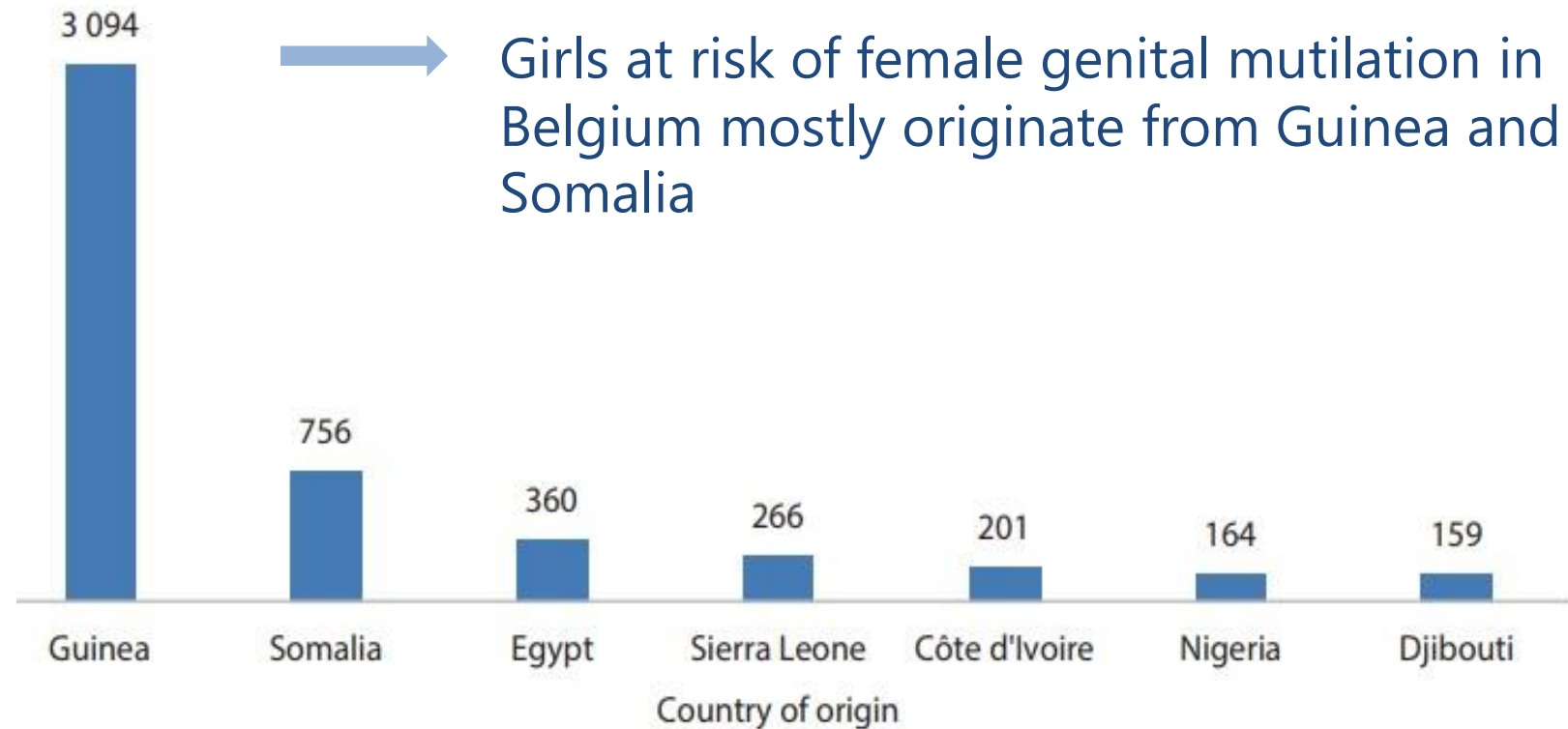
Numbers at risk and countries of origin

Belgium



16 – 27 %
at risk of FGM

Out of a total population of 22 544 girls aged 0-18 originating from countries where female genital mutilation is practiced



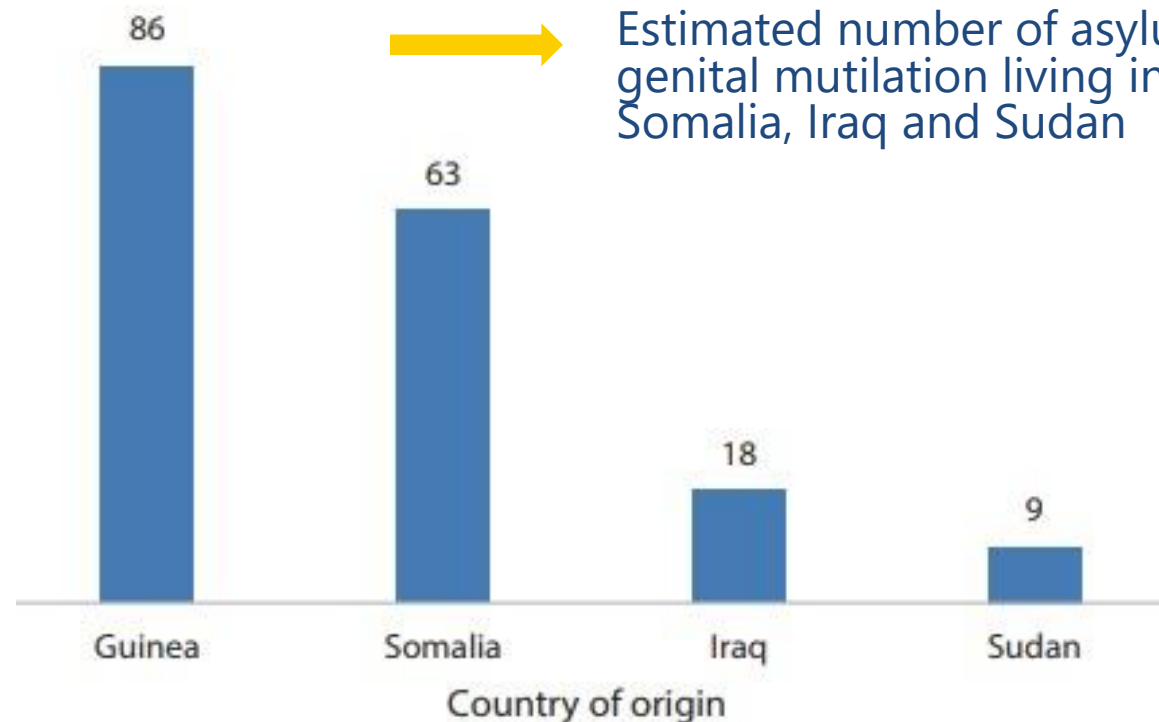
Asylum-seeking girls at risk and countries of origin

Belgium



23 %
of asylum-
seeking girls at
risk of FGM

→ Out of a total population of 969 asylum seeking girls aged 0-18 originating from countries where female genital mutilation is practiced.



Community perspectives in Belgium

Somali women
Over 25
1st generation

Guinean women
Under 25
2nd generation



Somali men
Over 20
1st generation

Iraqi women
asylum seekers
Over 25
1st generation

Community perspectives in Belgium



Opposing the practice

VS

**Still required to a degree to curb
female sexuality**

◦

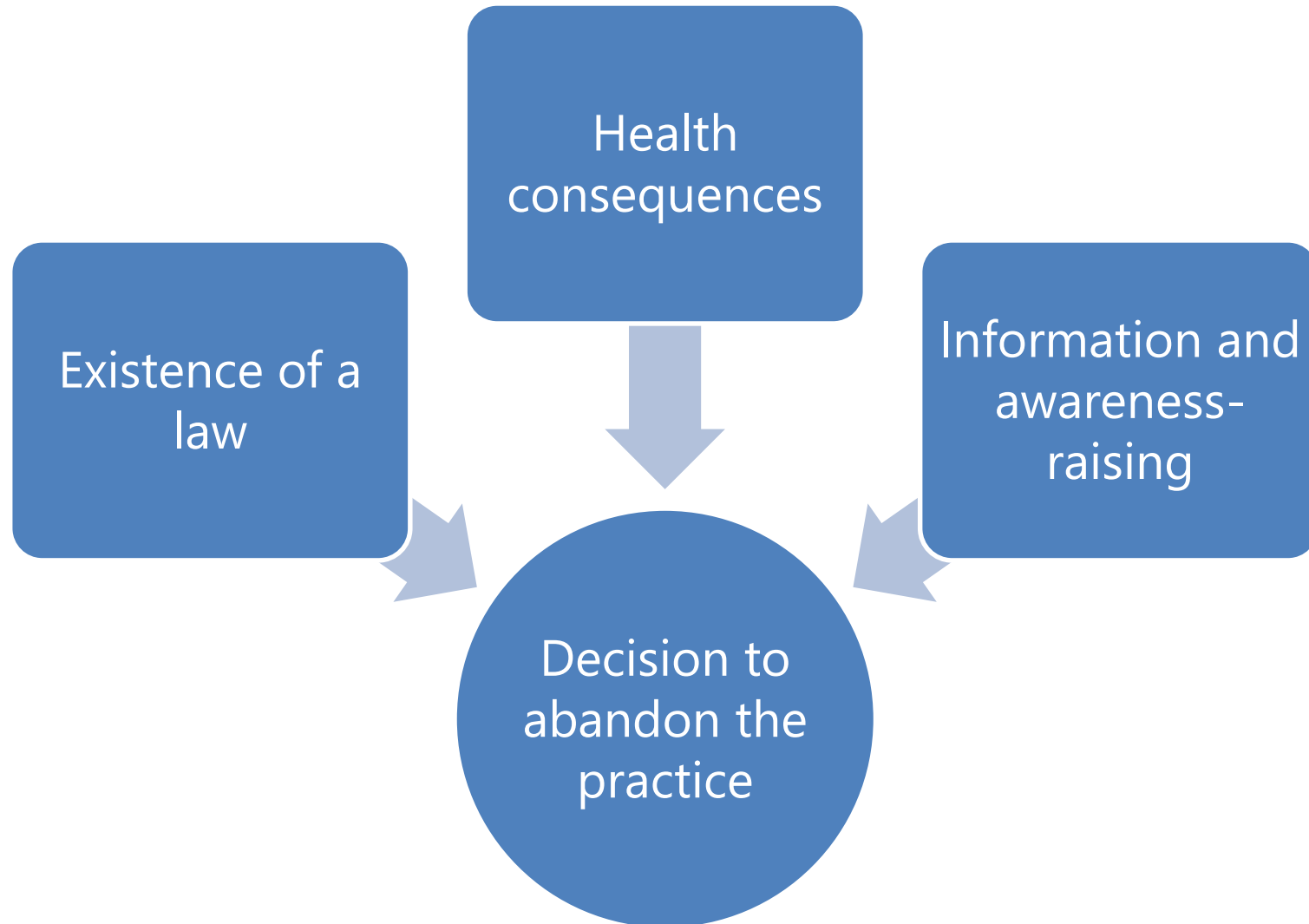
Social pressure in country of origin

VS

Not a social obligation in BE



Community perspectives in Belgium



Recommendations

Ways forward for Belgium

- ✓ Monitor the impact of legislation and policy
- ✓ Ensure systematic gender-sensitive asylum provisions
- ✓ Strengthen integration and migration policies
- ✓ Create and implement policies with communities

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Ways forward for Belgium

- ✓ Prevent through education
- ✓ Support specialised organisations and projects
- ✓ Raise awareness about the negative health consequences
- ✓ Use the right communication channels
- ✓ Improve the availability of quantitative data

Ways forward for the EU



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- ✓ Ratify the Istanbul Convention
- ✓ A gender-sensitive Common European Asylum System (CEAS)
- ✓ External actions to prevent female genital mutilation
- ✓ Incentive through EU integration Strategies

Let's talk

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