

This global ecumenical campaign has been adopted throughout the world by many of WCC's 348 member churches, by national councils and ecumenical and inter-religious partners, by academic institutions, student associations, and more.

Join this movement of people and organisations that can make a difference to individuals, communities, and national and international policy forums.



Share your Thursdays in Black campaign photos on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Use #ThursdaysinBlack #WCC

For more information on how you can join the campaign and order Thursdays in Black badges, contact: media@wcc-coe.org.

www.oikoumene.org/thursdays-in-black

What is the Thursdays in Black Campaign?

Dressing in black on Thursdays is to draw attention to the culture of violence against women in our world. This practice was started by the World Council of Churches (WCC) during the decade 1988-1998 to show solidarity with Women's struggle against rape as a weapon of war and other abuse. Today it would cover forced marriage especially of children and Female Genital Mutilation. In many countries it is women and their children that bear the brunt of poverty, injustice and inequality.

Inspiring Campaigns that demonstrate women's resilience include:

- > The **Mothers of the Disappeared** In Buenos Aires, Argentina, who protested against the disappearance of their children during the violent dictatorship.
- > The **Women in Black** in Israel and Palestine against war and violence.
- > **Women in Rwanda and Bosnia** protested against the use of *rape* as a weapon of war in the genocide.
- > **Black Sash** movement in South Africa protesting against apartheid and its use of violence against black people.

Thursdays In Black

Against Sexual and Gender-based Violence

Gender-based violence is frequently hidden, and victims are often silent or silenced, fearing stigma and further violence.

We all have a responsibility to speak out against violence, to ensure that women and men, boys and girls, are safe from rape and violence in homes, schools, work, streets – in all places in our societies.

WEAR BLACK ON THURSDAYS

What about in Scotland?

Sexual crimes account for **5% of all crimes recorded** in Scotland in 2019-20 Sexual crimes recorded by the police decreased by 1% from 13,547 in 2018-19 to 13,364 in 2019-20. It is claimed 1 in 10 women in Scotland has experienced rape while 1 in 5 women has been pressurised to have sex against their will. (Source: Natsal-3: key findings from Scotland:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-2019-2020/pages/3/>

In contrast, less than 1 in 20 men (4%) reported pressure to have sex against their will, including 2% who were actually raped.
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00474316.pdf>

In 2018-19 Police Scotland recorded 661 cases sexual assault against a child aged 13-15 and 684 cases of Sexual assault against a child under 13 – a rise of 6 & 8%

Domestic abuse recorded by police, 2019-20 revealing an increase of 4% over the previous year. Police recorded 62,907 incidents of domestic abuse in 2019-20, this is the fourth year in a row this figure has shown an increase.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-2018-19/pages/15/>

<https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/article/domestic-abuse-in-scotland-rose-by-4-in-2019-20>

The abuse does not have to be physical. Any behaviour that allows a person to exercise control and power over another person can become abusive.

<http://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/RCS>

What can you do to change the attitudes to Violence?

Don't be silent – Speak out!

Don't be blind

Don't be deaf

Don't turn away

Not all violence is physical. Think also of threats and controlling behaviour.

Each human life is precious and full of potential.

Looking someone in the eye recognises their humanness, helps them build self esteem, that they are worthy.

Pornography and prostitution objectify women and destroy relationships.

Sexist comments, jokes and attitudes would not be funny if they referred to your wife, mother, daughter, friend.

Bring the hidden to light. Don't let violence fester in dark corners.

Misogyny is a power game, institutionalised in our society. Speak out for gender equality and justice.

Remember 80% of survivors of domestic violence are women, and 95% of rape victims are women.

FINDING OUT MORE

Where to go for Help.

Scottish Women's Aid and Forced Marriage Helpline in Scotland
0800 027 1234

Rape Crisis Freephone 0808 802 9999
www.rapecrisis.org.uk
or 08088 010302

Forced marriage helpline and All forms of honour-based violence
0800 5999 247

Female Genital Mutilation Helpline
0800 028 3550

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline
0800 027 1234

Women's Support Project
08088 010302

Organisations working for gender equality & Justice

Side by Side, a faith movement for Gender justice.

The White Ribbon Campaign – men against violence against women.

Engender

Integrity – the Church of Scotland campaign against domestic abuse and violence against women.