

# IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

## GBV IN FOCUS

A SEASONAL NEWSLETTER

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### WELCOME

This newsletter aims to share and expand on knowledge and information about GBV in the lives of immigrant and refugee women in Canada. On our website, you can read about our research results and access our literature reviews and published articles. You can also find other relevant research material, a list of supportive resources and prevention practices of GBV.

**Subscribe** to our seasonal newsletter to keep up with our project findings and reflections; news of the project and research team members; reports and publications; outstanding practices and resources about GBV and migrants /refugees.



Kathryn Bates-Khan, Dr. Evie Tastsoglou, Dr. Chantelle Falconer

### WHAT IS GBV?

Gender equality is a human right and a [UN Sustainable Development Goal](#). Gender-based violence (GBV) stands in the way of this right.

Gender-based violence is a type of violence that is directed towards a person because of their gender, including how they express their gender. Women, girls, and members of the LGBTQ2 community are most often the victims of GBV. GBV includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and a range of emotionally abusive and controlling behaviors\*.

Migrant and refugee women, as a result of various intersectional forms of inequality, are often more vulnerable to GBV and have a harder time accessing support services.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE RESEARCH](#)



## THE RESEARCH TEAM

### **(1) Dr. Evangelia Tastsoglou, Principal Investigator**

Professor at the Department of Sociology at Saint Mary's University

### **(2) Dr. Myrna Dawson, Co-Investigator**

Professor of Social and Legal Responses to Violence at University of Guelph

### **(3) Dr. Catherine Holtmann, Co-Investigator**

Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of New Brunswick

### **(4) Dr. Lori Wilkinsin, Co-Investigator**

Professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminology at the University of Manitoba

### **(5) Dr. Chantelle Falconer**

Post-Doctoral fellow in Sociology and International Development Studies at Saint Mary's University.

[READ MORE](#)

## THE RESEARCH

### **"Violence against Women Migrants and Refugees: Analysing Causes and Effective Policy Responses"**

This project takes an intersectional approach to understand GBV in migration, analyzing the ways in which discrimination and inequalities based on gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and other identities interact to make certain women more vulnerable to GBV and less able to access supports and services for survivors compared to other groups. We are considering all categories of migrants.

This research program aims to bring new knowledge and analysis to organizations and policy makers involved in migration and refugee issues.

[READ MORE](#)

**We are delighted to welcome our new post-doctoral fellow, Dr. Mia Sisic, to the team. She will be working with us for the next year, as Dr. Falconer is on leave. She is excited to join the GBV-MIG team!**

### **(6) Dr. Mia Sisic**

Post-Doctoral fellow in Sociology and International Development Studies at Saint Mary's University



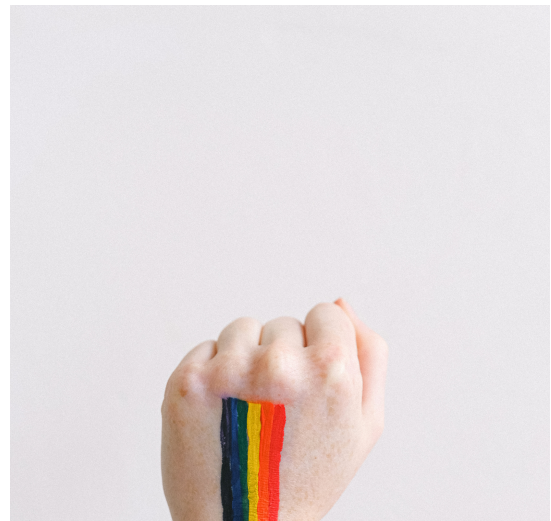


## WHY IS GBV RECEIVING SO MUCH ATTENTION IN CANADA?

Main historical and recent reasons\*:

- École Polytechnique Massacre: The 1989 massacre of 14 women was a key moment in Canada that raised awareness about violence against women as a national and structural problem; rates of gender-based violence continue to be of concern.
- Gender pay gap: Concern with the gender pay gap has had a resurgence with key figures, such as Hollywood movie stars, criticizing systems that produce pay inequities and inequalities.
- #MeToo: The #MeToo movement has been the impetus for women to take to the internet to share their experiences of sexual violence and gendered harassment in unprecedented numbers.
- The 2019 National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: The conclusion of the inquiry unabashedly referred to the GBV experienced by indigenous women and girls as genocide.
- COVID-19: As a result of the pandemic lockdowns across the globe, the UN Secretary General addressed the global surge of gender-based violence against women and girls, citing the home as the largest threat.

Chantelle Falconer  
Mia Sisic



## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN ADDRESSING GBV?

The moments described here demonstrate that GBV is not an individual, private, or domestic issue. Rather, GBV is widespread and impacts one's health, safety, and well-being. In order to address and prevent GBV, we need research to better understand the experiences of survivors and the conditions that enable the perpetuation of violence.

There are major global and national initiatives that support GBV research and programming. One such initiative, the Gender-Net Plus ERA-NET Cofund, of which this project proposal (funded in Canada by CIHR) won a competitive award, aims to promote gender equality, one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. *It's Time: Canada's Strategy To Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence* is Canada's national strategy that supports research and programs directed towards GBV prevention and intervention in Canada.

Chantelle Falconer



## RESEARCH ROUNDUP: A SAMPLE OF ONGOING GBV- RELATED PROJECTS IN CANADA

Currently in Canada, there are several projects which focus on different aspects of GBV:

### **Gender-Based Violence Prevention Program**

aims to raise awareness of GBV among newcomer families and build capacity among mainstream service providers to better support newcomers' needs related to GBV.

**Organization:** YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs, YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth

### **Covid-19 Pandemic Guidelines for Mental Health Support for Racialized Women at Risk of Gender-Based Violence**

is conducting a review of literature in order to assess available mental health supports during the COVID-19 pandemic for racialized women who may experience or who may have experienced GBV.

**Organization:** York University

### **Shift: The Project to End Domestic Violence initiative**

aims to prevent domestic violence. Shift uses research and partnerships in order to build capacity and effect policy change with the goal of changing systems that reproduce violence.

**Organization:** Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary



## MORE SAMPLES

### **Violence Against Women Services: What can COVID-19 Teach Us, and Are We Willing to Learn?**

seeks to understand how COVID-19 prevention protocols impact violence against women services in Ontario.

**Organization:** Gender, Trauma and Violence Knowledge Incubator at Western University

**Access to Responsive Justice Project** uses a community-based approach to research to understand the experiences of marginalized and gender diverse survivors of GBV efforts to access justice.

**Organization:** Centre for Gender & Sexual Health Equity.

### **Building Leadership Capacity to Address Gender-Based Violence against Non-Status, Refugee and Immigrant Women across Canada**

aims to build the leadership capacity of Non-Status, Refugee and Immigrant (NSRI) women to shape and inform policies and services addressing GBV by combining two promising practices developed by their project partners.

**Organization:** OCASI

## OUR APPROACH - THE GBV-MIG PROJECT

We are excited to be working in a landscape with such rich, promising research initiatives. We hope that our project can add to the conversation, by making the following contributions:

- We use a **comparative perspective**. Our research provides snapshots from across Canada, and we are working alongside our international collaborators to better understand the structural, underlying causes of GBV nationally and internationally.
- We are **focused on the experiences of migrant and refugee women**, broadly defined, in order to identify the unique needs and cross cutting, intersectional forms of inequality that make some women more vulnerable to GBV and have a harder time accessing support services.
- We are **focused on understanding the diverse forms of GBV and their impact**, including health consequences, on diverse migrant and refugee women's lives and ability to integrate in Canada.
- Our **qualitative approach** to research allows us to highlight stories of resilience, and to bring forward **the agency and strategies** of GBV survivors.
- We are **focused on support services**, in a broad sense, including mainstream GBV supports, as well as more informal, or unexpected sources of support in order to get a clearer picture of what supports migrant and refugee women actually use.



### SUBMIT AN ITEM

Let us know about interesting projects in your organization, resources that attracted your attention or email us with ideas for content that you might want to know more about. If you are a researcher in this field, share your new findings or reflections by writing to us.



### CONTACT US



<https://smu.ca/gendernet/welcome.html>



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### Camila Reis

Editor  
Research Assistant  
Graduate Student  
Saint Mary's University

**BEFORE YOU GO...**

**Are you an immigrant or refugee woman?**

**We want to hear your story**

## **Violence Against Women Migrants and Refugees: Analyzing Causes and Effective Policy Response**

We are interviewing migrant and refugee women across Canada on the theme of violence against women. We want to learn about your migratory journey and your settlement experience here in Canada. By sharing stories with us, we hope to better understand experiences of violence against women, the strategies women employ to prevent violence and deal with its impacts, and how services that support migrant and refugee women can be improved.

The interview will last about one to two hours. We can provide the services of an interpreter. To help defray any costs you may incur by participating in this interview we will compensate you with \$30. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Your safety and confidentiality are important to us and we will work with you to ensure your privacy and security.

For more information or if you would like to participate in this project please contact\*:

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👉 <https://smu.ca/gendernet/welcome.html>

This is a 3-year collaborative project supported by funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR FRN: 161903) and the GENDER-NET Plus ERA-Net Cofund. This project is part of a larger comparative initiative, the GBV-MIG project, which includes research teams in France, Ireland, Austria, Israel, Turkey, and Norway  
<https://gbvmigration.cnrs.fr/the-project/> <https://smu.ca/gendernet/welcome.html>

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board (# 19-092), the Research Ethics Board of the University of New Brunswick (#2019-113), the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board (# 19-09-004), and the University of Manitoba Human Ethics Board (#P2019:099)

\*Each region has an assigned contact person. Please reach out to Mia Sisic for more information.