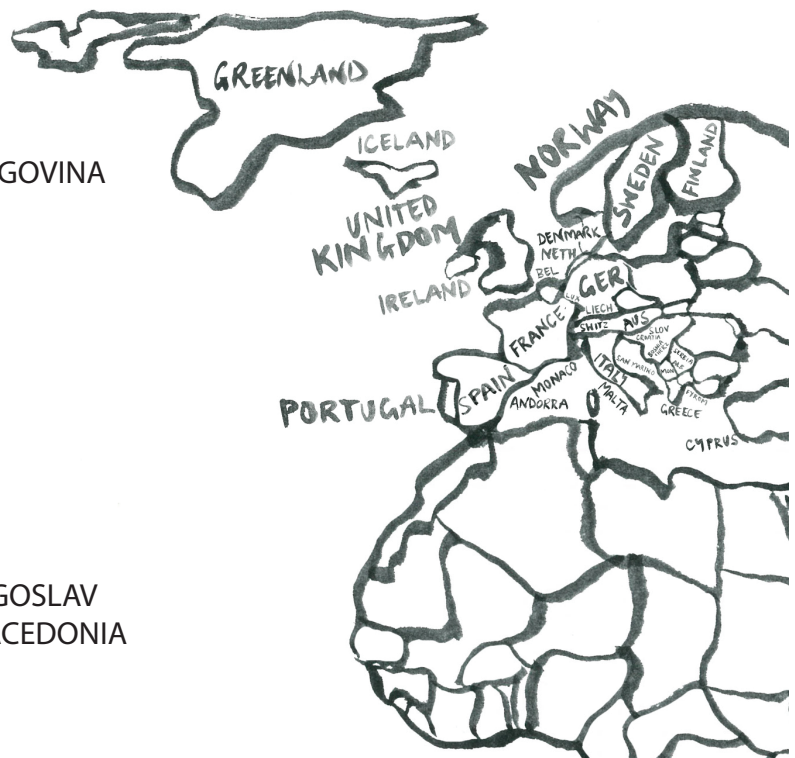


# SISTERHOOD FIGHT CLUB

#MIDDAYBABYMIDDAY #SETYOURALARM #BETHECHANGE #PRAYINGFORTHEWORLD

## #4: NORTH WEST & MEDITERRANEAN EUROPE

- DENMARK
- FINLAND
- ICELAND
- NORWAY
- SWEDEN
- AUSTRIA
- BELGIUM
- FRANCE
- GERMANY
- IRELAND
- LIECHTENSTEIN
- LUXEMBOURG
- MONACO
- NETHERLANDS
- SWITZERLAND
- UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND
- ALBANIA
- ANDORRA
- CROATIA
- CYPRUS
- BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
- GREECE
- GREENLAND
- ITALY
- MALTA
- MONTENEGRO
- PORTUGAL
- SAN MARINO
- SERBIA
- SLOVENIA
- SPAIN
- THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



### THE REGION

This region offers a great diversity of culture, natural sites, historical heritage and pristine landscapes.<sup>1</sup> The landscape throughout Europe offers far-reaching mountain ranges such as the Alps and Pyrenees, endless rivers flowing through breathtaking landscapes, such as the Danube and Rhine and many cities that offer a mix of modern and ancient architecture.<sup>2</sup> Movements and ideologies such as the Renaissance and democracy were birthed in this region.

### KEY STATISTICS

- » More than six million jobs were lost from 2008 to 2013 and poverty has increased.
- » In 2015 one million people fled to Europe across the Mediterranean Sea to escape war and persecution.
- » Estimates based on surveys in Europe suggest that 49 million women in the region have experienced violence.
- » The European Commission estimates 120,000 women are trafficked through the Balkans every year.

## THE CHALLENGES

Since the 2008 global economic crisis, this region has seen an increase in unemployment and poverty. In 2015, the report on employment and social developments in Europe notes that over nine million more people are unemployed compared to 2008. More than six million jobs were lost from 2008 to 2013 and poverty has increased.<sup>3</sup> The high level of private debt, unemployment, poverty, and reduced access to education, undermine social and political stability and long-term growth.<sup>4</sup> Economic tensions have contributed to friction between countries in the EU, including uncertainty surrounding England's withdrawal from the EU.

Another point of tension is regarding refugee and migrant policy. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), in 2015 one million people fled to Europe across the Mediterranean Sea to escape war and persecution. Of these, 3,735 were missing, believed drowned.<sup>5</sup> Vulnerability in this region is also exploited by human trafficking. The European Commission estimates 120,000 women are trafficked through the Balkans every year.<sup>6</sup>

Racial inequality is prevalent in this region. In Paris, France, a black person was six times more likely to be stopped by police than a white person, and an Arab person was almost eight times more likely to be stopped than a white person.<sup>7</sup> London and Madrid have some of the highest levels of inequality and economic segregation.<sup>8</sup>

There are an estimated 5,400 homicides against women aged 15-49 in the World Health Organisation European Region. Estimates suggest that about 2 out of 5 of these murders are committed by a current or ex-intimate partner. Death rates are higher in low and middle income countries. The prevalence of non-fatal violence is much higher and it is estimated that 1 in 4 women in the European region will experience physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner at some point in her life. Estimates based on surveys in Europe suggest that forty-nine million women in the region have experienced violence.<sup>9</sup>

## SO WHAT DO I PRAY FOR?

### PRAY FOR STABILITY AND FREEDOM OF CHOICES.

We pray for economic stability that people might be able to flourish and live healthy and safe lives, that they might have the ability to choose wisely for their children and protect their future. Isaiah 60:1-3, Isaiah 61:4

### PRAY FOR THE VULNERABLE AND OPPRESSED.

We pray against abuse and domestic violence. We pray against racism and discrimination and for marginalised and vulnerable groups to have equal access to education, healthcare and protection under the law. We pray against the effects of illegal drug use, manufacturing, and sale. We pray for health and healing, provision of food and shelter for those in need, and hope for those who are discouraged. Psalm 82:3-4, Isaiah 40:29, Luke 19:10, Jeremiah 31:17, Psalm 91

### PRAY FOR THE REFUGEE CRISIS

We pray for those fleeing from war, persecution, and oppression. We pray that they will find security, freedom, and hope. We pray for peace in refugee and asylum seeker's countries of origin. We pray for compassionate, wise, and unified leadership of governments across Europe in response to the refugee crisis. Psalm 145:18-19, Psalm 140:12, Proverbs 31:8-9, Isaiah 61:1b-3

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ezilon.com/maps/european-continent-maps.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ezilon.com/maps/european-continent-maps.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://euobserver.com/social/127221>

<sup>4</sup> <http://bruegel.org/2014/03/europes-social-problem-and-its-implications-for-economic-growth/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/5683d0b56.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.crs.org/stories/human-trafficking-albania-hiding-plain-sight>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/25/france-landmark-ruling-racial-profiling-checks-police-paris-terror-attacks>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.msn.com/en-au/news/other/economic-segregation-and-inequality-in-europes-cities/ar-BBn4CpD>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/violence-and-injuries/areas-of-work/violence/violence-against-women>

I BELIEVE THAT THE WEAPON  
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
MUST BRING TO THIS CURRENT  
GLOBAL TABLE OF UNREST AND  
CRISIS IS PRAYER. IT'S A WEAPON  
THAT MANY OUTSIDE OF FAITH  
MAY NEVER TRULY UNDERSTAND  
NOR EVER APPRECIATE - BUT  
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY  
DO OR DON'T PRAYER IS WHAT  
ENGAGES THE SPIRITUAL REALM  
THAT IS SO OFTEN AT THE CORE  
AND CAUSE OF TODAY'S  
PROBLEMS."

*Bobbie Houston  
excerpt Chapter Twenty-one  
The Sisterhood*

## **BRAVE WOMEN** Run in Our Family

Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, has navigated global recession with a sure hand and seen Germany grow steadily more prosperous. Her greatest legacy however, is likely to be her decision to open Germany's doors to refugees and migrants in response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Her response has been practical and compassionate, being referred to as "the most generous, openhearted gesture of recent history". An estimated 1 million asylum seekers were predicted to enter Germany by the end of 2015 and there are more challenges to be faced. She has demonstrated bold moral and empathetic leadership, welcoming vulnerable migrants despite the political costs.

Source: [www.time.com/time-person-of-the-year-2015-angela-merkel/](http://www.time.com/time-person-of-the-year-2015-angela-merkel/)

## **#SISTERHOOD FIGHT CLUB**

**#MIDDAYBABYMIDDAY #SETYOURALARM  
#BETHECHANGE #PRAYINGFORTHEWORLD**

The Sisterhood Fight Club is all about letting prayer do the heavy lifting as we turn our attention to a world that is broken on many levels and in need of restoration. Our world is a place of beautiful and challenging complexity. We do not claim to be experts, nor to understand or represent this complexity fully. This is a brief collection of information and examples based on our research.

Through prayerful reflection we seek to learn, empathise, add our support to the efforts of brave women everywhere, and continue to grow in our understanding through the help of the Holy Spirit. Let our churches and homes be known as "a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isaiah 56:7).

Join us! Set your alarm at #middaybabymidday and pray with us for the world.



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 The Colour Sisterhood

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