OSCE-LED SURVEY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

WELL-BEING AND SAFETY OF WOMEN

MAIN REPORT

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Foreword

Violence against women and girls is a persistent human rights violation that not only threatens the security and safety of its victims, but also hinders women and girls around the world from being full and equal participants in society. Women and girls who experience violence and abuse often suffer for years from the effects. They may have to deal with ill health and psychological trauma, which in many cases is passed on to their own children and also influences the communities and societies they live in.

The OSCE recognizes violence against women and girls as both a threat to individuals and a broader security concern. The participating States have adopted three Ministerial Council decisions on preventing and combating violence against women, including most recently in December 2018 in Milan.

Until now, however, we did not have sufficient data on the prevalence of such cases in the OSCE region, in particular in countries that have been affected by conflict. International organizations and civil society have called for robust and comprehensive data sets to formulate and steer policies and actions against violence against women and girls. This survey, implemented between spring and summer 2018, sheds new light on violence against women and girls in selected OSCE participating States, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, Moldova[1] and Ukraine. The research was also conducted in Kosovo.[2]

The resulting testimonials often paint a grim picture. Three in ten women say that they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 at the hands of a partner or non-partner. Over two-thirds of women think that violence against women and girls is common in their communities, and a fifth think it is very common. Just under a quarter personally know someone among their family and friends who has been subjected to violence.

Violence against women in the surveyed area should not be overlooked any longer. In 2018, I committed myself to taking a leadership role to integrate UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security into our activities and to break down gender barriers within the OSCE. This study marks an important step towards eliminating violence against women. It presents the needed evidence to inform decision-making and advocacy at various levels. Ultimately, we need to use the results to achieve specific policy goals: reduced violence against women, improved services for survivors and greater security for women and girls overall.

More than 15,000 women gave their time to be interviewed for this report. Many had to yet again confront traumatic experiences to answer the very detailed questions posed by the interviewers. And the majority of them had never before spoken to anyone about these events. On behalf of the OSCE, I would like to personally thank them for their trust in us.

Thomas Greminger

OSCE Secretary General

1 The term Moldova is used for the "Republic of Moldova" throughout the report.
2 All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.

OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Main report

Executive summary

What is this report about?

This report presents the cross-regional, comparable findings of the OSCE-led Survey on the Well-being and Safety of Women, which was implemented in 2018 in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, Moldova[3] and Ukraine.[4] The research was also conducted in Kosovo.[5]

The OSCE-led survey included a quantitative and qualitative component and was undertaken with the goal of providing comparable data on different forms of violence women experience in their childhood and throughout the course of their lives. The research examined violence that women experience in conflict and non-conflict settings, as well as the impact violence has on women, including its lasting consequences. Questions on norms and attitudes connected to violence against women were asked to better understand the underlying causes of violence.

The area covered by this research is diverse and has different historical, social and economic contexts. Rather than focusing on the findings from particular locations, the report aims to provide an overview of women's experiences and to highlight the issues – often similar – that persist and continue to hamper the well-being and safety of women throughout the area covered by the research.

Why is it important?

Violence against women is a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women.[6] Identifying the scale of the problem is a first step to tackling it at its root.

The lack of comparable data on violence against women has limited the ability of key actors to develop cross-regional initiatives aimed at improving policies and measures on the prevention of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and the protection of victims.

Since the OSCE-led survey is based on the methodology used by the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) for its EU-wide survey on violence against women, which was published in in 2014[7], the data collected in the area covered by this research is comparable to the data collected by the FRA survey. Together, the two surveys cover 35 OSCE participating States.

With its comparable data, the OSCE-led survey will provide much-needed information that will help depict the current situation concerning VAWG in OSCE participating Sates, and it will also enable the planning and development of cross-regional initiatives and actions as well as local policies and services. In the long term, this will lead to better prevention of VAWG, as well as improved policies and services for victims of violence. The overarching goal of this study is to contribute to a reduction of violence against women.

3 The Transdniestrian region has not been covered by the survey. However, one focus group discussion was held with women from this region.
4 The sample in Ukraine does not cover the Autonomous Republic of Crimea or non-government-controlled areas in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The survey was carried out on a sample representative of the adult population of women (2,048 women aged 18–74), including 298 women living close to the contact line in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, in an effort to better understand how conflict affects violence against women.
5 All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.
6 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1994.
7 Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results (Vienna: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2015), accessed 13 February 2019, http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report

What are the major findings?

The OSCE-led survey reveals a number of trends and findings about the prevalence of violence against women and girls, its impact and underlying social norms and stereotypes.

- Seventy per cent of women, or an estimated number of 16 million women have experienced some form of sexual harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence or non-partner violence (including psychological, physical or sexual violence) since the age of 15;
- Forty-five per cent of women, or approximately 10.2 million women have experienced sexual harassment, including harassment via the internet;
- Twenty-three per cent of women, or approximately 4.9 million women, have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence;
- Eighteen per cent of women or an estimated number of 4.4 million women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner.

Psychological violence is the most widespread form of intimate partner violence reported in the survey, with 60% of women who have been in a relationship experiencing this from a partner.

The survey data suggests that beliefs in female subservience, spousal obedience and silence surrounding VAWG continue to persist in the region and that those women who hold such beliefs are more likely to say they have experienced violence.

SDG 5.2 Indicators

SDG Indicator 5.2.2: the proportion of women and girls aged 18–74 in the area covered by the survey subjected to sexual violence by a non-partner in the 12 months prior to the survey is 0.8%.

SDG Indicator 5.2.1: the proportion of women and girls aged 18–74 in the area covered by survey who have ever had a partner and who were subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey is 20%.

A detailed list of disaggregated data of the relevant SDG 5.2 indicators can be found in Annex 6.

Key conclusions

Based on the detailed survey findings, the OSCE has drafted a number of key conclusions that suggest ways to recognize and respond to violence against women. These conclusions build on the Istanbul Convention and recommendations by UN bodies.

- The scale of violence against women and girls in the area covered by the survey calls for enhanced efforts to **implement legislation and improve action plans** that will address all forms of violence experienced by women and girls.
- **The survey clearly finds that all women**, regardless of their economic or social status, **can experience violence, but some groups of women are at a higher risk**. These risks include being poor, economically dependent or having children.
- The **characteristics and behaviour of perpetrators** also need to be taken into consideration **as possible risk factors contributing to intimate partner violence**.
- Violence has a **severe physical and psychological impact**, and women in the surveyed locations suffer from health problems as a result of their experiences of violence.
- Based on the data gathered, it is clear that **women do not report the vast majority of incidents** to the police and that they rarely seek support from other institutions.

- **Barriers to seeking help are rooted in attitudes** that silence women and protect abusers and also in women's lack of trust in the authorities to help and protect them.
- The data collected illustrates that a **majority of women do not know what to do if they experience violence** and that they are not aware of local specialized organizations offering support.

How will the data and findings be used?

For each key finding, several possible action points are proposed to OSCE participating States and OSCE executive structures in Chapter 13. These action points will be further developed and used as a basis for future work in the OSCE region on VAWG. The collected data will be made available so that further analysis can be conducted on the basis of this research.

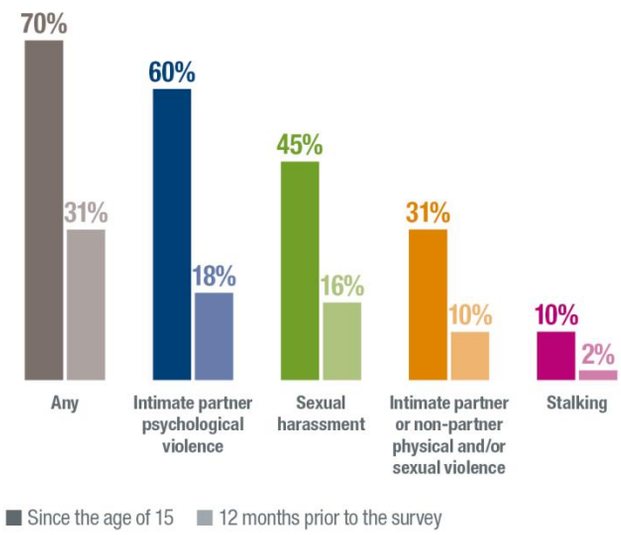
How can OSCE participating States use the data from the survey?

1. **Inform policies, strategies and action plans at the national and local levels**
   - Use the data for the development and implementation of national strategies and action plans, like national gender-equality plans, plans for combating violence against women and national action plans on UNSCR 1325
   - The survey data and research contain relevant information for a wide range of ministries, including on social policy, interior affairs, defence, health and education
   - Present and discuss data within co-ordination bodies and working groups on gender equality and combating gender-based violence, as well as on the security and defence sector and the armed forces, in parliamentary working groups and caucuses
   - Inform gender-responsive budgeting at the municipal, provincial and national level
2. **For monitoring and reporting on international commitments (if applicable):**
   - Reports to the CEDAW Committee
   - Beijing Platform for Action
   - National action plans on UNSCR 1325
   - Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 5 and Goal 16)
   - GREVIO/Istanbul Convention
   - European Gender Equality Index
   - NATO reporting requirements
3. **Include data and research findings in communication and awareness-raising activities**
4. **Further research using the OSCE-led survey data set**
   - Analyse differences in the prevalence, reporting and impact of violence against women at the subnational level and develop specific recommendations at that level

A quantitative survey was conducted among a representative sample of women aged 18 to 74 living in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine. The survey was also conducted in Kosovo.[1] A total of 15,179 interviews were conducted face-to-face between April and September 2018. Data has been weighted to the known population profile.

HIGH PREVALENCE OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



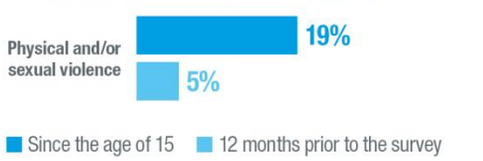
16 million women have experienced some form of sexual harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence, or non-partner violence (including psychological, physical or sexual violence) since the age of 15

4.9 million women have experienced intimate partner physical or sexual violence

4.4 million have experienced non-partner physical or sexual violence

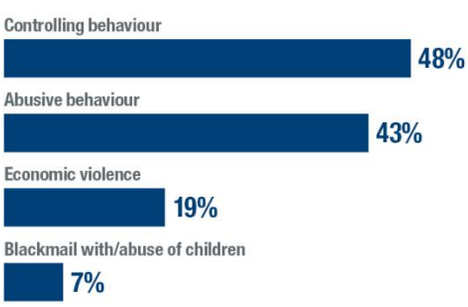
*Approximate figures

ONE IN FIVE WOMEN HAS EXPERIENCED NON-PARTNER PHYSICAL AND/OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE



INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

INTIMATE PARTNER PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE IS THE MOST WIDESPREAD FORM



Base: Prevalence of intimate partner/non-partner violence, sexual harassment, stalking, and non-partner violence are based on all women aged 18- 74 (15,179); intimate partner violence is based on all ever-partnered women (14,085)

[1] All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.

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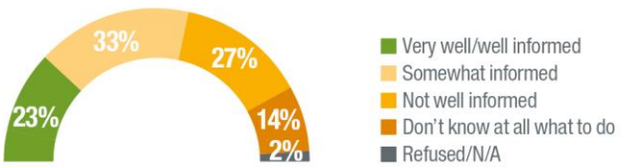
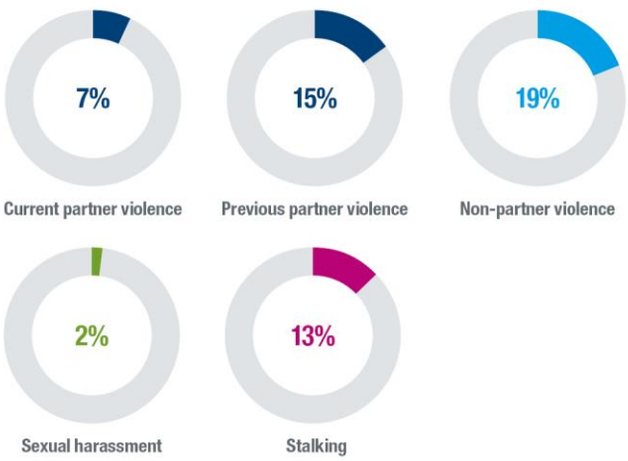
LOW LEVELS OF REPORTING AND AWARENESS

MANY WOMEN DO NOT FEEL WELL INFORMED ABOUT WHAT TO DO IF THEY EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE



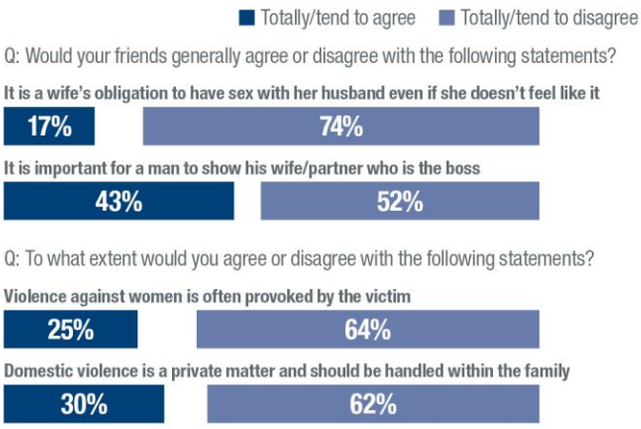
LOW LEVELS OF REPORTING TO POLICE

% who contacted the police directly following the most serious incident of violence.



Base for how well informed women feel: All women aged 18-74 (15,179)
Base for reporting to police: All women aged 18-74 who identify a most serious incident of each form of violence - sexual harassment (3,514), stalking (885), current partner (1,068), previous partner (1,079), non-partner (1,298)

SILENCING AND VICTIM-BLAMING ATTITUDES

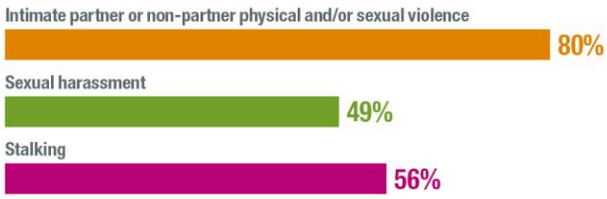


Base: All women aged 18-74 (15,179)

IMPACT OF THE MOST SERIOUS INCIDENTS

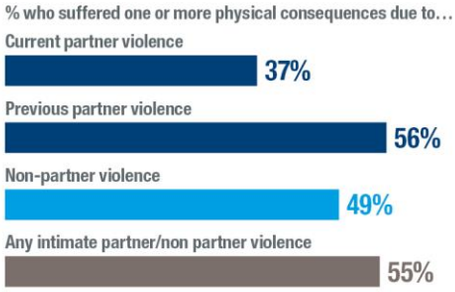
VIOLENCE CAUSES PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING

% who experienced one or more psychological consequences due to…



VIOLENCE CAUSES PHYSICAL SUFFERING

% who suffered one or more physical consequences due to…



3.25 million* women in the region covered by the survey were left with an injury or physical consequence considering only the most severe cases of violence they identified during their adult lifetime.

More specifically:

- **2.5 million** had bruises or scratches
- **82,000** experienced a miscarriage
- **700,000** suffered wounds, sprains or burns
- **70,000** contracted an infection or sexually transmitted disease
- **352,000** had fractures or broken teeth
- **52,000** became pregnant
- **145,000** experienced internal injuries
- **29,000** were left infertile or unable to carry a pregnancy to term
- **652,000** experienced concussion or another brain injury

*Approximate figures

Base for psychological and physical consequences: All women aged 18-74 who identify a most serious incident of each form of violence - sexual harassment (3,514), stalking (885), current partner (1,068), previous partner (1,079), non-partner (1,298), any intimate partner/non-partner (2,763)

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1. Introduction to the OSCE-led survey

Preventing and combating violence against women is a **core area of the OSCE's work**. The participating States have adopted three Ministerial Council decisions on preventing and combating violence against women, including most recently in December 2018 in Milan. The OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality from 2004 and other decisions also refer to combating violence against women. The OSCE recognizes the importance of combating violence against women to achieve comprehensive security and fulfil the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive impediments to women's full, equal and effective participation in political, economic and public life.[8]

OSCE Ministerial Council decisions on preventing and combating violence against women

- MC.DEC 14/04: Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality
  - Identifies combating violence against women as a priority area of work for the OSCE
- MC.DEC 15/05: Preventing and combating violence against women
  - Recognizes violence as a threat to human security and urges participating States to provide full access to justice, medical and social assistance, confidential counselling and shelter. It also calls on participating States to criminalize gender-based violence and highlights the importance of prevention.
- MC.DEC 7/14: Preventing and combating violence against women
  - Calls for action on legal frameworks, prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships. It addresses the area of reliable data collection and calls on participating States to speed up efforts to bring legislation into line with relevant international standards, including the Istanbul Convention.
- MC.DEC 4/18: Preventing and combating violence against women
  - Recognizes that inequality is a root cause of violence against women and calls for measures to address this, including by engaging men and boys in combating violence. It also notes that special measures should be taken to address specific forms of violence such as sexual harassment and online violence.

The lack of comparative insights into the prevalence and characteristics of violence against women limited possibilities to exchange experiences and develop cross-regional initiatives to improve policies and measures related to preventing and protecting women from violence.

8 See OSCE Ministerial Council Decision 4/18 on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women.

Prior research

Although VAWG has been recognized as important, and efforts have been made to determine its scale and nature through international or, more frequently, national surveys, the results were never comparable on a regional scale due to the use of different definitions and methodologies. Of the OSCE's participating States, Serbia and Montenegro were part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women in 2003.[9] Another international survey, the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), which contained a module on domestic violence, was conducted only in Albania (2008–2009 and 2017–2018), Moldova (2005) and Ukraine (2007). The UNICEF MICS surveys were conducted in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey on at least one occasion,[10] but these surveys do not focus on VAW but rather on childhood violence, and they usually contain only a few questions concerning attitudes to intimate partner violence (IPV). Albania, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine were part of the WHO's global status report on violence prevention in 2014, but that was not a prevalence survey.

Local surveys on VAWG have been conducted in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey, although not all of them were representative. Further details can be found in Annex 3. The results of these national surveys were not comparable, but the findings revealed similar patterns that were confirmed by the findings of this report. Violence against women and girls is prevalent in different forms, with psychological violence being the most wide-spread form of violence, followed by physical and then sexual violence. The consequences are severe, including injuries and mental health problems among women. In every local survey, the findings indicate that women are reluctant to seek assistance from institutions and organizations, relying mainly on their own coping strategies or seeking help from family members and others in their immediate social networks.

The OSCE-led survey is, therefore, a significant breakthrough in addressing violence against women in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, as it provides robust, comparable and comprehensive evidence of VAWG within and beyond intimate partner relations and the domestic context. The survey results will enable exchanges of experiences, shared initiatives and joint policy actions that will facilitate the development of more effective systems for preventing violence and protecting women, particularly in the framework of implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

Responding to the need for comparable data

There is a need to collect and learn from good practices within the area covered by the survey, as well as within the entire OSCE region. With its comparable data, the OSCE-led survey makes it possible to examine the situation in participating States as well as on a cross-regional level. It also makes it possible to take a closer look at the reporting of violence and the reasons why women choose not to report abuse to the police or other services. This comparable data will enable regional initiatives and actions.

This research is based on the methodology of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), which was used for the 2012 survey on violence against women in 28 European Union Member States.[11] This OSCE-led survey is therefore comparable to the FRA survey. The OSCE added to the survey several questions on norms, attitudes and behaviour related to violence and reporting experiences of abuse, in particular to ensure comparability of its data with the EU data on gender attitudes and norms (Eurobarometer No. 449). The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) uses the FRA data in its current work and plans to use the findings of the OSCE-led survey in the future.

9: Claudia García-Moreno et al., *WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2005), accessed 27 January 2018, http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/24159358X/en.

10: MICS 2 and 3 were conducted in Albania; MICS 2, 3 and 4 in Bosnia and Herzegovina; MICS 5 in Kosovo; MICS 3 and 4 in North Macedonia; MICS 2 and 4 in Moldova; MICS 2, 3, 5 and 6 in Montenegro; MICS 2, 3, 4 and 5 in Serbia; and MICS 2, 3 and 4 in Ukraine. See "Surveys", UNICEF MICS, accessed 12 February 2019, http://mics.unicef.org/surveys.

11: More about the FRA survey and methodology could be found at http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report.

Data to inform and support policy-making and implementation

The aim of this survey is to provide robust data in order to develop more comprehensive and evidence-based policies, strategies, programmes and activities to prevent and combat VAW. The ultimate goal is therefore to provide evidence for informed decision-making and advocacy at different levels, and thereby contribute to a reduction of VAW in the target area, improved services for survivors and greater security for women. This is also key for achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The survey provides data that is of direct policy relevance, as data was collected for the 12-month period prior to the survey. Thus, data on reporting and official responses to victims, as well as current prevalence, are available for policy-making.

The survey is the first cross-regional survey ever conducted that captures the prevalence of violence against women in the target area.

Overview of the study conducted

The OSCE-led survey included:

- 114 key expert interviews from the area covered by the survey, providing an overview of issues related to VAW and of conflict-related acts of violence;
- a survey of a representative sample of 15,179 women aged 18–74 living in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro North Macedonia and Serbia, Moldova[12] and Ukraine[13] in order to establish the prevalence and consequences of violence by using a multistage, stratified, random probability sample design. The sample also included women living in Kosovo.
- 63 focus groups with women from various demographic backgrounds on their attitudes towards the subject;
- 35 in-depth interviews with women who had experienced violence, including women with a disability, to understand, in more detail, the impact this had on them.

Main research goals

In total, 15,179 women aged 18–74 were interviewed face-to-face using a multi-stage, random probability approach. The data is weighted to the known population profile with each. An additional weight (population weight) was calculated to enable reporting for the entire sample of the selected OSCE participating States or for a subgroup thereof.[14] This weight reflects the distribution of the survey population across the area covered.

The key socio-demographics used were women's age, work status, whether they lived in a rural or urban area and whether they were affected by conflict or not.

The ultimate goal is to provide evidence for informed decision-making and advocacy and contribute to a reduction of VAWG

12 While the survey was not conducted in the Transdniestrian region, one focus group discussion was conducted with women from the region.
13 The sample in Ukraine does not cover the Autonomous Republic of Crimea or non-government-controlled areas in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The survey was carried out on a sample representative of the adult population of women (2,048 women aged 18–74), including 298 women living close to the contact line in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, in an effort to better understand how conflict affects violence against women.
14 The same was done for Kosovo.

The main goals of the study are to provide evidence of the prevalence of violence against women and girls and its consequences on women's health and well-being for the purposes of policy-making. The main research questions were:

- What are the attitudes and norms towards gender roles and violence against women?
- What is the extent of violence experienced by women in these regions covered by the survey?
- Which forms of violence do women experience?
- Who are the perpetrators of violence against women?
- What are the consequences of violence for women's health and well-being?
- Do women report their experiences to the police or other authorities or organizations? If not, why not?
- Are there differences between women's experiences of violence depending on their age, education, professional status, income or whether they are from a minority group or a rural area?

The study also aimed to achieve a better understanding of the above in light of whether women had experienced an armed conflict based on the definitions used in the study. Initial analysis is provided in Chapter 9, and a separate report will discuss this in more detail.

An overview of the qualitative research

The 114 key experts shared their views on the current state of how governmental institutions and NGOs are working to prevent VAWG, what support is available to women who have experienced VAWG; and what improvements they recommend. These experts included representatives of international organizations as well as governmental and non-governmental institutions.

In total, 63 focus group discussions were conducted with women from different age groups, women living in urban and rural areas, women from different minority groups and women who have experienced conflict. The aims of these discussions were:

- to understand societal attitudes towards women generally and to understand VAWG and the perpetrators of such violence;
- to explore how attitudes towards VAWG have changed over time, including in periods of conflict;
- to explore the degree to which women are aware of existing support measures, their views on those measures and any barriers that might prevent them from accessing support; and
- to identify how prevention and support could be improved.

Overall, 35 in-depth interviews were conducted with survivors of violence, including women with a disability. The aims of these interviews were:

- to explore the forms of violence that women have experienced throughout their lifetime and the impact of conflict;
- to identify barriers to disclosing experiences and to seeking support, and to explore reasons why some women choose to disclose their experiences and others do not;
- to understand the support received, to identify gaps in service provision and to identify the unmet needs of women from specific minority groups (e.g., women from an ethnic minority or with a disability); and
- for women who have gained access to support (formal or informal), to understand how they were able to access such support and the impact this had on them.

2. How to read the data

Reluctance to share

In order to better understand the prevalence of VAW, context is very important. The OSCE added several questions to the survey on norms, attitudes and behaviour of both women and men in relation to violence and reporting experiences of abuse. The results illustrate women's strong reluctance to share their experience of violence and suggest that the real prevalence of VAWG is probably higher than what this study was able to measure.

The qualitative and quantitative research confirms this and illustrates that the taboo and shame linked to sexual violence is particularly prevalent.

A guide to interpreting survey data

Where the percentages provided do not add up to 100, this may be due to rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" responses or the fact that respondents were able to provide multiple answers to certain questions. Throughout, an asterisk denotes any value of less than 0.5% but greater than 0%.

Privacy and anonymity

The interviews were conducted face-to-face by experienced and trained female interviewers, using a tablet. Interviews were conducted in private and used the principles of informed consent. The women interviewed were informed that all data collected would be confidential and the data anonymized.

Possible explanations for differences between participating States

The FRA has described in its EU-wide survey on VAW several possible explanations for observed differences in the prevalence of violence against women. The same explanations are applicable among the OSCE participating States surveyed. These differences require further exploration and research for corroboration and should be looked at with respect to other possible explanations at the level of the participating State.

1. When considering the survey results, it is necessary to take into account that talking with other people about experiences of violence against women is not considered culturally acceptable everywhere. Consideration needs to be given to the possibility that, in societies in which intimate partner violence is largely perceived as a private matter, incidents of violence against women are unlikely to be shared easily and are also rarely disclosed to the police. In line with this, women are less likely to talk about their experiences with violence to a survey interviewer.
2. Increased gender equality could lead to higher levels of disclosure and recognition of the different forms of violence against women. In societies with greater gender equality, where the subject of violence against women is "normalized" within society, women are more likely to report incidents of violence to the police, as well as disclose information to a survey interviewer.
3. Women's experiences of violence are linked to their exposure to risk factors for violence. Factors that might increase exposure to violence include patterns in socialization and lifestyle such as going out and dating, as well as employment factors such as working outside the home.
4. Different drinking patterns in participating States may help to explain certain aspects of violence against women. The survey reveals that there is a link between perpetrators' drinking habits and women's experiences of intimate partner violence. However, when exploring this relationship it is important to consider other factors as well, such as patterns in an individual perpetrator's violent behaviour.

5. In analyzing the key findings of the survey, it is important to take into account that different prevalence rates should be interpreted with care, and could be a reflection of changing attitudes and norms around violence against women in different locations.

Forms of violence covered

The findings presented in this report are based on a set of questions asked in the OSCE survey concerning violence against women perpetrated by a non-partner or an intimate partner, as well as instances of sexual harassment, stalking, childhood violence and the impact of conflict on gender-based violence. The questionnaire was based on the definitions established in the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

To measure the (reported) prevalence of each type of violence, women were asked if they had experienced a range of different forms of violence in various reference periods as detailed in Chapters 3 and 4 of this report.

- Regarding physical and sexual violence, a list of questions that were asked in the research can be found in Chapter 6 on page 33.
- Regarding psychological violence, a list of questions that were asked in the research can be found in Chapter 6 on page 44.
- For stalking, women in the survey were asked questions listed in Chapter 7 on page 67.
- In terms of sexual harassment, women in the survey were asked questions listed in Chapter 8 on page 71.

In this research, childhood violence refers to violence before the age of 15. A list of questions that were asked about experiences of violence during childhood can be found in Chapter 6 on page 65. The questions, methodology and the age of the respondents in the OSCE-led survey differ from the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) surveys as well as from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), and the prevalence rates of childhood violence are not comparable.

Regarding the chapter on conflict and gender-based violence (Chapter 9), **armed conflict** was defined for the purposes of this research as armed fighting between two or more organized groups, attacks on communities or general insecurity caused by conflict, while women considered conflict-affected are those who have lived in a situation where there was an active armed conflict for a period of at least one week and who answered "yes" to at least one of the questions listed on page 81 of Chapter 9.

Partners include individuals to whom the respondents were married, with whom they were cohabiting or with whom they were involved in a relationship without cohabiting. Non-partners include all perpetrators other than women's current or previous partners.

The **most serious incident** is defined as the incident that had the biggest impact on the surveyed women, either physically or psychologically.

The questionnaire was based on the definitions established in the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)

3. Regional context

Gender inequality in the OSCE region

Women remain largely underrepresented in positions of political power in the OSCE region as a whole and in the participating States included in this survey. This means that women do not have the same influence on policies, laws and reforms that shape socio-economic development that men have. In the whole OSCE region, only 27.9% of members of parliament are women, and in the countries surveyed, women's parliamentary representation ranges from 12% to 38%.[15]

Table 3.1: Percentage of women in parliaments of the area covered by the survey

Albania	28%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	21%
Montenegro	24%
North Macedonia	38%
Serbia	34%
Moldova	23%
Ukraine	12%

The participation of women in regional or local governance structures is also very low. For example, only 15% of mayors in Albania are women, 4% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2% in Montenegro 7% in North Macedonia and 6% in Serbia.[16]

Women's participation in the security sector is also low. Participation of women in police forces is an important enabler to help women report violence. Women represent between 6.5% and 19.2% of uniformed and commissioned staff in police services in South-Eastern Europe.[17]

Discrimination and economic inequalities, including the lack of economic independence, can make women more vulnerable to violence. In the surveyed locations, the rate of women's participation in the labour force is systematically lower than that of men, ranging from 32.4% to 49.8%. The percentage of women employed in managerial positions is also lower.

15 Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in Parliaments, December 2018.
16 *Women and Men in Albania 2018* (Tirana: INSTAT, 2018), accessed 3 February 2019, http://www.instat.gov.al/media/4764/burra-dhe-grate-ne-shqiperi-2018.pdf; *Women and Men in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Sarajevo: Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018); Macedonia - Reactor Information submitted for consideration to the committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its adoption of a list of issues regarding the Sixth Periodic Report of the Republic of Macedonia under the CEDAW, 71 Pre-Sessional Working Group, 12–16 March 2018; *Women and Men in Montenegro 2018* 7th edition (Podgorica: Monstat, 2018); *Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia* (Belgrade: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2017); *Women and Men in Kosovo* 2016-2017 (Prishtinë/Priština: Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2018).
17 Enkeleda Toska et al., *Women in Police Services in South East Europe* (Belgrade: SEESAC, 2015), accessed 23 February 2019, http://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Gender-and-Security/Women-in-Police-Services-in-South-East-Europe-.pdf.

The OSCE participating States covered in this report are all signatories of, or parties to, key international conventions

Table 3.2: Economic participation

	Percentage of labour force participation (2017),[18] 15 years of age and older		Percentage of women in managerial positions[19]
	Female	Male	
Albania	49.8%	66.8%	22.6%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	32.4%	53.3%	22.0%
Montenegro	47.5%	62.2%	24.0%
North Macedonia	42.7%	67.7%	24.0%
Serbia	46.3%	62.2%	30.7%
Moldova	39.4%	45.3%	42.0%
Ukraine	55.7%	69.0%	41.1%

Ratification of international conventions and availability of national mechanisms for gender equality

The OSCE participating States covered in this report are all signatories of, or parties to, key international conventions (see Table 3.3), such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention). All have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2003).

18 Data from ILOSTAT, http://www.ilo.org/ilostat. The labour force participation rate includes both people who are currently employed and those who are unemployed. For further information, see the SDG Indicators Metadata Repository or ILOSTAT's indicator description.
19 Data from ILOSTAT, http://www.ilo.org/ilostat. The female share of employment in managerial positions conveys the number of women in management as a percentage of employment in management. For further information, see the SDG Indicators Metadata Repository or ILOSTAT's indicator description.

Gender equality is promoted through overarching strategies and action plans, and specific plans for tackling violence against women further support the practical implementation of overarching commitments

Table 3.3: Conventions

	Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1962)	Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (2011): signed (s), ratified (r) or entry into force (f)	European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes (1983) Signed (s), ratified (r) or entry into force (f)
Albania	-	2014 (f)	2005 (f)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1994	2014 (f)	2005 (f)
Montenegro	2006	2014 (f)	2010 (f)
North Macedonia	1994	2018 (f)	-
Serbia	2001	2014 (f)	2010 (s)
Moldova	-	2017 (s)	-
Ukraine	-	2011 (s)	2005 (s)

The legal and policy frameworks across the area covered in the study indicate that significant efforts have been invested in the promotion of gender equality, protection of women's rights and improvement of the status of women. All OSCE participating States involved in the survey have adopted gender-equality laws and laws prohibiting discrimination, including on the grounds of gender. Gender equality is promoted through overarching strategies and action plans, and most of the participating States covered have adopted specific plans for tackling violence against women and domestic violence.

Table 3.4: National action plans or strategies

	Gender Equality	Violence against women
Albania	National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016–2020	Resolution Condemning Violence against Women and Improving Legal Mechanisms for its Prevention, 2017
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Gender Action Plan 2013–2017	• Framework Strategy on Implementation of the Convention on Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence 2015–2018 • Strategy to Combat Domestic Violence of Republika Srpska 2014–2019; • Strategy on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013–2017
Montenegro	Action Plan for Gender Equality 2017–2021	Strategy on Protection from Domestic Violence 2016–2020
North Macedonia	Gender Equality Strategy 2013–2020.	National Action Plan (NAP) for Implementation of the Istanbul Convention 2018–2023
Serbia	Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 with Action Plan for 2016-2018.	N/A
Moldova	National Strategy on Ensuring Equality between Women and Men 2017-2021	National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence and Violence against Women for the period 2018 – 2023
Ukraine	Programme on the Equality of Rights and Opportunities between Men and Women (2017–2021).	Concept of the National Programme on Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence (2017–2020)

Availability of national mechanisms for gender equality

National mechanisms for gender equality play a key role in implementing international conventions and national legal and policy frameworks. The surveyed countries all have different forms of national mechanisms for gender equality, though they are diverse in terms of institutional design and capacities. The legal and policy frameworks in all of the countries covered by the survey have been updated in recent years, and what is now needed is implementation through practical protocols, action plans and strategies.

Table 3.5: Mechanisms for gender equality

Albania	National Council on Gender Equality (Ministry of Health and Social Protection)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Agency for Gender Equality, Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees
Montenegro	National Council for Gender Equality; Department for Gender Equality within the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights
North Macedonia	Department for Equal Opportunities at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
Serbia	Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality
Moldova	Inter-ministerial Co-ordinating Council in the Field of Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence; Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection
Ukraine	Governmental Representative on Gender Issues within the office of the Deputy Prime Minister

43%

More than four in ten women aged 18–74 in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey say they believe that their friends would agree that: “It is important for a man to show his wife/partner who the boss is.”

17%

Nearly one in five women say they believe that their friends would agree that: “It is a wife’s obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn’t feel like it.”

30%

Three in ten surveyed women agree that domestic violence is “a private matter and should be handled within the family.”

68%

Two-thirds of women say they think that, in general, violence against women at the hands of partners, acquaintances or strangers is very or fairly common.

4. Attitudes towards gender roles and violence against women

4.1: Norms, attitudes and behaviours towards gender roles

In the survey, women were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements regarding gender roles and interactions between men and women, which was also explored in detail in the qualitative research.

Data from both the qualitative and quantitative research suggests that beliefs in female subservience and spousal obedience continue to persist in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey. In the qualitative research, women explained that men and women are regarded as occupying clearly defined and segregated roles in both the public and private spheres. The primary responsibility for women was described as that of mother, wife and homemaker.

> **"We Montenegrin women carry a lot on our back, the whole family, the husband is usually treated like a guest at home."**
>
> **Female, aged 51+, rural, Montenegro**

Men, on the other hand, are considered to be the breadwinners and are expected to provide for their families. They are seen as having a greater amount of leisure time because they have less responsibility at home and are believed to enjoy more freedom and advantages than women.

> **"A man has one obligation, his job. He goes to work, comes back home, and that's the end of his obligations. A woman works for 24 hours, children, household, husband. Everything."**
>
> **Female, aged 35–55, urban, minority group, Serbia**

> **"Men are allowed to do everything. They can go out whenever they want, they can just stay in betting shops and drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes."**
>
> **Female, aged 36–55, urban, Albania**

That said, women in the qualitative research explained that gender roles in society were slowly shifting, with more women going out to work and having greater freedom outside the home, while men were more likely to be involved in childcare and housework than they were previously.

> **"Look at my son and daughter-in-law: he is getting much more involved in taking care of the baby and everything else."**
>
> **Female, aged 38–55, conflict-affected, urban, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

> **"Our men have changed a lot. They agree to help women, particularly [men with families] are willing to do everything. They have really changed a lot compared to the situation some 20 or 30 years ago, particularly in terms of housework."**
>
> **Female, aged 51+, urban, Montenegro**

"A man has one obligation, his job. He goes to work, comes back home, and that's the end of his obligations. A woman works for 24 hours, children, household, husband. Everything"

However, the expansion of women's roles to include paid work does not replace or reduce women's responsibilities at home, increasing the pressure on women's time and energy.

> **"A woman in Serbia must clean, cook, iron, knead. She must be a superhero for her child, a super wife for her husband and a super worker at work. Her husband just comes home and asks whether lunch is ready. She also has to do the laundry. And all of that work is invisible."**
>
> **Female, aged 18–34, rural, Serbia**

Moreover, there are clear expectations of how women should look and behave. Participants in the qualitative research described how women were expected to be well-groomed and to act submissively. Women were seen as having less freedom than men to socialize and enjoy leisure time because of gender norms (for instance, socializing with other men can be frowned upon) and their responsibilities at home.

> **"Our women are still trying to meet the old medieval image of a woman. When a woman has to be well-groomed and good-looking. To be pleasing to the eye is probably considered one of a woman's key tasks."**
>
> **Female, aged 36–55, urban, Ukrainian, conflict-affected, IDP, Ukraine**

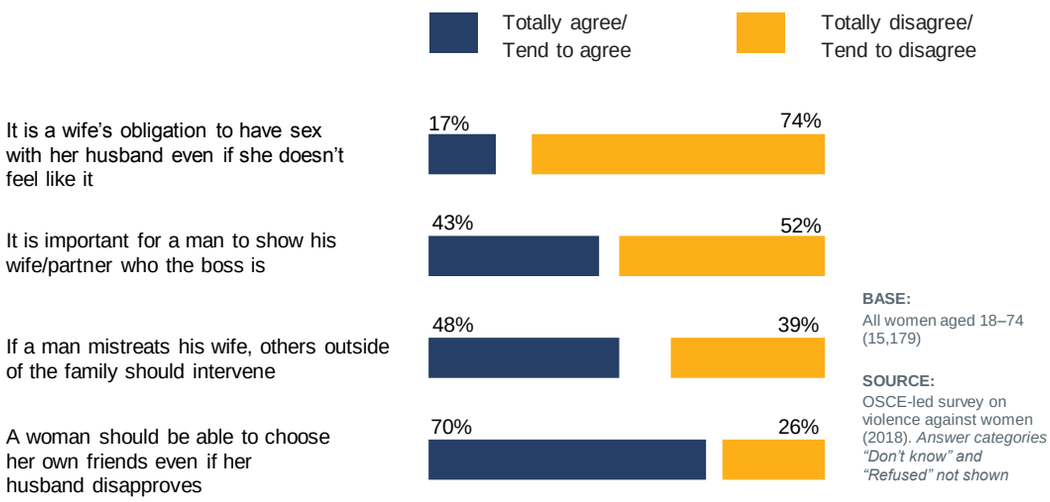
> **"If you go to a café on your own, let's say people could forgive you for that … but if you decide to hang out with solely male company, then you will be immediately labelled … What a catastrophe …"**
>
> **Female, aged 55–74, urban, North Macedonia**

The quantitative data also points to the fact that there is a significant minority of women who hold opinions of female subservience, spousal obedience and silence surrounding VAWG. For example, while 70% of women think their friends would agree that a woman should be able to choose her own friends even if her husband disapproves, a significant minority disagrees (26%). Similarly, more than two-fifths of women think their friends would agree that it is important for a man to show his wife/partner who the boss is.

Seventeen per cent of women believe that it is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it.

Figure 4.1: Perceptions of social norms and acceptable behaviours, OSCE-led survey average

People have different ideas about families and what is acceptable behaviour for men and women in the home. Please tell me whether your friends would generally agree or disagree with the following statements.



Certain groups of women are more likely than others to think their friends would agree that women should have sex with their husband even if they do not feel like it, that it is important for men to show their wife who the boss is, and that a woman should not be able to choose her own friends if her husband disapproves. These include:

- women over 50, particularly in comparison with women aged 18–29, who are less likely to hold such views;
- women with no formal education or only primary education compared to those with tertiary education, women who are fulfilling domestic responsibilities or who are retired and women in elementary occupations;
- those who are finding it very difficult or difficult to cope on their current income;
- women who did not choose their spouse themselves (i.e., their partner demanded that they marry them, or their parents or their partner's parents chose their husband);
- women from an ethnic/religious minority and returnees are also more likely to subscribe to subservient views.

While agreement is higher among the groups of women noted above, this is not to say that all women within these groups think the same way.

Table 4.1: Norms and acceptable behaviours, by place

People have different ideas about families and what is acceptable behaviour for men and women in the home. Please tell me whether your friends would generally agree or disagree with the following statements.

	If a man mistreats his wife, others outside of the family should intervene		It is important for a man to show his wife/partner who the boss is		A woman should be able to choose her own friends even if her husband disapproves		It is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn't feel like it	
	Agree, %	Disagree, %	Agree, %	Disagree, %	Agree, %	Disagree, %	Agree, %	Disagree, %
Albania	56	42	34	65	56	42	19	79
Bosnia and Herzegovina	53	43	24	74	57	39	11	84
Montenegro	49	46	33	64	64	31	14	79
North Macedonia	67	29	32	67	61	37	19	79
Serbia	66	28	21	77	73	25	12	84
Moldova	41	47	25	68	64	25	15	73
Ukraine	43	41	51	42	73	22	19	71
OSCE-led survey average*	48	39	43	52	70	26	17	74
Data collected in Kosovo	62	35	48	51	42	56	26	71

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (15,179)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

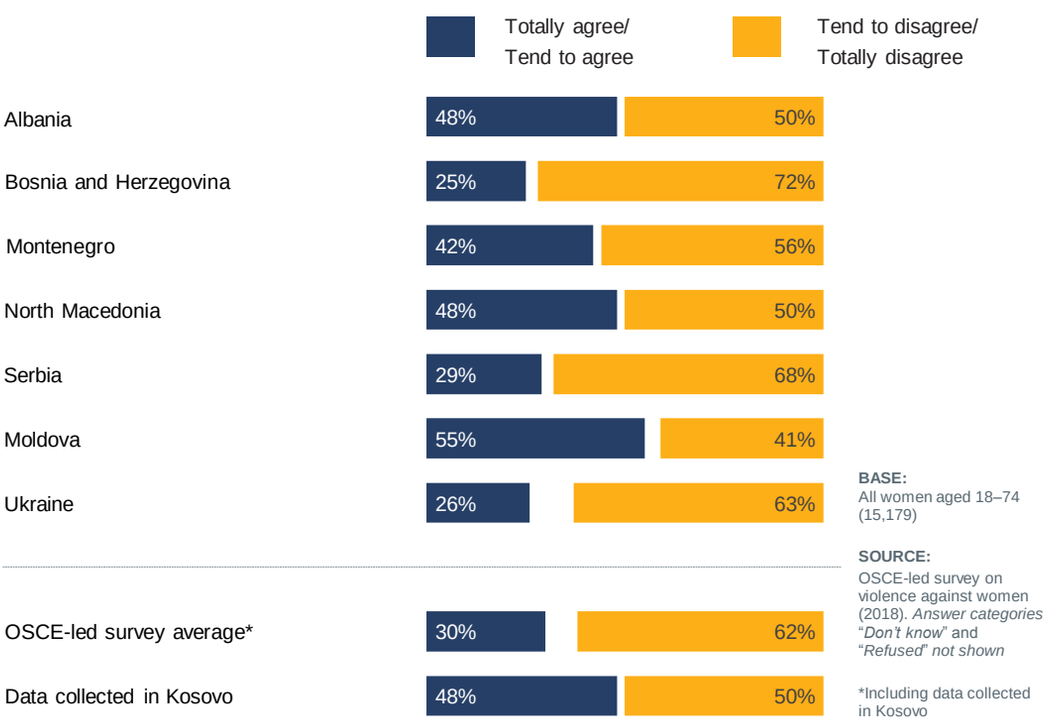
4.2: Norms, attitudes and behaviours towards violence against women

Attitudes are split around the issue of whether intimate partner violence is a private matter. Forty-eight per cent of surveyed women think that if a man mistreats his wife, others outside the family should intervene, while 39% disagree with this view. Younger women are more likely to agree that others should intervene, in addition to those who are conflict-affected and those who have tertiary education. This view is also most prominent among women living in rural areas and among those who are part of a minority group (refugees, returnees or women with a disability).

Thirty per cent of surveyed women agree that domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family, more than double the EU average (14%).[20] Agreement on this issue across the EU ranges from 2% in Sweden to 31% in Romania, suggesting that women in countries with a longer tradition of raising awareness of gender equality also are more open to talk about intimate partner violence.

Figure 4.2: Views on whether or not domestic violence is a private matter, by place

Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement.
- Domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family.

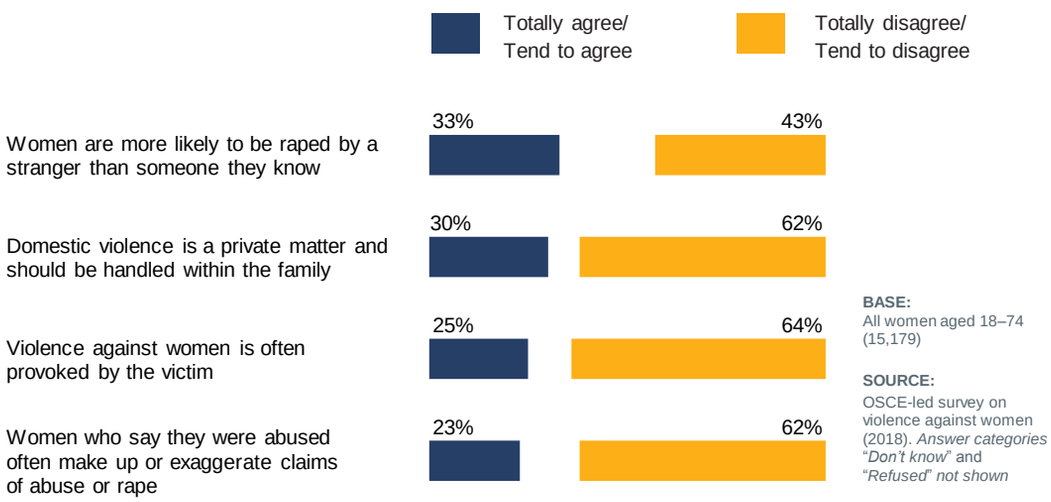


20 "Special Eurobarometer 449: Gender-based Violence", European Commission, Directorate-General on Justice and Consumers, November 2016, accessed 26 January 2019, https://data.europa.eu/euodp/data/dataset/S2115_85_3_449_ENG.

Around a quarter of women hold victim-blaming views and doubt the credibility of victims. As Figure 4.3 illustrates, 25% of women feel that violence against women is often provoked by the victim. A similar proportion (23%) believes that women who say they were abused often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape. By comparison, an average of 15% of women in the EU think that violence is often provoked by the victim, ranging from 6% in the Netherlands to 58% in Latvia, while 19% of women in the EU (ranging from 7% in Sweden to 43% in Malta) think that women exaggerate claims of abuse or rape, according to the European Commission's Special Barometer 449 on gender-based violence.[21]

Figure 4.3: Underlying attitudes on violence against women

To what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Those women who are more likely to believe that women should be subservient to men are also more likely to hold victim-blaming views and to believe that domestic violence is a private matter. For instance, women over 50 are more likely to believe that violence against women is often provoked by the victim (30% agree) or that claims of abuse are exaggerated (26% agree), while women aged 18–29 are less likely to believe this (19% and 18%, respectively, agree with these statements).

While the great majority of women do not think that having sexual intercourse without the woman's consent can be justified, a significant proportion of women think that this can be justified. Respondents were given a range of scenarios and asked if sexual intercourse without consent could be justified in any of them, such as within a marriage or partnership if either the woman or her assailant had been drinking or if the woman was wearing provocative clothing. More than three-quarters of women surveyed disagree that sexual intercourse without consent is permissible in any of the scenarios provided, with at least half strongly disagreeing. However, 17% believe that sexual intercourse without consent can be justified in a marriage or among partners who live together, and 14% think it can be justified if a woman voluntarily goes home with someone, flirts with him beforehand or does not clearly say no.

21 "Special Eurobarometer 449: Gender-based Violence", European Commission, Directorate-General on Justice and Consumers, November 2016, accessed 26 January 2019, https://data.europa.eu/euodp/data/dataset/S2115_85_3_449_ENG.

Table 4.2: Attitudes towards non-consensual sexual intercourse, by place

Do you personally agree or disagree that sex without consent could be justified in the following circumstances? (totally agree/tend to agree)

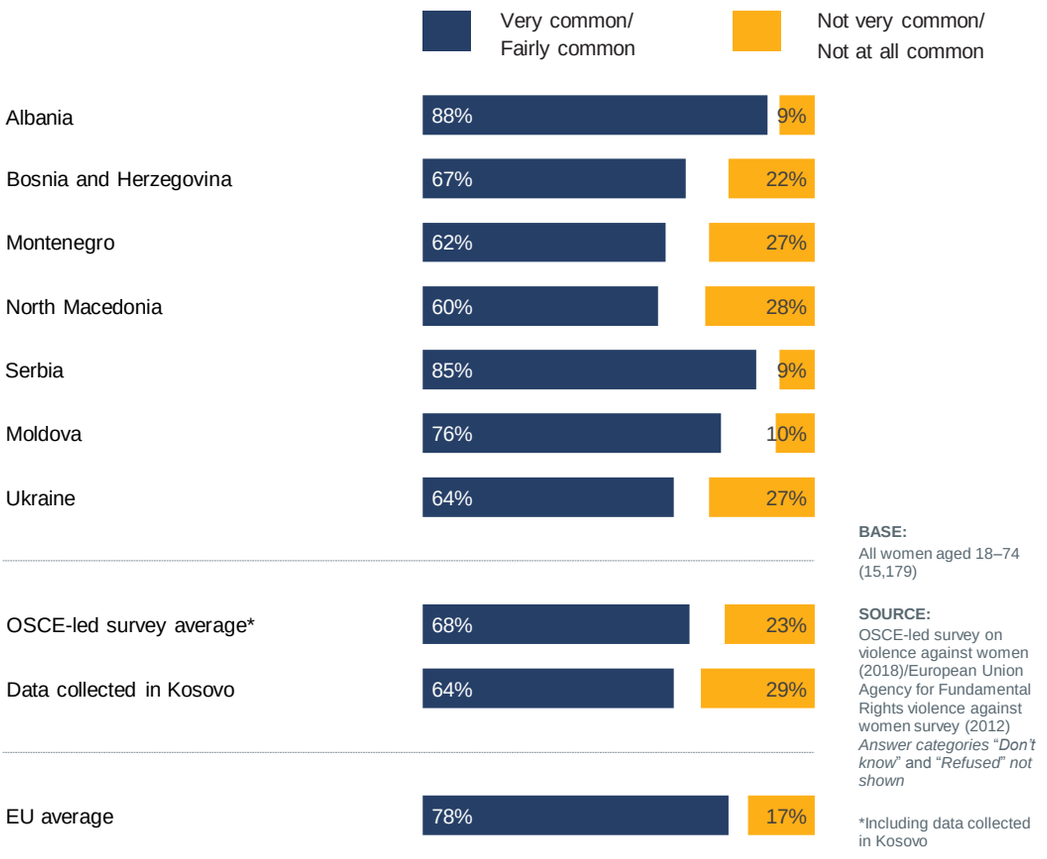
	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	*1,858*	*2,321*	*1,227*	*1,910*	*2,023*	*1,802*	*2,048*	*15,179*	*1,990*
In a marriage or among partners who live together	17	7	15	22	10	17	19	17	25
Wearing revealing, provocative or sexy clothing	15	4	4	13	7	16	13	12	19
The woman being drunk or using drugs	9	4	2	6	5	9	7	7	17
Flirting beforehand	20	5	3	17	7	15	15	14	24
Not clearly saying no or physically fighting back	22	6	5	17	6	17	16	14	24
Being out walking alone at night	11	3	4	7	3	9	6	6	19
Having several sexual partners	14	4	2	8	4	8	6	7	21
Voluntarily going home with someone, for example after a party or date	20	4	4	13	6	12	16	14	25
If the assailant does not realise what they were doing, for example because they were under the influence of alcohol or drugs or said they didn't know the woman had not agreed	16	3	1	5	3	6	4	5	20

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

Most women (68%) feel that violence against women is common (Figure 4.4). This is lower than the EU average of 78% (ranging from 54% in the Czech Republic to 93% in Portugal).[22]

Figure 4.4: Perceptions of the pervasiveness of violence against women, by place

How common do you think violence against women by partners, acquaintances or strangers is in …?



The qualitative research supports this finding. Participants in the focus group discussions held throughout the area covered by the OSCE-led survey explained that violence against women was common and, in particular, that intimate partner violence was widespread. They explained that sex within a marriage was largely considered a marital obligation in their society and that sexual violence, although very prevalent, was not commonly discussed or viewed as violence. Women felt that it was the norm for women to have sex with their partner regardless of whether they wanted.

> **"Having intercourse with your husband even though you don't feel like it is a form of sexual violence, but it's usually done for the sake of 'keeping the peace and quiet in the house'."**
>
> **Female, aged 55–74, Macedonian, urban, North Macedonia**

> **"Sexual violence is also possible, but women, wives usually do not talk about it. Since society does not understand this type of violence, the victim is intensely questioned by everyone: 'How come? You are married.'"**
>
> **Female aged 30–50, from the Transdniestrian region, urban, conflict-affected, Moldova**

22 *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results.*

> **"When a man slaps his wife, it is considered unimportant. He slapped her. He didn't do anything horrible, he didn't beat her up.**
>
> **Female, aged 18–37, rural, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The women who took part in the qualitative research explained that physical violence within a marriage or relationship was seen by society as far less acceptable, and that it would generally be the point where others would intervene, such as neighbours. That being said, certain forms of violence such as slapping or pulling a woman's hair were viewed as normal. These forms of violence were considered "minor" and therefore not constituting violence at all.

Women in the qualitative research felt that psychological violence was by far the most common form of violence committed by an intimate partner, and that it was very widespread. Women identified controlling behaviour, verbal abuse, economic violence, humiliation and threats as common forms of psychological violence. This type of violence was seen as so commonplace that it is not viewed by society as violence but rather as a norm within relationships. As such, they explained that women who experienced psychological violence were not considered victims and would not be taken seriously if they reported or complained about this type of behaviour. They also explained that women generally did not view psychological violence as a form of violence until it was accompanied by other "more severe" forms of physical violence.

> **"First, psychological violence is in general considered the norm, and nobody pays attention … Second, I don't think there is anyone here [in our country] who doesn't have to face this."**
>
> **Female, aged 56+, urban, Ukraine**

Women in the qualitative research explained that non-partner violence was most commonly perpetrated by the woman's family members, or her partner's family members. They felt that the most common form of violence perpetrated by a family member was psychological violence (namely verbal abuse and controlling behaviour), although some women shared personal experiences of physical violence at the hands of a family member.

In terms of violence experienced at the hands of a member of the woman's birth family, women described not being permitted to see their friends or to leave their house, as well as being forced to leave school at a young age and marry against their will. Women explained that it was typical for women to move into their husband's family's home upon getting married. As such, in addition to experiencing violence at the hands of their husbands, they could also be subjected to violence by their husband's family. In the qualitative research, mothers-in-law were the most commonly mentioned perpetrator of psychological (and sometimes physical) violence from among the members of the partner's family, and this violence generally took the form of belittling, cursing, humiliation and, in the case of physical violence, throwing objects.

> **"My first episode of physical violence was a week after I got married because I didn't burn the wood in the garden properly. The main reason for my husband's abusive behaviour is that he used to spend a lot of money on gambling and billiards and drinking with his friends. He was jealous, and he believed that roughness established a man's authority and masculinity. My mother-in-law also abused me psychologically and verbally when I was living with my husband. She started fights between me and my husband, threatened me with a knife, threw objects at me and was verbally abusive."**
>
> **Female, survivor of violence, aged 60+, Albania**

In terms of non-partner violence experienced at the hands of someone other than a family member, women in the qualitative research cited colleagues, classmates and strangers as perpetrators of violence. In particular, women explained that men in positions of power, such as more senior male colleagues or police officers, felt that they could commit acts of violence towards women because they did not think they would face any consequences. Women also explained that it was difficult for women in small towns and villages to distance themselves from those perpetrating violence against them.

5. Impact of attitudes towards gender-based violence on the prevalence of violence

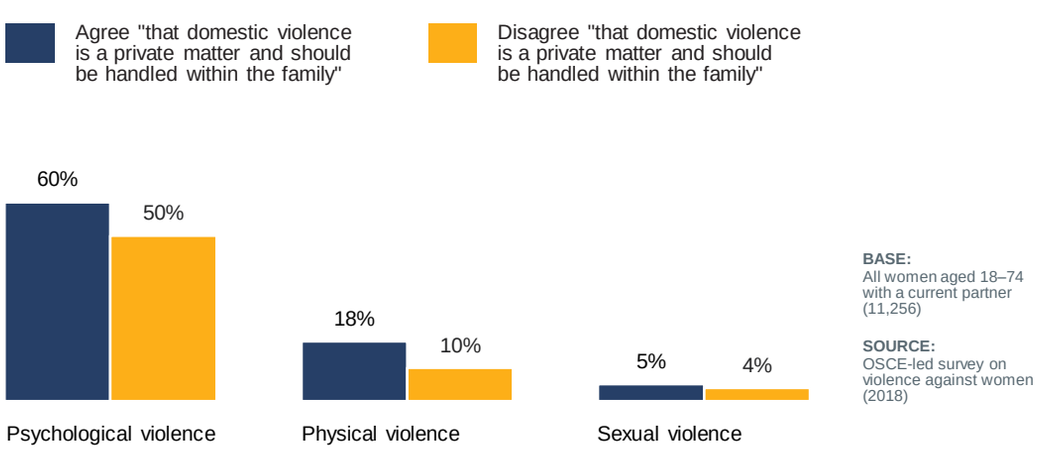
As discussed in Chapter 4, the women surveyed were asked a range of questions in an effort to understand their attitudes towards, and perceptions of, violence against women. This chapter looks at how these attitudes and perceptions may impact the indicated prevalence of violence against women.

Overall, the data suggests that those who hold views of female subservience, spousal obedience and silence surrounding VAWG are more likely to say they have experienced violence, both since the age of 15 and in the 12 months prior to the survey, albeit with some exceptions.

For example, experiences of current partner psychological violence are indicated by 60% of those who agree that domestic violence is a private matter that should not be discussed outside the family, but by 50% of those who disagree that this is case. Those agreeing that domestic violence is a private matter are also almost twice as likely to say they have experienced current partner physical violence than those who disagree (18% versus 10%).

Figure 5.1: Indicated prevalence of intimate partner violence based on attitudes about whether or not domestic violence is a private matter

(% experiencing each form of violence)

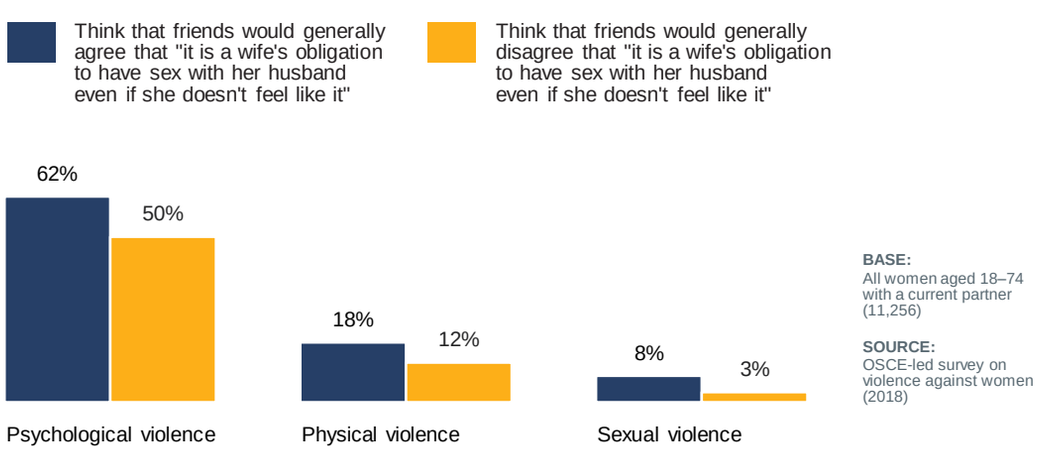


Women who think that their friends would agree that it is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it are also more likely than those who disagree to say they have experienced current partner violence. Sixty-two per cent of currently partnered women who agree indicate that they have experienced psychological violence committed by a current partner in their lifetime, while the same can be said for 50% of those who disagree; for physical violence, the figures are 18% of those who agree and 12% of those who disagree; for sexual violence, the rates are 8% and 3%, respectively. The indicated prevalence in terms of violence within the 12 months prior to the survey is also higher among those who agree for all three types of violence than for those who disagree.

Women who think that their friends would agree that it is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it are more likely to say they have experienced current partner violence than those who disagree

Figure 5.2: Indicated prevalence of intimate partner violence based on attitudes about whether or not it is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband

(% experiencing each form of violence)



When considering those women who agree and disagree with the statements, "Women who say they were abused often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape" and "Violence against women is often provoked by the victim", the same patterns can be seen again. In nearly all cases, women who agree with either of these statements are more likely to say they have experienced sexual harassment, non-partner physical and/or sexual violence and intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence. For example, around half of those agreeing with each statement (51% and 49%, respectively) indicate that they have experienced sexual harassment, while 44% of those disagreeing with each statement say the same. Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence is indicated by 24% and 26% of those agreeing with each statement and by 18% and 17% of those disagreeing, respectively. Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence is indicated by 28% of those agreeing that women exaggerate claims of abuse but by 22% of those disagreeing, and similar is seen in relation to whether women agree or disagree that women provoke violence.

Women who are older, those who have lower levels of education, those who find it difficult to cope on their current income and those who live in rural areas are more likely to hold subordinate attitudes and to indicate that they have experienced violence

Figure 5.3: Prevalence of violence based on attitudes about whether or not women exaggerate or make up claims of abuse
(% experiencing each form of violence)

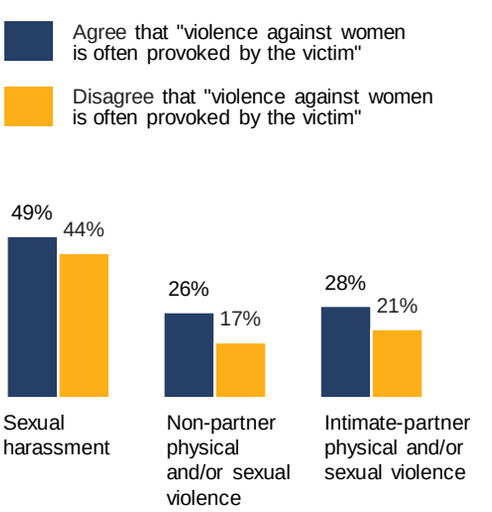
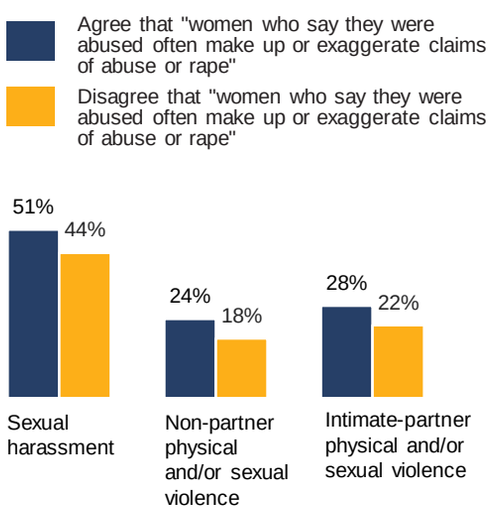


Figure 5.4: Prevalence of violence based on attitudes about whether or not women provoke violence



BASE:
All women aged 18–74 (15,179)/All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (14,085)

To some extent, this is related to the socio-demographic characteristics of those who agree with these statements. Women who are older, women who have lower levels of education, women who find it difficult to cope on their current income and women who live in rural areas are more likely to believe in female subservience, spousal obedience and silence surrounding VAWG and also tend to be more likely to indicate that they have experienced violence during their lifetime. This is not always the case: younger women and women with higher education indicate that they have experienced sexual harassment more often but would be less likely to believe in female subservience, spousal obedience and silence surrounding VAWG. This points to the possibility that holding such views can make women more likely to recognize their experiences of violence and that changing such perceptions is important in helping women identify such abuse.

The survey found that 70% of women have experienced some form of violence or abuse (including sexual harassment and stalking) at the hands of a partner or non-partner in their adult life.

Psychological violence at the hands of an intimate partner, which includes controlling or abusive behaviour, economic violence and using their children to blackmail their partner, is the most prevalent, with six out of ten women who have ever had a partner indicating one or more experiences of this.

Sexual harassment has affected almost half of all women surveyed, with 45% saying they have had such an experience since the age of 15, and 16% saying they had such an experience in the 12 months prior to the survey.

While physical and sexual violence is indicated less often, 19% of women indicate that they have experienced such violence at the hands of someone other than a partner since the age of 15.

And nearly a quarter (23%) of women who have ever had a partner say the same regarding their current or former intimate partner(s).

6. Violence against women

In the area covered by the OSCE-led survey, the results suggest that approximately:

16 million women have experienced some form of sexual harassment, stalking, intimate partner violence or non-partner violence (including psychological, physical or sexual violence) since the age of 15

4.9 million women have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence

4.4 million have experienced non-partner violence

This chapter discusses the prevalence and patterns of psychological, physical and sexual violence that women experience at the hands of partners and non-partners. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on stalking and sexual harassment.

6.1: The prevalence of physical and sexual violence and forms of violence

The prevalence of intimate partner and non-partner physical and sexual violence since the age of 15

According to the OSCE-led survey, 31% of women aged 18–74 have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner since the age of 15.[23] This is comparable with the EU average of 33%, ranging from 19% in Portugal to 52% in Denmark.

More specifically, 29% of women surveyed say they have experienced physical violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner, and 9% say they have experienced sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner.

Women in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey, as in the EU, are more likely to indicate that they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner than a non-partner.

Almost one in four women (23%) say they have been subjected to intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, similar to the EU average of 22% (which ranges from 13% in Austria, Croatia, Poland, Slovenia and Spain to 32% in Denmark and Latvia). Physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner (in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey) is indicated by 21% of women surveyed, while 7% indicate experiences of sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner.

23 With regard to physical violence, women in the survey were asked the following questions: has someone/a current partner/previous partner ever 1) pushed you or shoved you? 2) slapped you? 3) thrown a hard object at you? 4) grabbed you or pulled your hair? 5) punched you or beaten you with a hard object or kicked you? 6) burned you? 7) tried to suffocate or strangle you? 8) cut or stabbed you or shot at you? 9) beat your head against something? In this report, the prevalence of physical violence is based on respondents who report having experienced at least one of these forms of violence on at least one occasion. The prevalence of physical violence is provided for current partners, previous partners, any intimate partner (either current or previous) and non-partners. The reference period for non-partner violence was since the age of 15/in the 12 months prior to the survey, and for partner violence it was whether this had ever happened during their relationship or in the 12 months prior to the survey
Concerning sexual violence, women were asked: Since you were 15 years old and in the past 12 months, how often has someone 1) forced you to have sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way? 2) Apart from this, how often has someone attempted to force you to have sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way? 3) Apart from this, how often has someone made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or were unable to refuse? 4) Or have you consented to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused? The prevalence of sexual violence is based on respondents who reported having experienced at least one of these forms of violence on at least one occasion. The prevalence of sexual violence is provided for current partners, previous partners, any intimate partners (either current or previous) and non-partners. The reference periods are as above.

Physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of someone other than an intimate partner since the age of 15 is indicated by almost one in five women (19%). This is lower than the EU average of 22%, spanning from 10% in Portugal to 40% in Denmark. The majority of women who have experienced physical violence since the age of 15 have also experienced sexual violence: 73% in relation to intimate partner violence and 68% for non-partner violence.

Table 6.1: Prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, by type of perpetrator

	Current partner, %			Previous partner, %			Any partner, %			Non-partner, %		
	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Physical and/or sexual violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Physical and/or sexual violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Physical and/or sexual violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Physical and/or sexual violence
Albania	17	3	18	22	6	23	19	4	19	11	1	11
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6	2	6	11	4	11	10	4	11	7	1	8
Montenegro	11	3	12	15	2	15	17	3	17	8	1	9
North Macedonia	6	2	7	10	4	12	9	3	10	6	2	7
Serbia	9	3	10	17	5	18	17	5	17	8	2	9
Moldova	24	5	25	35	11	37	33	9	34	15	4	17
Ukraine	13	5	15	27	7	28	23	7	26	22	5	24
OSCE-led survey average*	13	4	14	24	7	25	21	7	23	18	4	19
Data collected in Kosovo	8	4	9	15	6	18	9	4	11	7	1	8
EU average	7	2	8	24	9	26	20	7	22	20	6	22

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (15,179), those with a current partner (11,256), previous partner (6,520), any partner (14,085)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)/ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights violence against women survey (2012)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

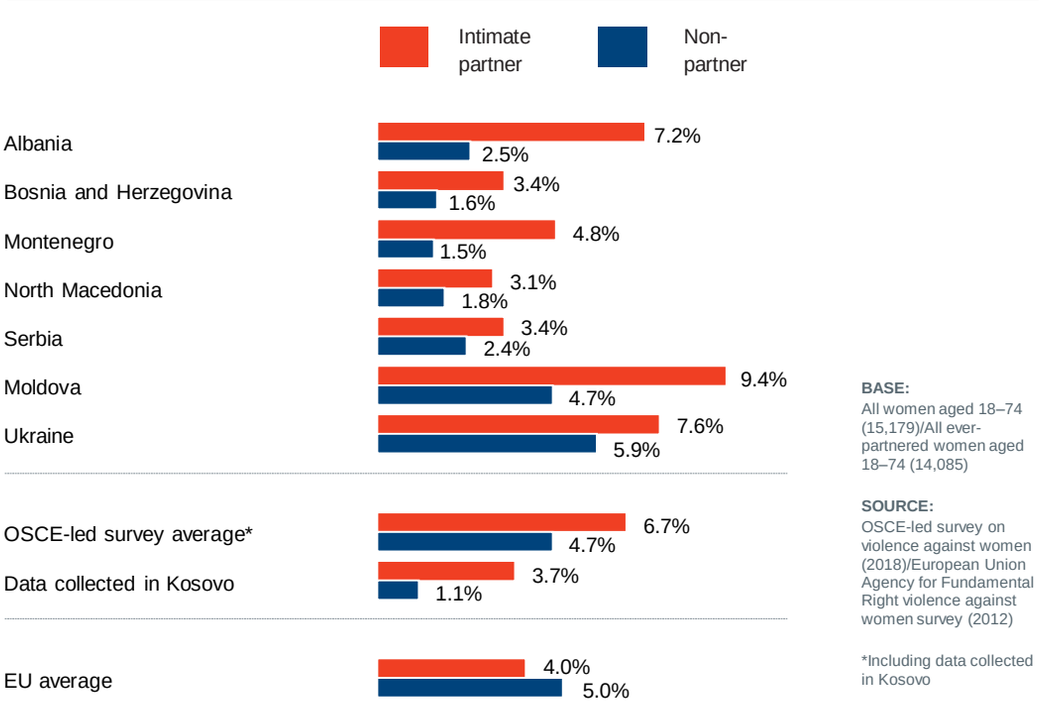
Prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey

Respondents were also asked about their experiences of physical and sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey. Overall, 10% of women surveyed indicate that they experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner in this time frame. This is higher than the EU average of 8%, ranging from 3% in Slovenia to 11% in Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands and Sweden.

Approximately 2 million women experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner or non-partner in the 12 months prior to the survey

The indicated prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey is 7%. This compares with an EU average of 4% (ranging from 2% to 6%). Five per cent of women say they experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner in the 12 months prior to the survey, in line with the EU average (also at 5%).

Figure 6.1: Prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey, by type of perpetrator



Prevalence when including the self-completion questionnaire

Due to concerns that women interviewed would not want to discuss their experiences of physical and sexual violence, a short self-completion questionnaire was administered at the end of the survey that was completed by 11,796 respondents.

The questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate which, if any, of the following seven statements applied to them:

1. My partner or an ex-partner has been physically violent towards me.
2. My partner or an ex-partner has been sexually violent towards me.
3. Since I was 15 years old, somebody other than my partner or an ex-partner has been physically violent towards me.
4. Since I was 15 years old, somebody other than my partner or an ex-partner has been sexually violent towards me.
5. Since I was 15 years old, somebody has been physically and/or sexually violent towards me during a conflict I have lived through.
6. Before I turned 15, somebody was physically violent towards me.
7. Before I turned 15, somebody was sexually violent towards me.

The table below shows the prevalence of violence as indicated in the survey only and the prevalence when taking into consideration those who indicated in the survey or in the self-completion questionnaire that they had experienced violence.

As can be seen, the indicated prevalence increases when the self-completion responses are included.

Table 6.2: Prevalence of violence based on the survey only and on the survey and responses to the self-completion questionnaire

	Survey, %	Survey and self-completion questionnaire, %
Intimate partner physical violence	21	24
Intimate partner sexual violence	7	9
Non-partner physical violence	18	20
Non-partner sexual violence	4	5

The self-completion questionnaire did not provide any further definition of violence or ask about specific forms of violence in order not to put any further burden on the respondent. The differences that become apparent when the self-completion questionnaire is added to the survey results could be due in part to the respondents considering different experiences that were not covered in the survey questionnaire. There is also the possibility that there were some experiences that women chose not to disclose during the survey.

Throughout this report, the results presented are based on the survey responses only.

Forms of physical and sexual violence

Across both intimate partner violence and non-partner violence, the most common forms of violence experienced by women since the age of 15 include being pushed or shoved or being slapped. These and nearly all other forms of violence are more commonly experienced at the hands of an intimate partner than a non-partner. While some forms of violence may be considered more serious than others, the consequences and impact may, of course, vary, and indeed each type may not be experienced in isolation but in combination or over a period of time with others. As can be seen in Table 6.3, when excluding the most frequently indicated form of violence, i.e., being pushed or shoved, the overall prevalence does not decrease by the same magnitude. This suggests that being pushed or shoved is often coupled with one or more of the other forms of violence as well. Indeed, among those women who have ever had a partner and who indicate that they have experienced violence, two-thirds say that they have experienced two of more different forms of violence, including 32% who say they have experienced four or more. This compares to 41% of survivors of non-partner violence who say they have experienced two or more types of violence and 10% who say they have experienced four or more.

Table 6.3: Forms of physical violence since the age of 15, by type of perpetrator

How often has your current partner/your previous partner/someone other than your partner done any of the following to you? (ever/since the age of 15)

	Current partner, %	Previous partner, %	Any partner, %	Non-partner, %
Pushed you or shoved you	9	19	17	12
Slapped you	6	14	12	7
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	3	9	7	4
Thrown a hard object at you	3	6	6	3
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	2	9	6	3
Beat your head against something	1	4	3	1
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you	1	3	3	1
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	0.3	1	1	1
Burned you	0.3	0.4	1	0.2
Any of the above	13	24	21	18
Any of the above excluding pushed or shoved	9	19	16	12

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (15,179), those with a current partner (11,256), previous partner (6,520), any partner (14,085)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

The overall indicated lifetime prevalence of intimate partner sexual violence is 7%, including 4% of women who have been raped. As discussed in Chapter 4, the women who took part in the qualitative research discussed how sex within marriage was often expected, and indeed the survey data shows that a significant minority believe that non-consensual sex between partners is justified (17%), which may indicate that many women do not disclose when this happens. Non-partner rape is reported by 2% of women.

Approximately 850,000 women have been raped by their partners

Table 6.4: Forms of sexual violence since the age of 15, by type of perpetrator

How often has your current partner/your previous partner/someone other than your partner done any of the following to you? (ever/since the age of 15)

	Current partner, %	Previous partner, %	Any partner, %	Non-partner, %
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	2	4	4	2
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	2	4	3	3
Apart from this, made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	2	2	3	1
Made you consent to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	2	3	3	2
Any of the above	4	7	7	4

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (15,179), those with a current partner (11,256), previous partner (6,520), any partner (14,085)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

6.2: Intimate partner physical and sexual violence

Overall, 21% of women who ever had a partner say they have experienced physical violence at the hands of a current or previous partner. The most common form of intimate partner violence is being pushed or shoved, followed by being slapped.

Table 6.5: Forms of physical violence since the age of 15 at the hands of an intimate partner

How often has your current partner/your previous partner done any of the following to you?

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	***1,660***	***2,190***	***1,117***	***1,778***	***1,973***	***1,698***	***1,955***	***14,085***	***1,714***
Pushed you or shoved you	7	8	10	5	12	23	19	17	3
Slapped you	17	8	14	7	13	25	12	12	8
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	6	5	5	3	8	11	7	7	3
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	3	4	3	2	5	11	7	6	1
Thrown a hard object at you	2	2	3	2	3	9	7	6	1
Beat your head against something	3	2	3	1	3	7	3	3	0.4
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you	2	2	2	1	3	6	2	3	0.4
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	1	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	1	1	1	0.2
Burned you	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	1	1	0.3
Any of the above	19	10	17	9	17	33	23	21	9
Any of the above excluding pushed or shoved	18	9	14	8	14	28	18	17	9

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

In terms of intimate partner sexual violence, the most common form is being forced into sexual intercourse, which 4% of women say they have experienced in a relationship.

Table 6.6: Forms of sexual violence since the age of 15 at the hands of an intimate partner

Has your current partner/your previous partner done any of the following to you?

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	***1,660***	***2,190***	***1,117***	***1,778***	***1,973***	***1,698***	***1,955***	***14,085***	***1,714***
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	2	2	1	2	2	5	4	4	2
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	2	2	1	2	3	5	3	3	2
Apart from this, made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	1	3	1	2	3	2	3	3	2
Made you consent to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	2	3	3	2	3	5	4	3	2
Any of the above	4	4	3	3	5	9	7	7	4

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

The data suggests that for many women who have experienced various forms of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, these are not isolated experiences. For most types of violence, including those that might be considered more serious and for sexual violence, more than half of those who have had such an experience say this has happened more than once, as illustrated in Table 6.7.

This is more pronounced for previous partner violence than it is for current partner violence. Indeed, between 20% and 43% of women who have experienced each form of violence at the hands of a previous partner say that there have been six or more incidents of such violence.

Table 6.7: Repeated experiences of intimate partner physical and sexual violence since the age of 15

	Once		2-5 times		6 or more times		Number of cases (n)	
	Current Partner	Previous Partner	Current Partner	Previous Partner	Current Partner	Previous Partner	Current Partner	Previous Partner
Pushed you or shoved you	41	34	36	28	23	38	*714*	*914*
Slapped you	47	40	30	27	22	33	*976*	*918*
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	38	41	26	26	36	33	*356*	*524*
Thrown a hard object at you	40	31	31	28	30	41	*250*	*478*
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	45	36	26	24	29	39	*215*	*315*
Beat your head against something	55	63	29	17	15	20	*112*	*212*
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you	55	45	33	26	12	28	*138*	*243*
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	93	21	3	46	4	33	*22*	*25*
Burned you	80	54	19	26	1	20	*31*	*59*
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	42	47	34	21	24	32	*80*	*231*
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	55	47	34	27	11	26	*63*	*218*
Made you consent to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	36	32	34	24	30	43	*114*	*213*
Made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	44	47	30	15	26	38	*71*	*150*

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (15,179), those with a current partner (11,256), previous partner (6,520), any partner (14,085)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Most serious incidents of intimate partner violence

The survey asked women who had experienced physical and/or sexual violence to provide further details about the incident they considered the most serious over their lifetime, i.e., the one that had the most impact on them. This could have included actual violent acts as well as threats thereof. Table 6.8 provides an overview of the types of violence that women said were involved in the most serious incident of intimate partner violence they experienced. For the most part, each form of violence is mentioned more often in relation to the most serious incident of previous partner violence than it is for current partner violence, including those that may be considered more severe, which is in line with the higher stated lifetime prevalence of previous partner violence. For both current and previous partner violence, around nine in ten of those who identified a most serious incident say that there was a physical element involved, and one in six say that there was a sexual element involved.

Table 6.8: Most serious incident of intimate partner violence

I would like you to think about the most serious incident by your current/previous partner. Which of the things on this card happened at that time? By" most serious", we mean an incident that had the biggest impact on you.

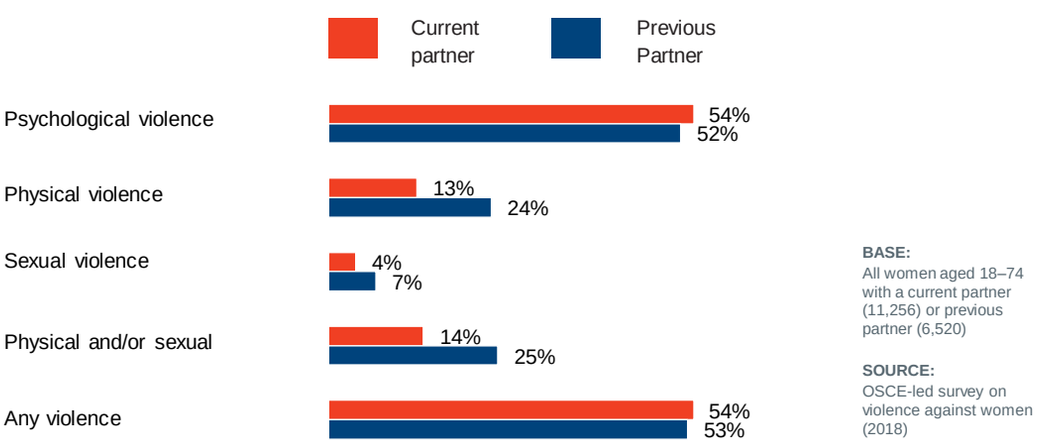
	Current partner, %	Previous partner, %	Any partner, %
Pushed you or shoved you	34	35	36
Threatened to hurt you physically	20	32	29
Slapped you	23	27	27
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	7	14	12
Threw a hard object at you	7	10	10
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	7	20	16
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	4	6	6
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	4	6	6
Made you consent to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	4	4	5
Made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	3	4	4
Beat your head against something	4	5	5
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you	3	5	4
Threatened you with violent sexual acts (like rape, forced pregnancy, etc.) in a way that really frightened you	0.4	2	2
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	0.2	1	2
Burned you	1	1	1

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (15,179), those with a current partner (11,256), previous partner (6,520), any partner (14,085)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Difference in prevalence of violence perpetrated by current and former partners

- Women are more likely to say they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a previous partner (25%) than their current partner (14%).
- Most forms of violence are more likely to be mentioned in respect of previous partners, including those that might be considered more severe.
- Three-quarters of those who identified a most serious incident of violence at the hands of their previous partner say that the violence experienced was one of the reasons, if not the main reason, why the relationship ended.
- It is possible that more severe violence brought an end to the relationship, as well as that women who have experienced violence in their current relationship are less inclined to disclose this, perhaps out of shame or fear of repercussions, as explored in more depth in Chapter 11.

Figure 6.2: Prevalence of intimate partner violence at the hands of a current or previous partner



Patterns in intimate partner violence[24]

Around four-fifths (85%) of victims of current partner violence (similar to the EU average of 82%) and 75% of victims of previous partner violence (compared to 62% in the EU) were living with the perpetrator at the time of the first incident of violence (or threat thereof). Leaving their partner does not necessarily mean an end to the violence experienced: 11% of those who indicate that they have experienced previous partner physical and/or sexual violence say that there were also incidents that happened after the breakup, pointing to the need for continued protection and support even after women leave abusive relationships.

Among those respondents who were pregnant during their relationship and who experienced violence (or threats thereof) during the relationship, 19% say they experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of their current partner during their pregnancy, similar to the EU average of 20%. Over a third (36%) say the same in relation to previous partner violence (compared to the EU average of 42%).

Of those women with children or who have had children, almost a third (31%) say the children living with them are aware of violent incidents perpetrated by their current partner, and over a third (36%) say the same in the case of previous partner violence.

24 While the reporting rates/prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence discussed above do not include threats of such violence, other questions relating to when such violence happened and details on the most serious incident, do include threats of violence.

The data suggests that violence against women in intimate relationships happens on a continuum. Rather than being an isolated incident, it tends to happen more than once (as shown in Table 6.7) over a period of time. Of those women who say they experienced the first incident of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of their current partner five or more years ago, 22% experienced the most recent incident in the 12 months prior to the survey, and a further 7% say the most recent incident took place between one and four years before the survey. For 28% of survivors of current partner violence who say they experienced their first incident of violence between one and five years before the survey, the most recent incident took place in the 12 months prior to the survey.

6.3: Intimate partner psychological violence

In the qualitative research, women discussed how prevalent they thought psychological violence was in relationships, and indeed the survey findings support this: three in five women who have ever had a partner indicate that they have experienced **psychological violence** committed by an intimate partner in their lifetime (60%), which is significantly higher than the EU average of 43%[25] and at the same level as the highest-ranking countries in the EU (Denmark and Latvia, the lowest being Ireland at 31%).

Women were asked about a number of different forms of psychological violence that have been grouped into four broad categories as follows:

- **Economic violence**, which includes being prevented from making decisions about family finances and from shopping independently and being forbidden to work outside the home.
- **Controlling behaviours**, which include situations where a woman's partner tries to keep her from seeing her friends, *restricts her use of social media sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.)*, tries to restrict contact with her birth family or relatives, insists on knowing where she is in a way that goes beyond general concern, gets angry if she speaks with another man, suspects that she has been unfaithful, *forbids the use of contraception or otherwise restricts decisions on family planning*, *prevents her from completing school or starting a new educational course*, *wants to decide what clothes she can wear* or *expects to be asked for permission so she can see a doctor*.
- **Abusive behaviours**, which includes situations where a woman's partner forbids her to leave the house at all or *forbids her to leave the house without being accompanied by a relative*, takes away her car keys or locks her up, belittles or humiliates her in front of other people or in private, purposefully scares or intimidates her (e.g., by yelling or smashing things), makes her watch or look at pornographic material against her wishes, threatens to hurt or kill someone she cares about (other than her children), threatens to hurt her physically, threatens her with violent sexual acts (like rape, forced pregnancy, etc.) and *hurts or threatens to hurt her when visiting, picking up or bringing back her children (previous partner only)*.
- **Using a woman's children to blackmail her, or abusing her children**, which includes threatening to take her children away, threatening to hurt her children, hurting her children or making threats concerning the custody of her children (previous partner only).

Women who were in a relationship were asked if any of these things had happened sometimes, often or all of the time or had never happened, while women who had been in previous relationships were asked if any of their previous partners had ever done any of these things to them.[26]

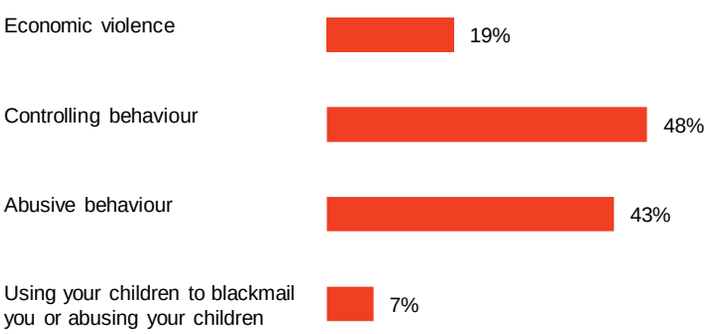
25 The forms of psychological violence in italics were not asked about in the FRA survey.
26 In relation to being threatened with physical or sexual violence, women were asked how many times their current and/or previous partner had ever done this and how often they had done it in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Overall, 48% of women who have ever had a partner have experienced controlling behaviours on the part of a current or previous partner, with partners insisting on knowing where they were going (beyond general concern) or becoming suspicious that they had been unfaithful mentioned most often within this category (each by 31%).

Around one in five women have experienced abusive behaviours. This includes over one-third of respondents who say they have been belittled or humiliated in private (36%) and around one in five women mentioning that their partners had scared them on purpose (23%) or belittled or humiliated them in public (21%).

Economic violence has been experienced by nearly one in five women (19%).

Figure 6.3: Prevalence of the different forms of intimate partner psychological violence



BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (14,085)/The category of using a woman's children for blackmail or abusing her children is based on women who have ever had a partner and or who have ever had children.

SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

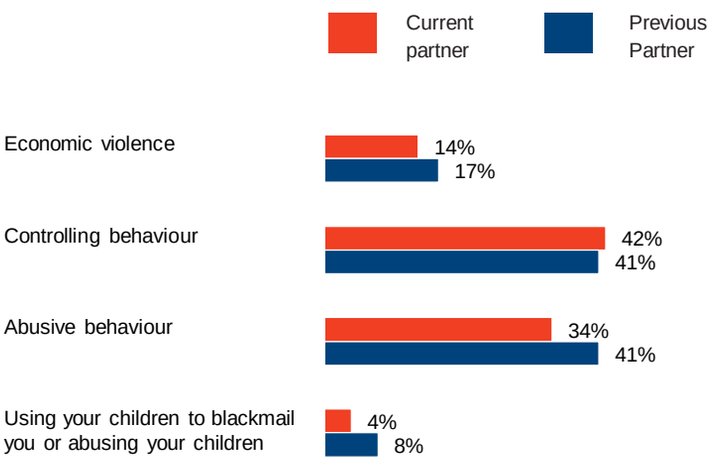
Table 6.9: Prevalence of the different forms of intimate partner psychological violence, by place

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	***1,660***	***2,190***	***1,117***	***1,778***	***1,973***	***1,698***	***1,955***	***14,085***	***1,714***
Economic violence	22	12	12	10	12	20	21	19	13
Controlling behaviour	50	28	35	36	35	55	53	48	42
Abusive behaviour	41	23	24	24	29	53	48	9	5
Using your children to blackmail you or abusing your children	11	6	7	4	8	12	7	7	4

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (14,085)/ (Blackmail with/abuse of children is based on ever-partnered women who have or have had children)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Women are more likely to say they have experienced economic violence, abusive behaviours and blackmail involving children or abuse of children in relation to a previous partner than in relation to a current partner.

Figure 6.4: Prevalence of psychological violence by current and previous partners



BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have ever had a current partner (11,256), previous partner (6529)/ The category of using a woman's children for blackmail or abusing her children is based on women who have had a current/previous partner and who have children.

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Three in five women who have ever had a partner indicate that they have experienced psychological violence committed by an intimate partner in their lifetime

6.4: Non-partner physical and sexual violence

As mentioned above, nearly one in five women (19%) have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of someone other than their partner in their adult life. Specifically, 18% have experienced physical violence at the hands of a non-partner, and 4% have experienced sexual violence. The most prevalent forms of non-partner physical violence are being pushed or shoved (experienced by 12% of women), followed by being slapped (7%).

Table 6.10: Forms of non-partner physical violence since the age of 15

Since you were 15 years old until now, how often has someone other than a partner done the following to you?

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	***1,858***	***2,321***	***1,227***	***1,910***	***2,023***	***1,802***	***2,048***	***15,179***	***1,990***
Pushed you or shoved you	3	4	4	3	4	8	16	12	3
Slapped you	8	3	5	3	4	8	8	7	5
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	3	2	2	2	2	4	5	4	2
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	3	1
Thrown a hard object at you	1	1	0.3	2	1	3	4	3	1
Beat your head against something	1	1	0.1	0.3	0.4	1	2	1	1
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you	0.4	1	0.3	1	1	2	2	1	1
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	0.4	0.1	0.2	0	0.1	1	1	1	0.1
Burned you	0.1	0.2	0.2	0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1
Any of the above	11	7	8	6	8	15	22	18	7
Any of the above excluding pushed or shoved	10	5	7	5	6	12	14	12	6

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

In terms of sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner, the most common form is attempted rape, which 3% of women say they have experienced.

Table 6.11: Forms of non-partner sexual violence since the age of 15

Since you were 15 years old until now, how often has someone other than a partner done the following to you?

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	***1,858***	***2,321***	***1,227***	***1,910***	***2,023***	***1,802***	***2,048***	***15,179***	***1,990***
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	0.4	0.4	1	1	1	2	3	3	1
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	0.3	1	0.3	1	1	2	3	2	1
Apart from this, made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	0.3	1	0.2	1	0.3	1	2	1	0.2
Made you consent to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	1	1	0.2	0.3	0.4	1	2	2	1
Any of the above	1	1	1	2	2	4	5	4	1

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

Victims of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner are less likely to have repeated experiences than women who have experienced intimate partner violence. There are nonetheless many women who have had more than one experience of each type of violence. Of the women who say they have been pushed or shoved, slapped, or had a hard object thrown at them, half or more say this has happened at least twice. Between one-quarter and two-fifths of victims of sexual violence have experienced rape and/or other forms of sexual violence on multiple occasions.

Table 6.12: Repeated experiences of non-partner physical and sexual violence since the age of 15

	Once, %	2-5 times, %	6 or more times, %	Number of cases (*n*)
Pushed you or shoved you	40	37	23	*815*
Slapped you	53	31	15	*778*
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	48	37	15	*382*
Thrown a hard object at you	51	31	18	*214*
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	**56**	**22**	**23**	***213***
Beat your head against something	**85**	**8**	**7**	***126***
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you	60	17	23	*115*
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	**89**	**9**	**2**	***55***
Burned you	93	4	2	*21**
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	73	19	7	*189*
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	**62**	**25**	**13**	***160***
Made you consent to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	70	16	14	*121*
Made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	69	23	9	*102*

BASE: All women aged 18–74 who have experienced each from of violence ('n' indicates number of women who say they have experienced each form of violence)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
*** CAUTION: SMALL BASE**

Most serious incidents involving non-partners

The most serious incidents (those incidents that had the most impact on the victims[27]) involving non-partners tend to be physical rather than sexual, in line with the general prevalence. Of those who identify a most serious incident, 88% say that it included some form of physical violence, while 16% say it involved some form of sexual violence.

Table 6.13: Women's most serious incidents of non-partner violence

I would like you to think about the most serious incident by a non-partner. Which of the things on this card happened at that time? By "most serious", we mean the incident that had the biggest impact on you.

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	***230***	***199***	***112***	***168***	***250***	***329***	***502***	1,996	***206***
Pushed you or shoved you	12	22	22	17	21	20	32	30	23
Threatened to hurt you physically	13	23	15	21	25	17	20	20	19
Slapped you	33	16	25	13	18	22	14	15	31
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	10	11	7	5	9	6	9	9	11
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	4	7	3	6	8	11	7	7	5
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	2	2	6	4	8	6	6	6	3
Threw a hard object at you	4	5	3	8	2	7	6	6	4
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	1	2	2	3	1	4	5	5	4
Made you consent to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	0.3	1	1	0	1	2	3	3	2
Threatened you with violent sexual acts (like rape, forced pregnancy, etc.) in a way that really frightened you	0	0.4	1	0	1	1	3	3	0.4
Tried to suffocate or strangle you	3	4	1	5	2	5	3	3	3
Made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	1	1	1	3	1	2	3	3	1
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	2	0	1	0	0	3	2	2	0.4
Beat your head against something	3	1	0.4	0	2	1	2	2	4
Burned you	1	0	1	0	0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0

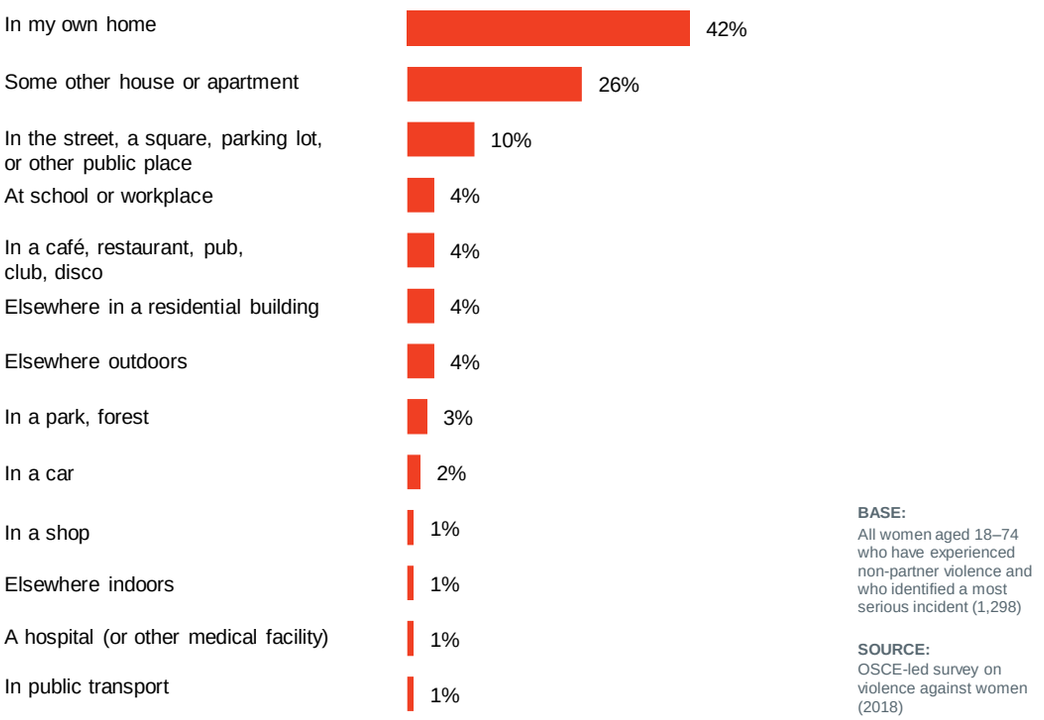
BASE: All women aged 18–74 who experienced non-partner violence since the age of 15 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

27 This include threats of physical or sexual violence.

More than two in five of the most serious incidents (42%) identified took place in the woman's own home, which is twice as high as indicated in the EU (27%), and a further 26% took place in some other house or apartment, highlighting the danger women face in private spaces.

Figure 6.5: Location of the most serious incident of non-partner violence

Thinking about the most serious incident of non-partner violence, where did it take place?



6.5: Perpetrators of non-partner physical and sexual violence

Women who say that they have experienced non-partner physical and/or sexual violence were asked to provide details on who the perpetrator was (using the list provided [28]) and the sex of the perpetrator(s).

Sexual violence

While opinions are split as to whether women are more likely to be raped by a stranger than someone they know (33% agree and 43% disagree), data on the actual experiences of women suggests that perpetrators of sexual violence are more likely to be someone the victim knows.

While 23% of women who say they have experienced non-partner sexual violence identify the perpetrator as a stranger, the same proportion say the perpetrator was a friend, acquaintance or neighbour, and 22% say that it was someone else they knew but that they did not wish to specify further from the list of categories provided. At 14%, the next most common perpetrator is a date or someone the woman had just met. Fewer women say that incidents of non-partner sexual violence are committed by a relative or family member (3%) or by a relative or family member of their partner (6%).

28 The list of perpetrators provided for non-partner violence includes: boss/supervisor; colleague/co-worker; client/customer/patient; teacher/trainer/coach; another pupil/fellow student; doctor/healthcare worker; a relative/family member (other than your partner); a relative/family member of your partner; a date/someone you just met; friend/acquaintance/ neighbour; somebody else you knew; guards at checkpoints/borders; police officer (not at a checkpoint or border); soldier or other armed man/woman (not police or a guard at a checkpoint/border); international peacekeeper/observer/aid worker; someone you did not know.

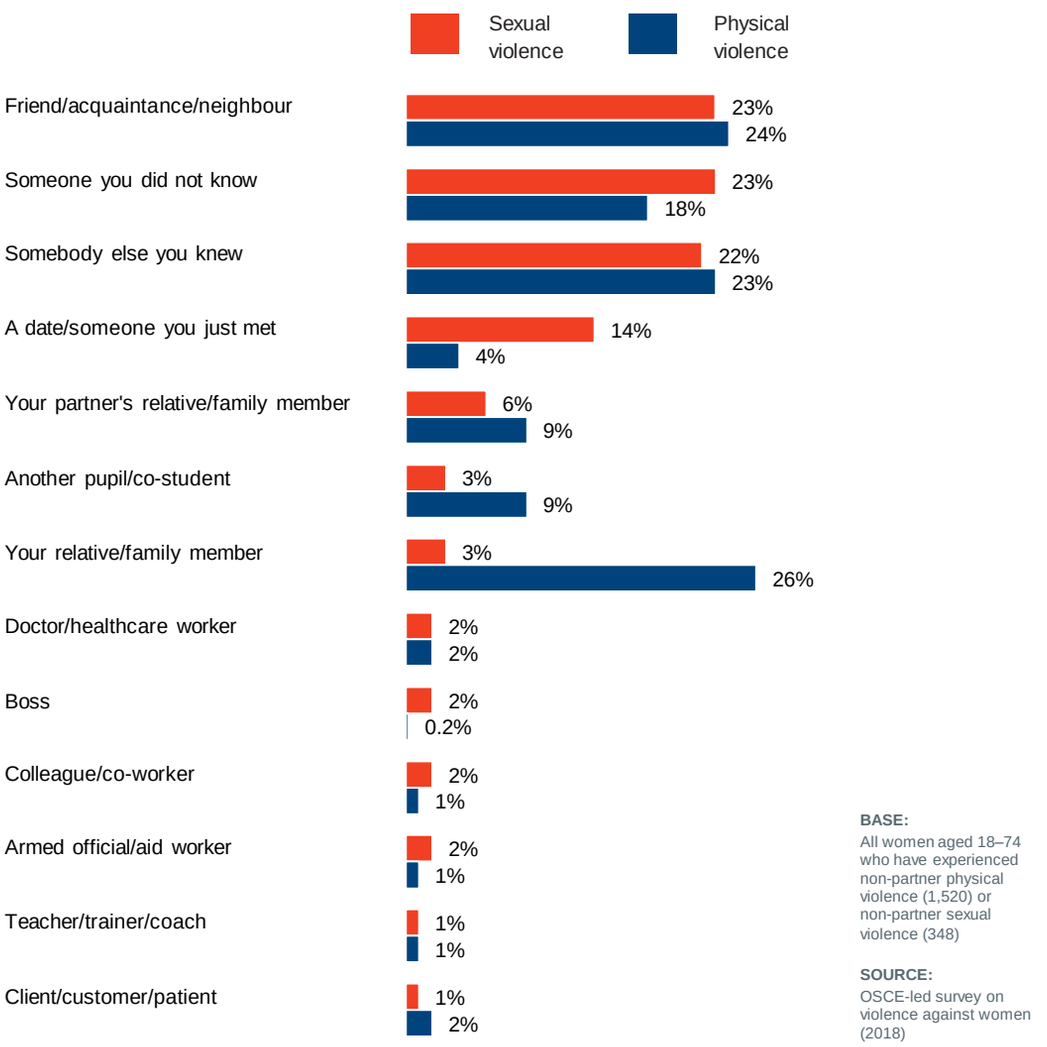
Men are, for the most part, the perpetrators of non-partner sexual violence. More than eight in ten women (82%) who have experienced this form of violence say the perpetrator was male, while 1% say that a woman was involved (and 18% preferred not to say).

Physical violence

In relation to non-partner physical violence, a relative or family member of the victim (26%) is identified most often, followed by a friend, acquaintance, neighbour (24%) or someone else the victim knew but did not specify from the list of perpetrator types (23%). Nearly one in five (18%) say the perpetrator was someone they did not know, which is lower than the EU average of 31%.

Figure 6.6: Perpetrators of non-partner violence, by type of violence since the age of 15

Who did this to you?



While men are more frequently identified as the perpetrators of physical violence, women are nonetheless involved in a significant proportion of these incidents. Seventy per cent of women who have experienced non-partner physical violence say the perpetrator was a man (47% mention a man only, and 23% say both men and women were involved), compared with 45% who say a woman was involved (with 22% mentioning only women). Eight per cent preferred not to say or did not know the sex of the perpetrator.

In cases where a female perpetrator is mentioned, they are most likely to be a member of the victim's own family or her partner's family, a colleague, or a fellow student. Table 6.14 summarizes the proportion of each perpetrator type who were male, female or whether both men and women were involved.

Table 6.14: Sex of perpetrators of non-partner physical violence since the age of 15

Was the perpetrator of physical violence a man, a woman, or were both men and women involved?

	Male, %	Female, %	Both, %	Number of cases (n)
Colleague/co-worker	37	60	3	*36*
Another pupil/co-student	26	37	37	*123*
Your own relative or family member (other than partner)	47	34	18	*421*
Your partner's relative of family member	42	39	14	*153*
Date/someone you just met	100	0	0	*47*
Friend/acquaintance/neighbour	61	20	16	*299*
Someone else you knew	52	28	20	*274*
Someone you didn't know	59	10	30	*221*

BASE: All women aged 18–74 who identified each perpetrator type of non-partner physical violence (n indicates number of women who identify each perpetrator type)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
Perpetrator categories with fewer than 30 cases are not shown here. Don't know/refused responses not shown.

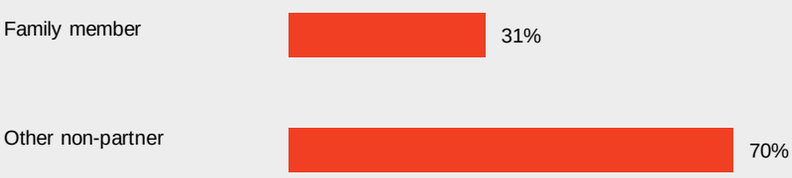
In more than three-quarters of the most serious incidents identified, the perpetrators acted alone (76%). There were two perpetrators in 17% of incidents and three or more in 5% of cases. Among those women who said that rape was part of the most serious incident, 23% indicate that there were two or more people involved. While the total number of women who say that rape was part of the most serious incident of non-partner violence is low (73), it is nevertheless concerning that one in five of these women were subjected to gang rape. Over a third of the most serious incidents were perpetrated by someone who was drunk or under the influence of drugs (37%).

Role of family members in perpetrating non-partner physical violence

Although the majority of incidents of non-partner physical violence are perpetrated by someone who is not part of the woman's family (or partner's family), three in ten victims of non-partner physical violence identify the perpetrator as a member of the victim's family or her partner's family.

Figure 6.7: Perpetrators of non-partner physical violence: family members versus other non-partners

Who did this to you?



BASE: All women aged 18–74 who have experienced non-partner physical violence since the age of 15 (1,520)

SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Female perpetrators are more frequently identified when a family member is responsible for non-partner physical violence: in two-thirds of such cases, the victim said a man was involved (64%, including 45% of cases where only a man was involved and 19% where both men and women were involved); in around half of cases, the victim said a woman was involved (54%, including 35% where only a female was involved). In contrast, when the perpetrators include people other than family members, men are identified as being involved in 75% of cases (with 53% mentioning only a man and 22% mentioning both men and women), while women are identified by 42% of victims (with 20% mentioning only a woman).

Table 6.15: Sex of the perpetrators of non-partner physical violence, by type of perpetrator

Who did this to you?

	Family member %	Other non-partner %
Base size (n)	***532***	***951***
Male	45	53
Female	35	20
Both	19	22
No answer/not applicable	1	6

BASE: All women aged 18–74 who experienced non-partner physical violence since the age of 15 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

6.5: Characteristics of victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence

A range of socio-demographic characteristics were collected during the survey in order provide insight into whether certain groups of women were more likely to experience violence at the hands of intimate partners and non-partners. The key differences are discussed below.

Age

The prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence is highest among those who are aged 40–49 (26%) and also comparatively higher than average among those 50 or above. The indicated prevalence is lower among those aged 18–39, as seen in Table 6.16.

Similarly, those aged 40–49 are most likely to indicate experiences of non-partner violence (23%), with the prevalence also higher among those aged 50–59 (21%) than among women under 40. The accumulation of experiences over a lifetime will in part explain these differences, although in the case of non-partner violence, those 60 and over are no more likely to say they have had such experiences in their adult life than the youngest age group.

The prevalence of intimate partner violence in the 12 months prior to the survey is highest among those aged 18–29 (10%) and those aged 40–49 (9%), which is around double the rate indicated by those aged 50–59 (4%) and those 60 or above (5%). This could be in part due to the fact that the partners of older women have become less able to inflict violence and also the fact that younger women are more willing to recognize and share their experiences.

Non-partner violence in the 12 months prior to the survey is also most often indicated by those aged 18–29 and 40–49 (both at 6%) and least often by those aged 50 or above (4%).

Table 6.16: Prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, by age

	Avg %	18–29 %	30–39 %	40–49 %	50–59 %	60+ %
Base size (n)	*14,085*	*1,956*	*2,674*	*2,771*	*2,850*	*3,834*
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence	23	18	21	26	24	25
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	6.7	9.5	7.4	8.7	4.1	4.7

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Table 6.17: Prevalence of non-partner partner physical and/or sexual violence, by age

	Avg %	18–29 %	30–39 %	40–49 %	50–59 %	60+ %
Base size (n)	*15,179*	*2,537*	*2,770*	*2,846*	*2,955*	*4,071*
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence	19	17	18	23	21	17
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	4.7	5.5	4.5	6.4	3.5	3.8

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Despite their increased duration of potential exposure compared to younger women, women 60 or over are less likely than other age groups to say they have ever experienced psychological partner violence over their lifetime (56%). This prevalence is also lower than average among 18–29-year-olds (58%).

Table 6.18: Prevalence of intimate partner psychological violence, by age

	Avg %	18–29 %	30–39 %	40–49 %	50–59 %	60+ %
Base size (n)	***14,085***	***1,956***	***2,674***	***2,771***	***2,850***	***3,834***
Intimate partner psychological violence	60	58	62	61	63	56

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Education

By level of education, women with tertiary education are more likely to indicate experiences of intimate partner violence and non-partner violence in their lifetime compared with those who have no formal or only primary education, particularly in relation to non-partner violence.

In the 12 months prior to the survey, differences in terms of income are less marked, though it is still women with tertiary education who indicate higher rates of violence (particularly regarding non-partner violence).

Table 6.19: Prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, by education

	Average, %	No formal education/ Primary, %	Secondary, %	Tertiary, %
Base size (n)	***14,085***	***1,817***	***9,161***	***3,043***
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence	23	20	23	24
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	6.7	6.6	6.4	7.2

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Table 6.20: Prevalence of non-partner physical and/or sexual violence, by education

	Average, %	No formal education/ Primary, %	Secondary, %	Tertiary, %
Base size (n)	*15,179*	*1,954*	*9,847*	*3,302*
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence from a since the age of 15	19	13	17	24
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	4.7	4.4	3.8	6.3

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Women with tertiary education are also more likely to say they have experienced psychological partner violence (62%) compared to those with no or primary education (53%). This may be due to women with higher levels of education being able to better identify these types of behaviours as violence or as being unacceptable.

Employment status

Women who are doing unpaid work in a family business are among the most likely to indicate experiences of intimate partner violence and non-partner violence, both in their lifetime and in the 12 months prior to the survey. Women who are not working due to an illness or disability are also more likely to indicate experiences of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in both time periods, and non-partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Students have the lowest lifetime rate of intimate partner violence, which is in line with the fact that the vast majority of this group are aged between 18–29-year-olds, but the prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey is lower than that indicated by this age group overall (5% of students versus 10% of 18–29 year olds overall). This group is no different from the average in terms of the prevalence of non-partner violence.

The adult lifetime prevalence of intimate partner and non-partner violence is also lower among those who are currently unemployed or whose main activity is fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities. The prevalence of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey is lowest among retired women, in line with the prevalence among women 50 or older.

Table 6.21: Prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, by employment status

	Average, %	In paid work, %	Self-employed, %	Helping in the family business (unpaid), %	Unemployed, %	A pupil, student, in training, %	Not working due to illness or disability, %	Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities, %	Retired, %
Base size (n)	*14,085*	*4,285*	*545*	*170*	*3,134*	*362*	*118*	*2,264*	*3,065*
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence	23	24	25	33	19	11	38	20	26
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	6.7	6.8	8.2	15.5	6.4	5.4	11.8	8.5	4.1

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Table 6.22: Prevalence of non-partner physical and/or sexual violence, by employment status

	Average, %	In paid work, %	Self-employed, %	Helping in the family business (unpaid), %	Unemployed, %	A pupil, student, in training, %	Not working due to illness or disability, %	Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities, %	In retirement, %
Base size (n)	*15,179*	*4,488*	*564*	*180*	*3,384*	*680*	*131*	*2,333*	*3,264*
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence from a since the age of 15	19	21	24	32	15	19	16	16	18
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	4.7	4.8	6.0	10.9	3.6	5.3	9.8	5.1	3.7

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

The same patterns can be seen in relation to intimate partner psychological violence. Women doing unpaid work in a family business (75%), not working due to illness or disability (66%) or fulfilling domestic responsibilities (65%) are more likely to share that they have experienced psychological violence, while women who are students (51%), unemployed (52%) or retired (57%) are less likely.

Table 6.23: Prevalence of intimate partner psychological violence, by employment status

	Average, %	In paid work, %	Self-employed, %	Helping in the family business (unpaid), %	Unemployed, %	A pupil, student, in training, %	Not working due to illness or disability, %	Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities, %	Retired, %
Base size (n)	***14,085***	***4,285***	***545***	***170***	***3,134***	***362***	***118***	***2,264***	***3,065***
Intimate partner psychological violence	60	62	62	75	52	51	66	65	57

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Income

For women who are finding it difficult or very difficult to get by on their present income, the lifetime and 12-month prevalence of both intimate partner violence and non-partner violence is elevated. In fact, three times as many women who are finding it very difficult to cope on their income say that they have experienced violence at the hands of an intimate partner or a non-partner in their lifetime compared with those who are living comfortably. A similar difference can be seen in relation to the prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Table 6.24: Prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, by income

	Average, %	Living comfortably on present income, %	Coping on present income, %	Finding it difficult on present income, %	Finding it very difficult on present income, %
Base size (n)	***14,085***	***2,884***	***6,592***	***3,097***	***1,376***
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence	23	13	19	28	40
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	6.7	4.5	4.7	8.7	13.1

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Table 6.25: Prevalence of non-partner physical and/or sexual violence, by income

	Average, %	Living comfortably on present income, %	Coping on present income, %	Finding it difficult on present income, %	Finding it very difficult on present income, %
Base size (n)	***15,179***	***3,193***	***7,059***	***3,298***	***1,479***
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence from a since the age of 15	19	12	16	23	36
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	4.7	2.7	4.1	4.7	10.4

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

The stated prevalence of intimate partner psychological violence also increases the more women struggle to cope on their current income: 47% of those who are comfortable say they have experienced this form of violence, rising to 68% among those finding it difficult and 77% of those finding it very difficult to get by.

Table 6.26: Prevalence of intimate partner psychological violence, by income

	Average, %	Living comfortably on present income, %	Coping on present income, %	Finding it difficult on present income, %	Finding it very difficult on present income, %
Base size (n)	***14,085***	***2,884***	***6,592***	***3,097***	***1,376***
Intimate partner psychological violence	60	47	55	68	77

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Residential area

Women living in rural areas are slightly more likely to say they have experienced intimate partner violence than those living in urban areas, both in their adult lifetime and in the 12 months prior to the survey. The opposite is true for non-partner violence.

Table 6.27: Prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, by residential area

	Average, %	Urban, %	Rural, %
Base size (n)	*14,085*	*7,829*	*6,256*
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence	23	23	25
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	6.7	6.0	7.8

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Table 6.28: Prevalence of non-partner physical and/or sexual violence, by residential area

	Average, %	Urban, %	Rural, %
Base size (n)	*15,179*	*8,435*	*6,744*
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence from a since the age of 15	19	20	17
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	4.7	5.3	3.8

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Intimate partner psychological violence is also more often indicated by women living in urban areas (61%) than those in rural areas (58%).

Minority groups

Lifetime intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence is higher among those women who consider themselves to be disabled (27% versus 23% on average) or to be a refugee or internally displaced (26%). The same is also the case for non-partner violence. Among those who consider themselves disabled, 24% say they have experienced non-partner violence compared with 19% on average, while 28% of those who are refugees or internally displaced say the same.

Children

Women who have children at home are more likely to indicate experiences of intimate partner violence than those who do not, both in their lifetime (24% versus 22%) and in the 12 months prior to the survey (8% versus 5%). Women who have ever had children are more likely to indicate experiences of psychological violence committed by an intimate partner than those who have never had children (61% versus 52%). The same pattern holds true for those who currently have children at home.

6.6: High-risk partners

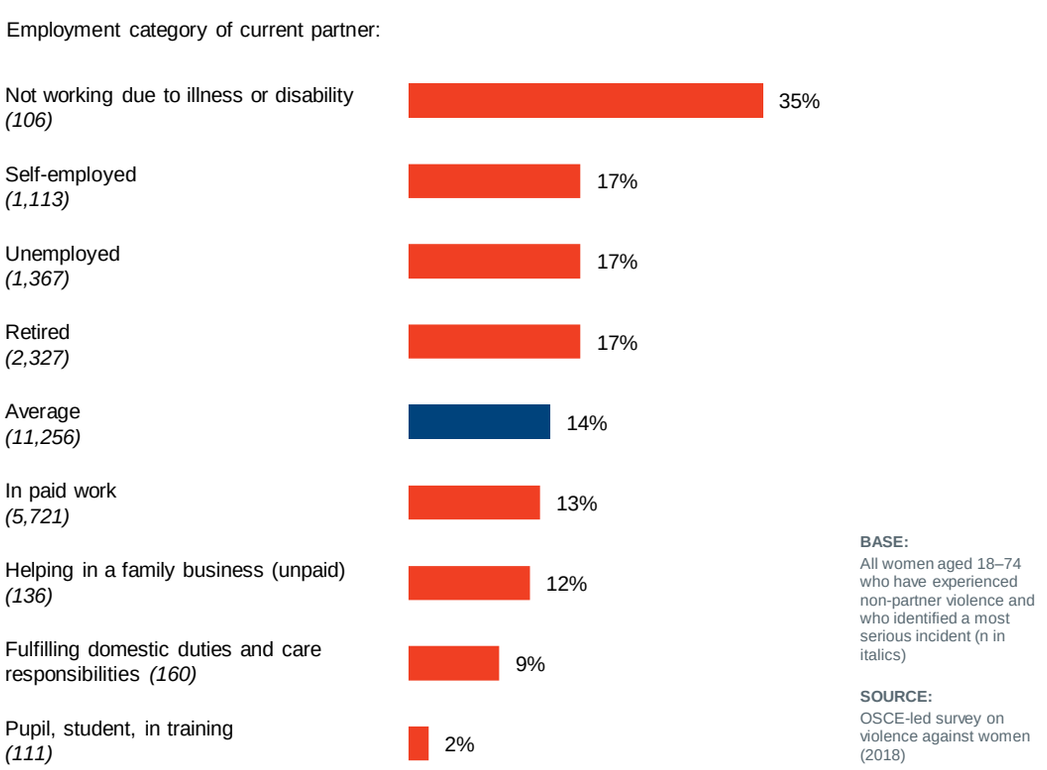
A range of socio-demographic variables were collected about women's current partners in order to provide some insight into whether certain partner characteristics correlated with a higher risk of current partner violence.

The indicated lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a current partner increases with the age of the woman's partner. This is likely in part due to the accumulation of experiences over time. Considering the prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey, those women whose partners were aged 40–49 were most likely to experience physical and/or sexual violence (8%) at the hands of their current partner, while those with the youngest partners (aged 18–29) and the oldest partners (60 or above) were least likely to indicate such experiences (both at 5%).

Women whose partners are not working, whether due to unemployment (17%), because of illness or disability (35%) or being because they are retired (17%), are all more likely to say they have experienced violence in their lifetime compared with the average (14%). The same holds true for prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey, which may indicate that when men are not fulfilling their traditional role of being the family's main breadwinner, this could prompt violent behaviour. Indeed, women whose partners earn less are also more likely to indicate that they have experienced psychological, physical and sexual violence both in their lifetime and in the 12 months prior to the survey than those who earn the same. That said, women whose partners earn more than them are also more likely to be the perpetrators of violence.

Figure 6.8: Prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence according to current partner's work status

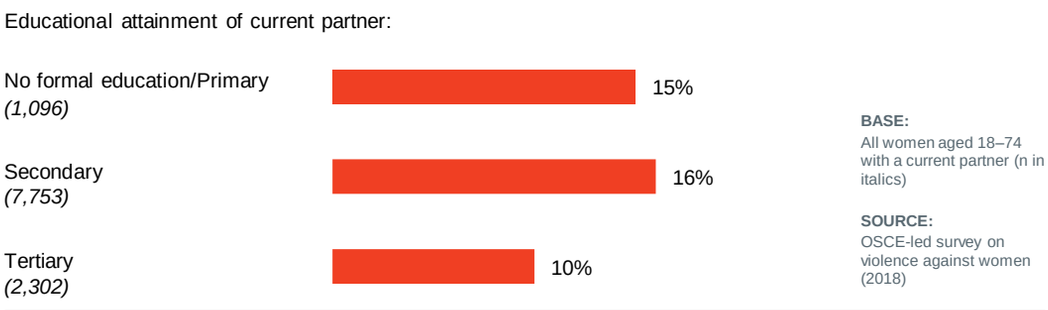
% any form of physical and/or sexual violence



Education is also a factor. Women whose partners have up to secondary education are more likely to indicate that they have experienced violence in their lifetime (16%) than those whose partners have tertiary education (10%).

Figure 6.9: Prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence according to current partner's education

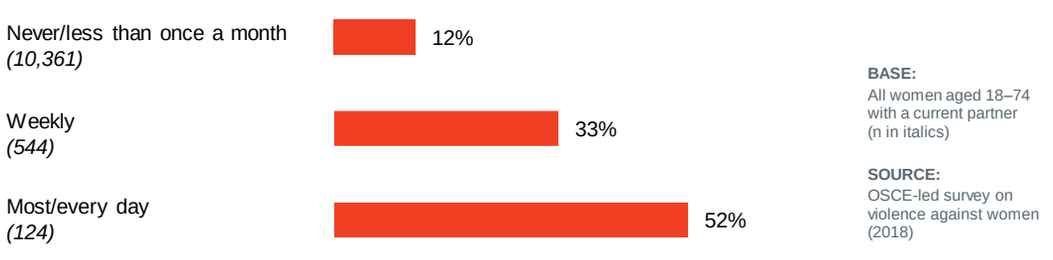
% any form of physical and/or sexual violence



Another risk factor is whether a woman's partner drinks on a weekly or daily basis. Women whose partners drink on a weekly or daily basis are more likely to indicate that they have experienced all forms of intimate partner violence both in their lifetime and in the 12 months prior to the survey. For example, 5% of women whose partners never drink or who do so only about once a month say they experienced physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey. This increases to 19% of those whose partners drink on a weekly basis and to 37% of those whose partners drink on a daily basis. Indeed, 67% of current partners and 71% of previous partners were drunk and/or under the influence of drugs at the time of the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence.

Figure 6.10: Prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence according to current partner's drinking habits

% any form of physical and/or sexual violence



Women whose partners have fought in an armed conflict are more likely to say they have experienced violence at the hands of these partners. This may be due to the fact that half of partners who fought in a conflict suffered from some form of long-term psychological impact (50%), namely difficulty sleeping (23%), anxiety (19%), depression (17%) or post-traumatic stress disorder (17%). The impact of conflict is addressed in Chapter 9 and will also be addressed more fully in a separate report.

The impact of childhood violence

In the survey, women were asked if they had ever experienced any violence at the hands of an adult before the age of 15. Overall, 21% say they did experience some form of physical, sexual or psychological violence before the age of 15.[29] Physical violence is the most common form indicated, by 17%, while psychological violence is indicated by 8% and sexual violence by 3%.

Women who have experienced physical and psychological violence tend to have had repeated experiences rather than one-off events.

The socio-demographics collected about the women surveyed apply to their current situation, but there are certain groups for whom the indicated prevalence of any form of childhood violence is much higher. These include:

- women who are finding it very difficult to get by on their current income (33%), especially compared with those who are comfortable on their current income (14%);
- women who consider themselves to be disabled (37%) or are a refugee or internally displaced person (32%);
- women who are currently doing unpaid work in a family business (29%).

Perpetrators of physical and psychological violence are most frequently parents, while those who were victims of sexual violence in childhood most often identify men who were not family members as the perpetrators.

As discussed in Chapter 12, the multivariate analysis shows that the strongest predictor of a woman experiencing some form of abuse or violence in adulthood is whether she experienced childhood violence.

Among those women who experienced childhood violence, nearly all of them (93%) say they have had some experience of the same in adulthood, compared with 70% on average and 65% of those who did not experience childhood violence. The same pattern is seen with the prevalence of abuse in adulthood in the 12 months prior to the survey. Over half of those who experienced childhood abuse (53%) have experienced violence as an adult, compared with 31% on average and 23% of those who did not experience childhood violence.

Among those who are or have ever been married, 6% say that they were under the age of 18 when they first got married. This is equivalent to over 1.1 million women in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey who were child brides.

29 Childhood violence refers to violence before the age of 15. In terms of physical violence before the age of 15, women were asked the following questions: Before the age of 15, how often did an adult who was 18 years of age or older do the following to you: 1) slap or pull you by the hair so that it hurt? 2) hit you very hard so that it hurt? 3) kick you very hard so that it hurt? 4) beat you very hard with an object like a stick, cane or belt? 5) Stab or cut you with something? In terms of sexual violence before the age of 15, women were asked the following questions: Before the age of 15, how often did an adult who was 18 years of age or older do the following to you when you did not want them to: 1) expose their genitals to you? 2) make you pose naked in front of any person or in photographs, video, or on an Internet webcam? 3) touch your genitals or breasts against your will? 4) force you to have sexual intercourse? In terms of psychological violence before the age of 15, women were asked the following questions: Before the age of 15, how often did an adult family member do the following to you: 1) say that you were not loved? 2) say that they wished you had never been born? 3) threaten to abandon you or throw you out of the family home? Before the age of 15, how often did an adult who was 18 years of age or older do the following to you: threaten to hurt you badly or kill you?

The prevalence of childhood violence is based on respondents who report having experienced at least one of the items listed above for either physical, sexual or psychological violence or any of the three.

Women whose partners drink on a weekly or daily basis are more likely to indicate that they have experienced all forms of intimate partner violence both in their lifetime and in the 12 months prior to the survey

Effects of intimate partner violence on children

Women who have children are more likely to indicate that they have experienced violence. Focusing on those who currently have children at home, 21% say they experienced psychological violence committed by a current or previous partner in the 12 months prior to the survey, compared with 15% of those who do not have children at home. Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence is also indicated more often by those who have children at home: 8% say they have had such an experience compared with 5% of those who do not have children at home. The lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence is also higher among those who currently have children at home or who have ever had children (their own children, foster children or step-children).

The children of women who experience violence are also impacted indirectly and directly. Of those with children or who have had children, almost a third (31%) say the children living with them are aware of violent incidents at the hands of their current partner, while over a third (36%) say the same in relation to violence perpetrated by previous partners

More directly, among those women who have ever had a partner and who have ever had children (their own children or step-children), 3% say their partners have hurt their children, and 2% say that their partners have threatened to hurt their children.

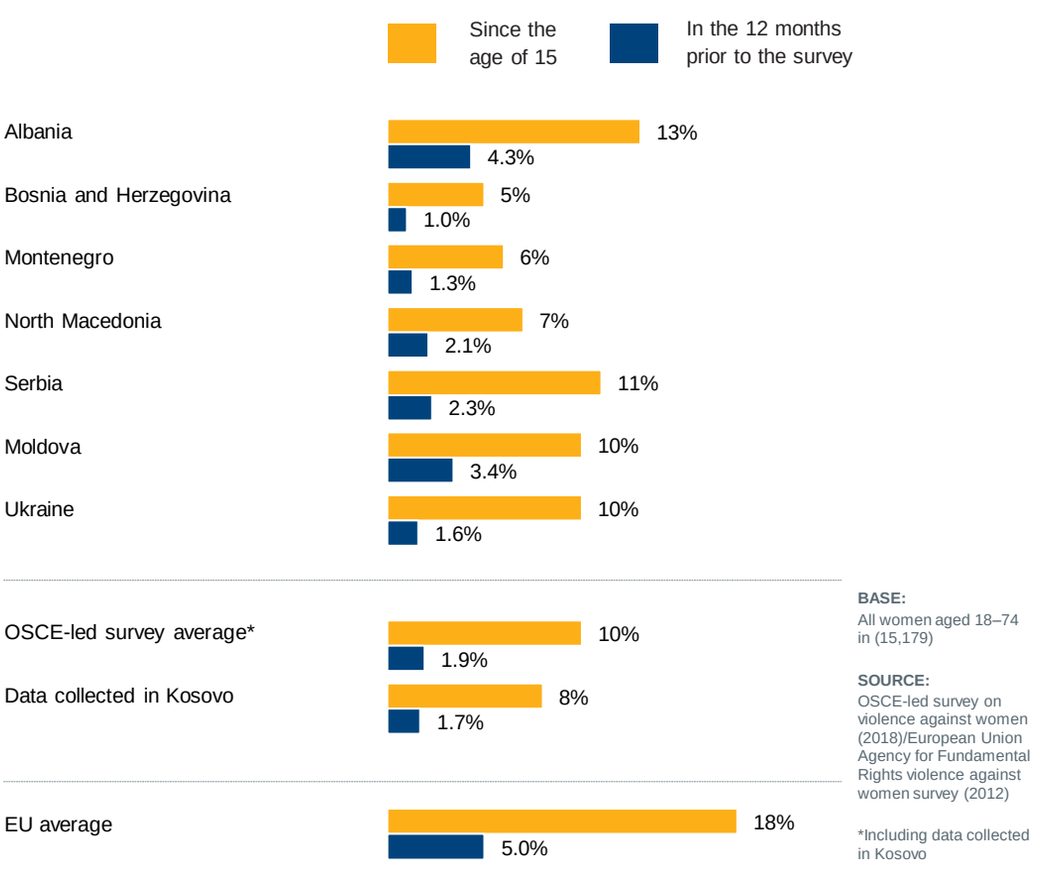
While contact with the police and other support services is low in general, women who have children at home are even less likely to have been in touch with these services. Just 15% of those with children at home have contacted one or more of these services, compared with 24% of those who do not live with children.

7. Stalking

7.1: Prevalence of stalking

Ten per cent of women state that they have been stalked[30] at some point since they were 15 years old. This is lower than the EU average of 18%, with results across the EU ranging from 8% in Lithuania and Romania to 33% in Sweden. Two per cent say they were stalked in the 12 months prior to the survey, which is lower than the EU average of 5%.

Figure 7.1: Prevalence of stalking



30 For stalking, women in the survey were asked the following questions: Since you were 15 years old until now/in the past 12 months, has the same person repeatedly done one or more of the following things to you: 1) sent you emails, text messages (SMS) or instant messages that were offensive or threatening? 2) sent you letters or cards that were offensive or threatening? 3) made offensive, threatening or silent phone calls to you? 4) posted offensive comments about you on the Internet? 5) shared intimate photos or videos of you on the Internet or by mobile phone? 6) loitered or waited for you outside your home, workplace or school without a legitimate reason? 7) deliberately followed you around? 8) deliberately interfered with or damaged your property? The prevalence of stalking is based on respondents who reported having experienced one or more of the forms of stalking listed above.

Women aged 18–29 are most likely to say they have been stalked since the age of 15, with 15% indicating this, compared to 10% of 30–49-year-olds and 7% of women over 50. The prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey is also higher among the youngest age group, with 5% of women aged 18–29 saying they have had a recent experience, compared with 1–2% of those over 30. These differences by age may in part be related to the greater use of technology among young people, although this age group generally indicates that they have experienced each type of stalking behaviour more often than older people.

Table 7.1: Prevalence of stalking, by age

	Avg %	18–29 %	30–39 %	40–49 %	50–59 %	60+ %
Base size (n)	*15,179*	*2,537*	*2,770*	*2,846*	*2,955*	*4,071*
Experience of stalking since the age of 15	10	15	10	10	7	7
Experience of stalking in the 12 months prior to the survey	1.9	5.0	1.1	1.2	1.6	0.7

BASE: All ever-partnered women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Women who have had a previous partner are twice as likely to indicate that they have been stalked since the age of 15. As noted later in this report, previous partners are the most commonly identified of the known perpetrators.

Thirteen per cent of women with tertiary education indicate that they have been stalked since the age of 15, compared with 8% of women with secondary education and 5% of women with only primary education.

The prevalence is fairly consistent in terms of employment status, although students are more likely to have been stalked both since the age of 15 (17%) and in the 12 months prior to the survey (8%), which is largely age-related, as nearly all students fall into the 18–29-year-old age group. Other employment categories that differ more significantly from the average are those women who are working for a family business and those not working due to illness or disability, who are also more likely than average to say they have been stalked. In terms of minority groups, women with a disability are more likely to say they have been stalked.

The most common forms of stalking indicated in the survey are offensive, threatening or silent calls (4% compared to the EU average of 11%); being sent offensive emails or text messages; having someone loiter outside their home; being followed around; and having their property interfered with or damaged (all at 3%, which his lower than the EU average for each category).

Most serious cases of stalking

Receiving silent or offensive calls; receiving emails, text messages or instant messages; being deliberately followed around and having property damaged are the types of stalking most often involved in what women identify as their most serious incident. As with the prevalence since the age of 15, in the most serious cases, the perpetrator was also most likely to be a stranger (39%) or a previous partner (24%). In the majority of these cases, the perpetrator was acting alone (61%), but in 6% of cases there were two perpetrators and in 6% three or more. A quarter say they do not know how many people were involved.

Thirty-one per cent of the most serious cases of stalking ended after a few days and 50% in less than three months. However, some experiences of stalking continued over a long period of time: in 21% of cases, it lasted over two years (the same proportion as in the EU) and in 10% of cases over five years (similar to the EU average of 11%).

The most common strategy to deal with stalking was to talk about it with friends or relatives, which was mentioned by 69% of victims in relation to the most serious incident. This is also the case in the EU, where 77% of victims of stalking discussed the incident with friends or family. Around half confronted the perpetrator (46% versus 43% in the EU), but far fewer women threatened the perpetrator with police or court action (22% versus 32% in the EU).

A significant proportion of victims made changes in their lives to deal with the stalking. Twenty-seven per cent changed their phone number or email address, and 19% closed their social networking accounts. Thirteen per cent moved home because of the stalking, which is in line with the EU figure of 14%. Only 2% contacted a victim support organization, but 17% went somewhere else for help, compared with 5% and 17%, respectively, across the EU.

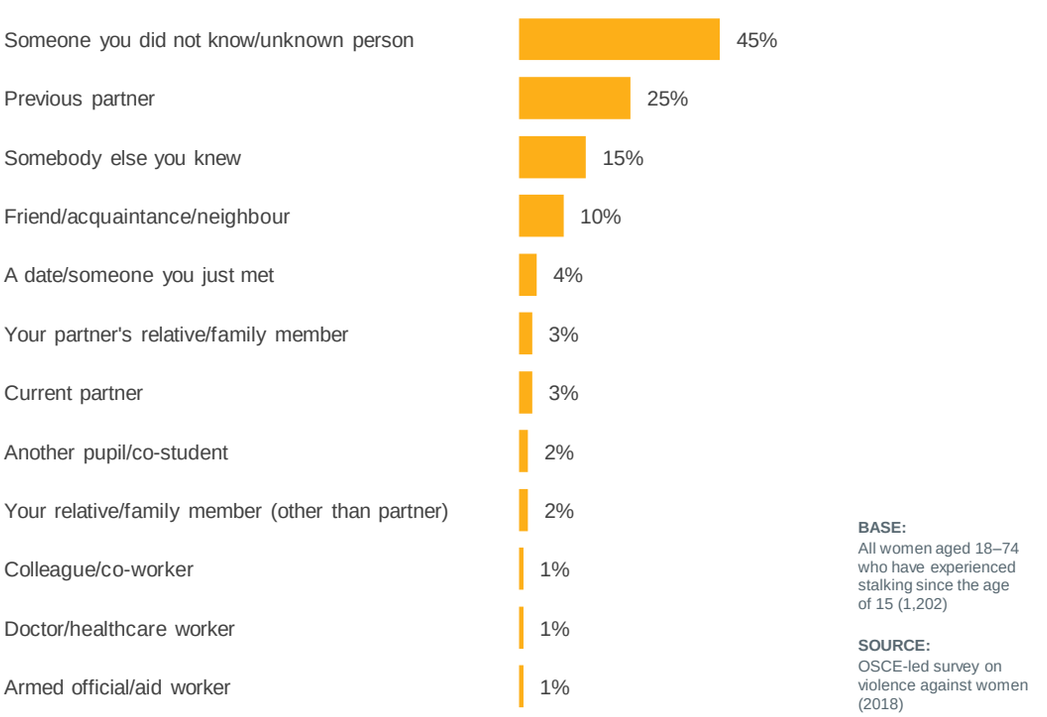
7.2: Perpetrators of stalking

Stalking is most likely to have been carried out by a stranger (45%), while 25% of victims identify a previous partner or boyfriend as the perpetrator. Previous partners are more likely to be responsible for stalking behaviours that include sharing intimate photos or videos of the victim online, deliberately following around their previous partner or loitering around their home or place of work or studies and deliberately interfering with or damaging their property.

Seventy-one per cent of women who have been stalked say a man was responsible (63% mention a man only and 8% both a man and woman), while 15% say women were involved (7% mentioning women only). Twenty-two per cent did not know the perpetrator's sex or preferred not to say.

Figure 7.2: Perpetrator of stalking since the age of 15

Who was it that did this to you?



45%

Almost half of all women aged 18–75 have experienced some form of sexual harassment since the age of 15.

8. Sexual harassment

8.1: Prevalence of sexual harassment

The prevalence of sexual harassment was measured by specifying acts that respondents felt were unwanted and were experienced as offensive or intimidating.[31] Six forms of sexual harassment were selected for their severity, and they are referred to in this report as "the most severe forms" of sexual harassment.[32]

Forty-five per cent of women say they have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment since they were 15 years old. This is lower than the EU average of 55%, which ranges from 24% in Bulgaria to 81% in Sweden. The countries with longer traditions of gender-equality policies and awareness-raising campaigns (the Nordic countries and Western Europe) also have higher percentages of women who say that they have experienced sexual harassment.

Sixteen per cent of women indicated that they experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Approximately 3.5 million women experienced some form of sexual harassment in the year prior to the survey

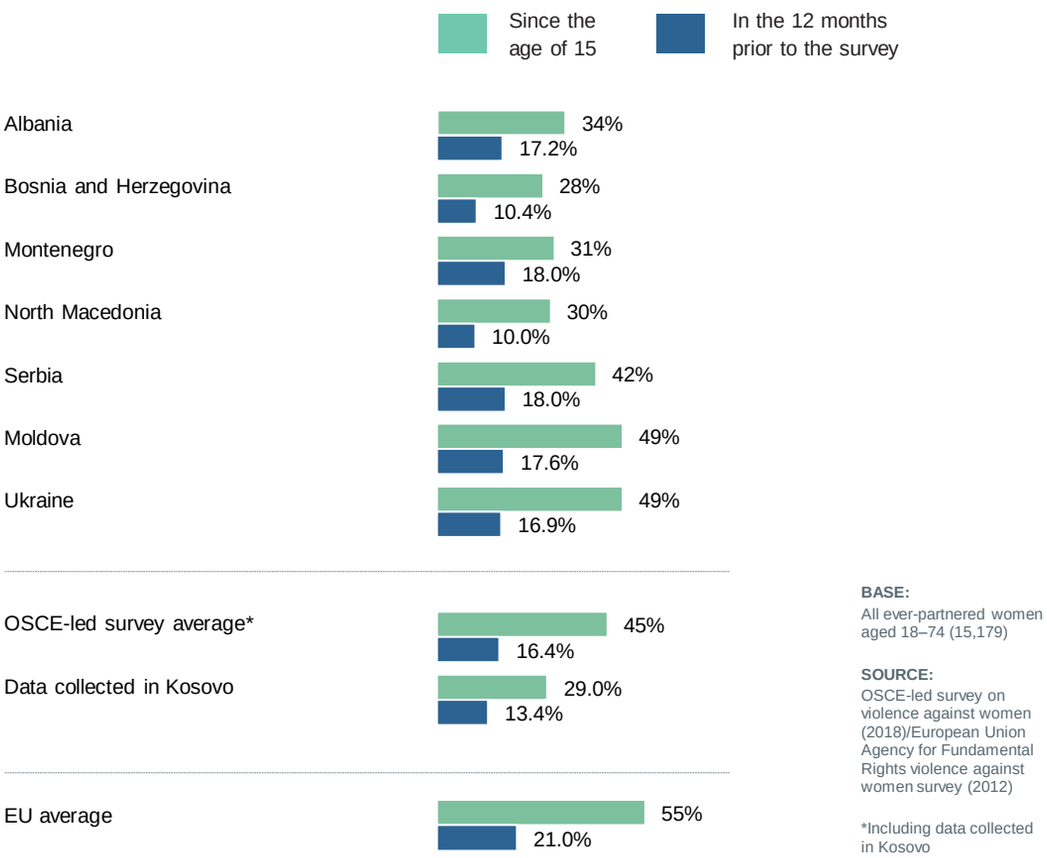
Thirty per cent of women say that they have experienced more serious forms of sexual harassment, while 8% say the same about the 12 months prior to the survey. These figures are again lower than the EU average of 45% who say they have experienced more serious sexual harassment at some point in their lives (ranging from 19% in Bulgaria to 74% in Sweden), while this figure is 13% for the 12 months prior to the survey.

31 In terms of sexual harassment, women in the survey were asked: How often from the time you were 15 years old until now/in the past 12 months have you experienced any of the following: 1) unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing? 2) sexually suggestive comments or jokes that offended you? 3) inappropriate invitations to go out on dates? 4) intrusive questions about your private life that offended you? 5) intrusive comments about your appearance that offended you? 6) inappropriate staring or leering that you found intimidating? 7) somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos or gifts that offended you? 8) somebody indecently exposing themselves to you? 9) somebody making you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes? 10) unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you? 11) inappropriate advances that offended you on social networking websites such as Facebook or in Internet chat rooms? With regard to each form of sexual harassment, women could indicate whether they had experienced it never, once, two to five times or six times or more. The prevalence of sexual harassment is based on respondents who reported having experienced one of the listed items at least once. Six forms of sexual harassment were selected for their severity, and they are referred to in this report as "the most severe forms" of sexual harassment.

32 The most serious forms of sexual harassment are reported as "unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing", "sexually suggestive comments or jokes that offended you", "somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos or gifts that offended you", "somebody indecently exposing themselves to you", "somebody making you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes" and "unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you". The prevalence of the most severe forms of sexual harassment is based on respondents who report having experienced at least one of these six forms of sexual harassment on at least one occasion.

Figure 8.1: Prevalence of all forms of sexual harassment

Since you were 15 years old until now/ in the preceding 12 months how often have you experienced each of the following?



Women aged 18–29 (54%) are the most likely to say they have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15, while women over 60 (36%) are least likely. Younger women tend to indicate experiences of nearly all forms of sexual harassment in higher proportions compared with their older counterparts, but the differences are particularly marked in relation to forms that could be classified as cyber-harassment, i.e., via mobile and Internet technology. Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that caused offence since the age of 15 are indicated almost nine times more often among 18–29-year-olds than they are among those 50 or over. Inappropriate advances that caused offence on social networking sites or in Internet chat rooms are around seven times more likely to be reported by younger women compared with older women. No doubt the greater usage of such technologies by younger women increases the risk of experiencing such behaviours, but the finding also highlights the extent to which such technologies are being used inappropriately.

Table 8.1: Prevalence of sexual harassment, by age

	Avg %	18–29 %	30–39 %	40–49 %	50–59 %	60+ %
Base size (n)	***15,179***	***2,537***	***2,770***	***2,846***	***2,955***	***4,071***
Experience of sexual harassment since the age of 15	45	54	45	47	44	36
Experience of sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey	16.4	28.0	16.6	16.4	14.5	7.9

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

There are some clear differences in terms of the prevalence of sexual harassment based on the victim's education and occupation. Women with tertiary education (54%) are more likely than those with primary education or less (22%) to say they have been sexually harassed.

Table 8.2: Prevalence of sexual harassment, by education

	Average, %	No formal education/ Primary, %	Secondary, %	Tertiary, %
Base size (n)	***15,179***	***1,954***	***9,847***	***3,302***
Experience of sexual harassment since the age of 15	45	22	41	54
Experience of sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey	16.4	9.0	14.7	20.3

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

The prevalence of sexual harassment is highest among students (62%). While women who are students are primarily 18–29 years old, they are still more likely to have experienced harassment than this age group overall (54%), suggesting that the school, college or university environment in particular places these women at risk of experiencing these behaviours.

Table 8.3: Prevalence of sexual harassment, by employment status

	Average, %	In paid work, %	Self-employed, %	Helping in the family business (unpaid), %	Unemployed, %	A pupil, student, in training, %	Not working due to illness or disability, %	Fulfilling domestic tasks and care responsibilities, %	In retirement, %
Base size (n)	***15,179***	***4,488***	***564***	***180***	***3,384***	***680***	***131***	***2,333***	***3,264***
Experience of sexual harassment since the age of 15	45	50	52	62	36	62	50	39	36
Experience of sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey	16.4	18.9	18.1	27.5	14.4	39.5	18.9	12.9	7.8

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Women who are employed are more likely to experience sexual harassment: 50% of those in paid employment and 52% of those who are self-employed say they have had such experiences compared with 36% of those who are unemployed, 38% of those whose main activity is fulfilling a domestic role and 36% of those who are retired. Age and education are in part factors for these differences, but it is likely that the greater interaction that women who are employed have with others means they are at greater risk of such encounters.

Other notable differences include:

- Women who are finding it difficult (51%) or very difficult (52%) to cope on their current income are more likely to say they have experienced sexual harassment in comparison with women living comfortably (38%).
- The stated prevalence of sexual harassment is higher among women living in urban (49%) than rural (38%) areas.
- Sixty-six per cent of women with a disability say they have been subjected to sexual harassment.
- Women with children at home are more likely to say they have been sexually harassed (47% compared to 43% without children at home) but women who have never had children are more likely to indicate that they have had such experiences than those who have had children (55% compared to 43%).

The groups of women more likely to say they have been sexually harassed are also more likely to say that they have experienced more severe forms of sexual harassment.

Forms of sexual harassment

The most common forms of sexual harassment that women say they have experienced since the age of 15 are intimidation through staring or leering (22%); unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing (19%); sexually suggestive comments (17%) and intrusive and offensive questions (17%). In the EU, the most common types of sexual harassment women said they had experienced were similar: inappropriate staring or leering (30%), unwelcome hugging or kissing (29%), sexually suggestive comments (24%) and offensive comments about their personal appearance (20%).

Experiences of sexual harassment are not isolated. As can be seen in Table 8.5, women who experience sexual harassment tend to have repeated experiences. Depending on the form of harassment, between 40% and 73% of victims say they have had two or more experiences of the form(s) of harassment they experienced.

Table 8.4: Prevalence of different forms of sexual harassment

At times you may have experienced people acting towards you in a way that you felt was unwanted and offensive. How often since you were 15 years old, have you experienced any of the following?

	Once, %	2-5 times, %	6+ times, %	Since the age of 15, %
Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated	6	10	6	22
Unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing	6	8	6	19
Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended	5	7	5	17
Intrusive questions about your private life that made you feel offended	5	8	5	17
Intrusive comments about your physical appearance that made you feel offended	5	6	4	14
Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates	5	5	3	12
Inappropriate advances that offended you on social networking websites such as Facebook, or in internet chat rooms	2	3	2	6
Somebody indecently exposing themselves to you	3	2	1	5
Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you	2	1	1	4
Somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos or gifts that made you feel offended	2	1	1	3
Somebody made you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes	0.4	0.2	0.1	1

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (15,179)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Table 8.5: Repeated experiences of sexual harassment

	Once, %	2-5 times, %	6+ times, %	Number of cases (n)
Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated	28	46	26	*2618*
Unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing	29	41	29	*1641*
Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended	28	42	31	*1653*
Intrusive questions about your private life that made you feel offended	27	44	28	*2007*
Intrusive comments about your physical appearance that made you feel offended	32	40	28	*1562*
Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates	38	41	21	*1296*
Inappropriate advances that offended you on social networking websites such as Facebook, or in internet chat rooms	33	40	26	*832*
Somebody indecently exposing themselves to you	60	31	9	*565*
Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you	41	35	25	*529*
Somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos or gifts that made you feel offended	50	32	18	*349*
Somebody made you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes	59	22	19	*87*

BASE: All women aged 18–74 who have experienced each form of sexual harassment (n indicates number of women who have experienced each form of stalking)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Most serious incident of sexual harassment

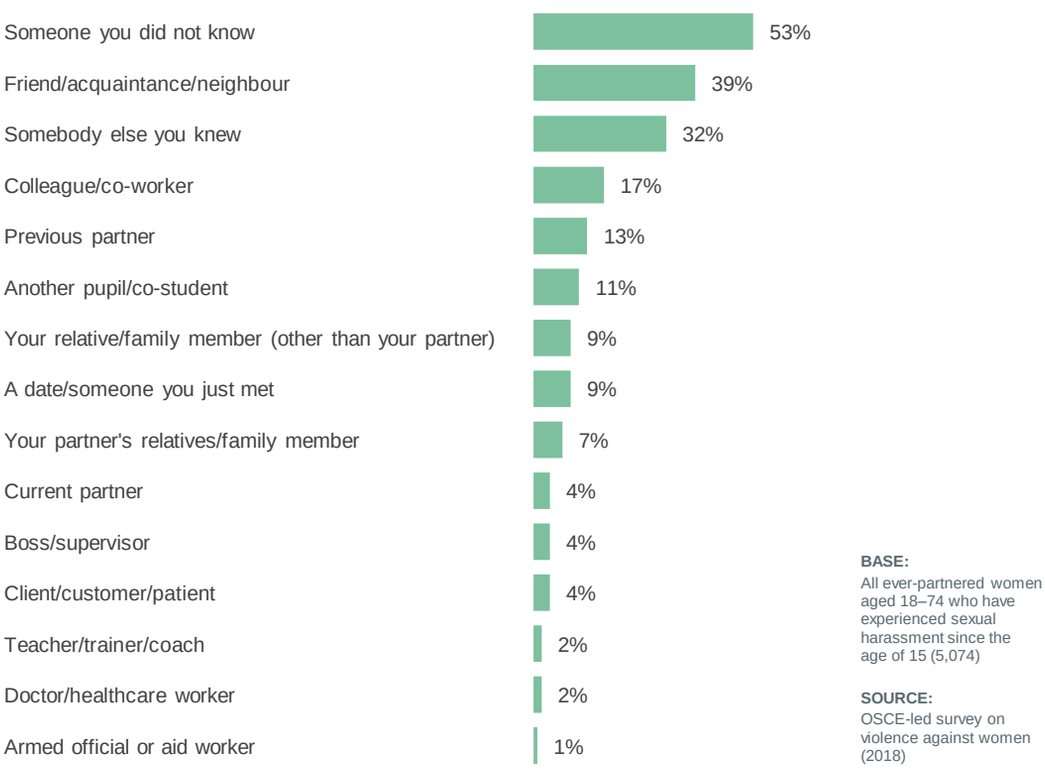
Twenty-six per cent of incidents of sexual harassment that were identified as the most serious took place in the 12 months prior to the survey. Unwelcome touching or hugging is mentioned most often (24%), followed by inappropriate staring or leering (18%), suggestive comments that were offensive (12%) and intrusive questions about a woman's private life (12%).

8.2: Perpetrators of sexual harassment

Perpetrators of sexual harassment were most likely to be someone the woman did not know (53%), followed by a friend or acquaintance (39%), somebody else they knew (32%) or a co-worker (17%).

Figure 8.2: Perpetrators of sexual harassment

Who was it that did this to you?



The most common types of sexual harassment committed by someone the victim did not know include inappropriate advances on social networks and in Internet chat rooms (72% of those experiencing this identified a stranger as the perpetrator), indecent exposure (64%), unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages (56%) and inappropriate staring or leering (55%).

Intrusive questions about a woman's private life are asked most often by friends, acquaintances or neighbours (38% of women who experience this type of harassment say a friend, acquaintance or neighbour was responsible). They are also most likely to be responsible for asking intrusive comments about the victim's physical appearance (31%) and for unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing (26%).

Current or previous partners or boyfriends are particularly likely to be responsible for making their wives or girlfriends watch pornography when they did not want to. Fifty-two per cent of those experiencing this form of harassment say a previous partner was responsible. Furthermore, among those women who indicate that they have experienced this, 13% say that their current partner was responsible.

Men are identified as the perpetrators of sexual harassment by 93% of victims and women by 42% (55% mention only men and 5% only women, while 37% mention both men and women). Female perpetrators are most commonly found among the victim's own or their partner's family members, fellow students, doctors or other healthcare workers, colleagues and friends, as shown in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6: Sex of the perpetrators of sexual harassment

Was the perpetrator [of sexual harassment] a man, a woman, or were both men and women involved?

	Male, %	Female, %	Both, %	Number of cases (n)
Someone you did not know	81	1	16	*2,700*
Friend/acquaintance/ neighbour	55	15	29	*1,825*
Somebody else you knew	65	8	26	*1,468*
Colleague/co-worker	55	20	24	*734*
Previous partner	99	1	*	*515*
Your own relative or family member (other than your partner)	25	33	42	*442*
Another pupil/co-student	54	11	33	*389*
Date/someone you just met	90	2	8	*365*
Your partner's relative or family member	33	29	38	*315*
Current partner	99	*	*	*224*
Boss/supervisor	86	5	9	*152*
Client/customer/patient	77	9	10	*148*
Teacher/trainer/coach	83	14	2	*80*
Armed official/aid worker	86	8	5	*65*
Doctor/health care worker	57	32	5	*60*

BASE: All women aged 18–74 who identify each perpetrator type of sexual harassment ('n' indicates number of women who identify each perpetrator type)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
Don't know/refused responses not shown.

Supporting the survey findings, women who took part in the qualitative research said that sexual harassment was a common occurrence for women. Women described being sexual harassed at work by colleagues, as well as by strangers in public spaces such as parks.

Some women said that sexual harassment could be triggered by the woman herself, i.e., that it is natural for a man to behave this way in response to how a woman dresses or behaves. This sort of belief may help explain the lower prevalence compared with the EU.

Sexual harassment in the workplace was seen by many women as a common occurrence. For instance, one woman in Ukraine described experiencing sexual harassment during a job interview. She said she was told that she could only have the job if she had sex with her potential employer. The woman refused and did not report the incident, as she felt that there was no need to.

> **"I was offered [a job in return for sex] once at a job interview. I got up and left, I snorted and that was it … There were many different types of indecent proposals when I was looking for my first job after getting my diploma."**
>
> **Survivor of violence, Ukrainian, IDP, Ukraine**

The women interviewed said that workplace sexual harassment was particularly likely to be perpetrated by men in senior positions. Women discussed their bosses making additional demands of them and threatening them with dismissal if they did not meet them. In Montenegro, women highlighted the fact that there were few examples of women winning a sexual harassment case because the men in senior positions in companies were well connected socially and were able to protect themselves.

> **"Women must endure harassment in order to keep their jobs. There isn't a single harassment case in Montenegro where the woman actually won. Each of those bosses has some form of backing from above. They are aware that women cannot hurt their position."**
>
> **Female aged 18–29, urban, Montenegro**

16%

Overall, 16% of women in the area covered by the survey can be considered to be directly conflict-affected.

9. Conflict and violence

9.1: How are women affected by conflict?

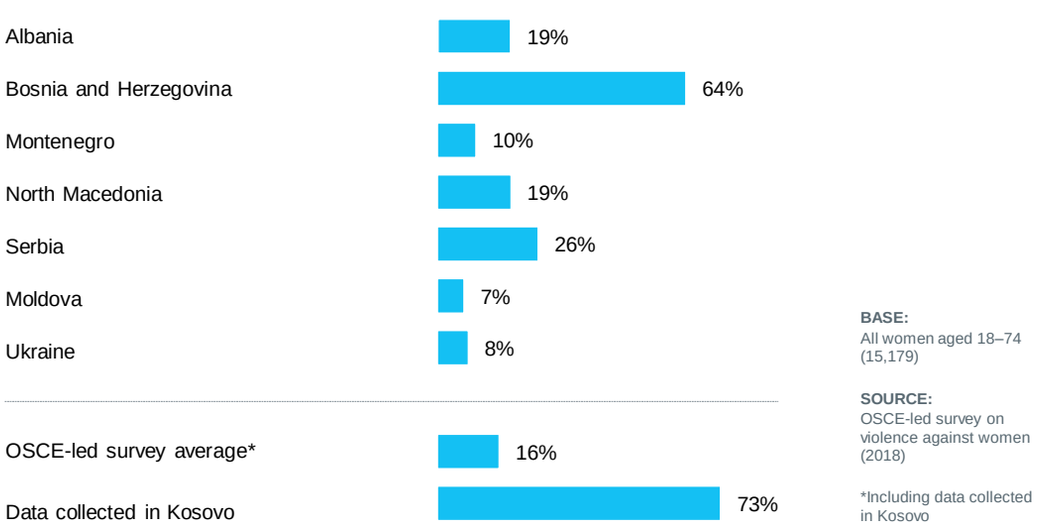
For the purposes of this research, armed conflict is defined as armed fighting between two or more organized groups, attacks on communities or general insecurity caused by conflict.

Eighteen per cent of the women surveyed in the area covered by the OSCE-led survey indicate that they have lived in a situation where there was an active armed conflict for a period of at least one week.

Among the women who have lived through conflict, 72% actually heard gunshots or the sound of bombing or shelling in the area where they were living, and 58% lived somewhere where armed personnel were stationed or moving in larger numbers for at least a week. Twenty-eight per cent said they saw fighting where they were living, and 24% said that their property was damaged or destroyed, while 17% had property taken by armed groups. Twenty-six per cent of the women who said they had lived through conflict[33] had a spouse or family member who took part in the fighting, and 2% played an active part in the fighting themselves. For 34%, it was impossible to find work due to the conflict, and 33% stated that they had to flee or evacuate temporarily.

Overall, 16% of women in the area covered by the survey can be considered to be directly conflict-affected,[34] i.e. they lived through a period of conflict and had one or more of the experiences discussed above.

Figure 9.1: Proportion of conflict-affected women



33 Numbers for all women in the region might be higher.

34 The definition of "conflict-affected" is having lived in a situation where there was an active armed conflict for a period of at least one week and answering "yes" to at least one of the following questions: "Did you hear gunshots, the sound of bombing or shelling in the local area where you were living at the time of the conflict?" "Did you live for at least a week in a location where armed personnel (regular military or other armed groups) were stationed or moving in larger numbers? This may include local residents participating in the conflict." "Did you witness fighting in the local area where you were living at the time of the conflict?" "Was the property (e.g., your home, car, livestock) of your immediate family destroyed or seriously damaged due to the conflict?" "Was the property (e.g., your home, car, livestock) of your immediate family taken by an armed group?" "Was it impossible to find work in the local area due to the conflict (office/factories were closed or destroyed, it was too dangerous)?" "Did an immediate family member or your spouse or partner take part in the conflict or participate in fighting as a member of an armed group?" "Did you play an active part in fighting during the conflict?" "Were civilians from the local area where you were living detained or imprisoned?" "Did civilians in the local area where you were living die due to the conflict?" "Were you personally physically attacked or injured due to the conflict?" "Did you have to flee your home during (any of) the conflict(s) you experienced?"

Those defined as conflict-affected were also asked about other consequences of having lived through conflict, from the availability of public services to loss of family members and experiences of violence. Around half of these women had at least one of the experiences listed in Table 9.1, with men in their family being away being mentioned the most often (28%), followed by the lack of health services (24%) and law enforcement (22%).

Twelve per cent of conflict-affected women lived in an area where members of armed groups deliberately targeted women in some way, e.g., through threatening or violent behaviour, harassment, humiliation or by making women provide sexual services in exchange for goods or to ensure their safety. This highlights how conflict could make women feel less secure through gender-based violence or threats thereof.

Table 9.1: Experiences of conflict-affected women

Please tell me whether or not you experienced any of the following during the armed conflict(s) that you have experienced?

	Yes, %
Men in your family (husbands, fathers, brothers) were away from home and the family, (because they had to flee, fought in the conflict, were detained, went missing)	28
Health services (including women's health services) that you previously used were unavailable or inaccessible for a longer period of time	24
No law enforcement (police or other organization to keep law and order) present in your local area, for a prolonged time	22
Women in your family had to go into potentially dangerous places (i.e. through frontline/boundary line or close to explosives like mines) for work or to fetch essentials for the household (firewood, food, drinking water, fuel, etc.)	15
An immediate family member or your spouse or partner was injured or died due to fighting / violence	12
Armed groups deliberately used threats, rumours or actual violence against women to terrify the local population in the area where you lived	9
Members of armed groups harassed local women in the area where you lived	8
Members of armed groups employed deeply humiliating practices against local women in the area where you lived	5
Circumstances caused women to offer sexual services in exchange for essential goods or for ensuring the safety of their family in the area where you lived	3

BASE: Women aged 18–74 in who had been affected by armed conflict (4,955)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

9.2: Conflict and violence against women

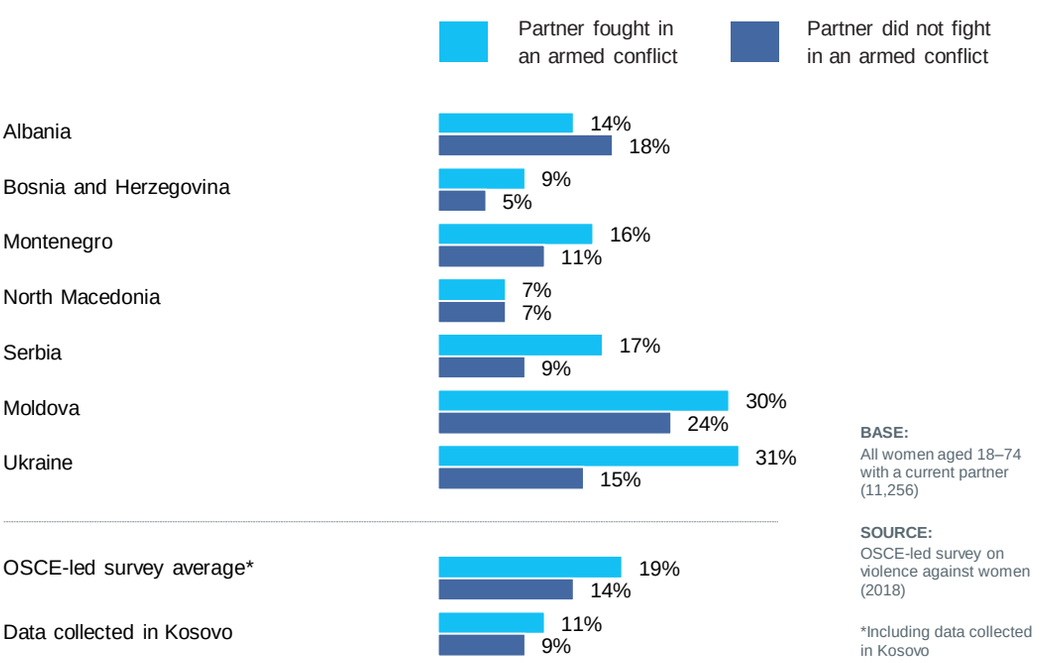
Women identified as conflict-affected were asked whether or not any of their experiences of violence discussed in previous chapters were connected with armed conflict. The data shows that a significant percentage of women do make this connection. Among those who have experienced non-partner physical and/or sexual violence (including threats thereof), 26% say that some of their experiences were related to conflict, rising to 34% when asked about their most serious incident. A similar pattern can be seen with previous partner violence, with 29% connecting an experience of physical and/or sexual violence to armed conflict, but this rises to 34% when asked about their most serious incident. For current partner violence, the equivalent figures are 32% and 39%, respectively.

In the qualitative research, with the exception of North Macedonia, where women did not link experiences of violence with conflict, women in the rest of the area covered by the OSCE-led survey felt that armed conflicts had exacerbated violence against women. Tensions generated by political turmoil and economic crisis, the psychological trauma of war experienced by men and ethnic violence were all factors that were seen as having played a part in this.

Indeed, conflict appears to have had a widespread impact on the men involved in the fighting, with half of women whose current partner fought in an armed conflict saying it has had a long-term psychological impact on their partner. When comparing the prevalence of various forms of physical and sexual violence between those whose partners have fought in an armed conflict and those who have not, a number of differences are noted that suggest that women are more vulnerable to violence when their partner has been involved in conflict. For example, women whose current partners have fought in an armed conflict are more likely to indicate that they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of their current partner compared with those whose partners have never fought in an armed conflict (19% versus 14%, respectively) and also in the 12 months prior to the survey (9% versus 6%, respectively). While there is little difference between the indicated prevalence of psychological violence between these two groups, some individual forms are more prevalent among those living with a former combatant, including current partners who do things to scare or intimidate their partner, e.g., by yelling or smashing things (22% versus 15%, respectively) and belittling or humiliating them in front of other people (16% versus 13%, respectively).

Figure 9.2: Prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence, by current partner's involvement in conflict

How often has your current partner done any of the following to you?



Moreover, women's emotional and psychological reactions to violence were more pronounced among those who had experienced armed conflict. Conflict-affected women who indicate that they have experienced violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner are more likely to say that, following their most serious incident, they felt fear (65% compared to 59% of women who are not conflict-affected), shock (45% versus 42%, respectively), shame (31% versus 28%, respectively) and annoyance (44% versus 41%, respectively). However, they are less likely to report anger (52% versus 60%, respectively) or guilt (8% versus 10%, respectively). Conflict-affected women are also more likely to say they have experienced all of the psychological impacts they were asked about, with the exception of difficulties in relationships, most notably loss of self-confidence (34% compared to 26% of women who are not conflict-affected), feeling vulnerable (38% versus 32%, respectively) and depression (33% versus 27%, respectively).

Over half of survivors of the most serious incidents of intimate-partner and non-partner physical and/or sexual violence have experienced one or more physical injuries as a consequence of the incident.

Eight out of ten women who identify a most serious incident of intimate-partner or non-partner physical and/or sexual violence developed a longer-term psychological condition as a result.

10. Impact of sexual harassment, stalking and violence on women's lives

This chapter provides an overview of the impact of violence on women's well-being. In the survey, women were asked a number of questions about the impact that their most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence, including threats thereof, had on them. The most serious incident was defined as the one that had the most impact, either psychologically or physically, on the victim. Women were asked about the short-term or immediate responses, referred to here as emotional responses, as well as those that develop over the longer term and are more long-lasting, referred to as psychological reactions. Finally, they were also asked if they had suffered one of a number of physical injuries or consequences.

It is important to note that this analysis focuses only on the impact of the most serious incident experienced. The survey findings do not reveal the full extent of the way in which survivors of violence are affected, as there will also be consequences following other experiences they may have had. That being said, the findings can already demonstrate the public health consequences of violence against women.

The public health impact of the most serious incidents of violence against women

Approximately 4 million women have felt the impact of at least one of a range of long-lasting psychological symptoms in response to the most serious incident of non-partner or intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence that they have experienced.

Approximately 3.25 million women were left with an injury or physical consequences of the violence they suffered, considering only the most severe cases they identified during their adult lifetime. More specifically this translates into approximately:

- 2.5 million had bruises or scratches
- 700,000 suffered wounds, sprains or burns
- 652,000 experienced concussion or another brain injury
- 352,000 had fractures, broken bones or broken teeth
- 147,000 endured internal injuries
- 82,000 experienced a miscarriage
- 70,000 contracted an infection or sexually transmitted disease
- 53,000 became pregnant
- 29,000 were left infertile or unable to carry a pregnancy to term

10.1: Physical consequences and psychological effects of partner and non-partner violence

Physical consequences of intimate partner and non-partner violence

Violence leads to physical injuries or consequences for a significant percentage of victims. Over half of survivors say they experienced some physical consequences, with bruises and scratches reported most often in the survey following the incident of partner or non-partner physical and/or sexual violence identified as the most serious (44%). This is also the most common type of injury reported in the EU. Twelve per cent of women say they suffered wounds, sprains or bruises, while 11% say they experienced concussion or another brain injury.

Table 10.1: Physical injuries arising from the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence (all perpetrators)

Thinking about the most serious incident, did it result in any of the following?

0% 48%

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Moldova	Ukraine	OSCE-led survey average*	Data collected in Kosovo
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Base size (n)	*329*	*271*	*185*	*212*	*407*	*515*	*579*	*2763*	*265*
Bruises, scratches	33	41	32	25	38	48	45	44	25
Wounds, sprains, burns	10	12	7	6	11	16	12	12	6
Concussion or other brain injury	9	2	4	4	6	16	12	11	8
Fractures, broken bones, broken teeth	6	7	11	5	5	9	6	6	3
Internal injuries	5	4	5	2	2	4	2	3	3
Infection or a sexually transmitted disease	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	1	1
Pregnancy	1	1	2	5	1	1	1	1	3
Miscarriage	1	4	6	2	1	4	1	1	2
Infertility or inability to carry out a pregnancy	0.3	0.3	0	0	0.3	0.3	1	1	1
No injuries	53	50	58	61	49	42	39	41	59

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced intimate partner or non-partner physical and/or sexual violence and who identified a most serious incident (n in italics)

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
*Including data collected in Kosovo

Injuries were noted most often as a result of the most serious incident of violence committed by a previous partner. The more brutal or severe nature of the violence that women indicate experiencing at the hands of a previous partner (as discussed in Chapter 6) is reflected in the fact that they are more likely to suffer physically in some way. For example, almost one in ten women who have ever had a partner say a previous partner beat them with a hard object or kicked them, compared with 2% who say the same about a current partner and 3% about a non-partner. Previous partner violence was also more likely to include cases where the woman's head was beaten against something (4% versus 1% in cases of current partner and non-partner violence) or where the victim was suffocated (3% compared with 1% in cases of current partner and non-partner violence).

Twelve per cent of victims of non-partner violence report having suffered more serious injuries, such as various kinds of wounds, sprains and burns or a concussion or brain injury. Wounds, sprains and burns are also indicated by one in ten victims of previous partner violence.

Women participating in the qualitative research who had experienced violence described a wide range of physical and psychological impacts. Physical impacts could be serious, with some women needing urgent medical care following an assault. In some cases, women were permanently disabled as a result of the violence they were subjected to.

According to the survey results, physical consequences were experienced more often among victims of previous partner violence when the most serious incident included some form of sexual violence. Internal injuries in particular are more common (12% versus 1% of cases where the violence was only physical), as are the rates of fractures and broken teeth (9% versus 3%, respectively) and miscarriage (6% versus 2%, respectively). The rate of concussion and brain injuries also more than doubles (from 6% to 13%, respectively).

While victims of current partner and non-partner violence did not report injuries more often overall, certain outcomes were more commonly reported when their most serious incident involved violence of a sexual nature. In particular, victims of non-partner violence were more likely to have contracted an STD (7%), become pregnant (5%) or been unable to get pregnant later (3%). Victims of current partners were more likely to suffer a brain injury (8%) and internal injuries (6%) than when the incident involved only physical violence.

Table 10.2: Physical injuries resulting from physical and/or sexual violence (most serious incident), by type of perpetrator

Thinking about the most serious incident, did it result in any of the following?

0% 52%

	Current partner		Previous partner		Non-partner	
	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %
Base size (n)	***892***	***176***	***863***	***216***	***1,113***	***185***
Bruises, scratches	36	24	51	52	28	44
Wounds, sprains, burns	6	5	8	11	13	7
Fractures, broken bones, broken teeth	3	6	3	9	6	6
Concussion or other brain injury	6	8	6	13	14	0
Internal injuries	1	6	1	12	1	4
Infection or a sexually transmitted disease	0.2	3	0.1	3	0	7
Pregnancy	0.1	0.5	1	2	0	5
Miscarriage	1	1	2	6	0.1	2
Infertility or inability to carry out pregnancy	0	0.2	1	0.2	0	3
No injuries	58	61	44	31	44	46

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced physical/sexual violence and who identified a most serious incident: n indicates number of women who said the most serious incident was physical only in nature or included sexual violence

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Psychological consequences of intimate partner and non-partner violence

The majority of survivors of physical and/or sexual violence developed at least one of the longer-term psychological symptoms listed in Table 10.3 as a result of their most serious incident. Anxiety was mentioned most often, by 39% of victims, followed by feelings of vulnerability (32%). Anxiety and vulnerability were also the most commonly shared psychological consequences reported in the EU. About three in ten women say they experienced difficulties in their relationships (29%) or depression (28%).

Table 10.3: Psychological consequences of physical and/or sexual violence (most serious incident) - all perpetrators

Thinking about the most serious incident, did you suffer from any of the following as a result?

0% 48%

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Moldova	Ukraine	OSCE-led survey average*	Data collected in Kosovo
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Base size (n)	*329*	*271*	*185*	*212*	*407*	*515*	*579*	*2763*	*265*
Anxiety	28	29	29	14	41	44	40	39	31
Feeling vulnerable	19	36	17	24	32	26	34	32	23
Difficulties in relationships	19	18	8	10	13	29	32	29	16
Depression	22	34	16	23	27	39	28	28	28
Loss of self-confidence	21	34	21	19	26	28	27	27	25
Difficulty in sleeping	27	30	17	26	25	42	25	26	40
Panic attacks	15	24	9	17	15	28	23	22	22
Concentration difficulties	23	13	4	11	12	18	11	12	17
None of the above	31	31	44	35	31	19	15	18	29

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced intimate partner or non-partner physical and/or sexual violence and who identified a most serious incident (n in italics)

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
*Including data collected in Kosovo

The qualitative research found that women could endure severe and long-term psychological impacts as a result of physical and/or sexual violence. Women described feeling ongoing emotional trauma as a result of their experiences. Psychological impacts discussed included lower self-esteem, anxiety, depression and feelings of isolation.

> **"I am still afraid. If I go somewhere, I start shivering and think that I have to walk more quickly in order not to have problems. I have this fear of talking, of sharing my opinion. I still have this fear. Because I am afraid that if I tell someone how I like something or do something the way I like it, there will be a problem. I struggle a lot with this because I always remember how I suffered."**
>
> **Survivor of violence, Moldovan, religious minority, Moldova**

"I am still afraid. If I go somewhere, I start shivering and think that I have to walk more quickly in order not to have problems. I have this fear of talking, of sharing my opinion"

In the survey, the psychological impact of violence perpetrated by a previous partner was, as with physical consequences, generally more pronounced than that of violence perpetrated by a current partner or non-partner. This could be due to recognition and identification of abuse after separation, as opposed to a willingness to challenge the current relationship due to the impact or harm that might cause. It also reflects the fact that each type of violence is identified as occurring more often in previous relationships than in current relationships, including the more extreme types (see Table 6.7).

When the incident identified as the most serious included sexual violence, women are more likely to have experienced at least one psychological consequence.

Survivors of non-partner sexual violence were more likely to develop symptoms of anxiety (55%) and a general feeling of vulnerability (43%) following their most serious incident, compared with when only physical forms of violence were involved (mentioned by 23% and 20%, respectively). Survivors of such incidents were also more likely than those whose most serious incident did not involve sexual violence to experience difficulties sleeping (36% versus 21%) and panic attacks (29% versus 18%).

For survivors of current partner sexual violence, the most serious incident led to difficulties in relationships more often than when the incident was physical only (48%), feelings of vulnerability (37%) and a loss of self-confidence (31%). Among survivors of previous partner sexual violence, difficulties in relationships (46%), feelings of vulnerability (45%), loss of confidence (42%), panic attacks (37%), difficulties sleeping (35%) and difficulties concentrating (21%) are all mentioned more often than when the most serious incident was only physical in nature.

Table 10.4: Psychological consequences of physical and/or sexual violence (most serious incident), by type of perpetrator

Thinking about the most serious incident, did you suffer from any of the following as a result?

0% 55%

	Current partner		Previous partner		Non-partner	
	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %
Base size (n)	*892*	*176*	*863*	*216*	*1,113*	*185*
Depression	14	16	27	27	25	31
Anxiety	32	19	40	46	23	55
Panic attacks	11	9	15	37	18	29
Loss of self-confidence	22	31	27	42	16	20
Feeling vulnerable	23	37	30	45	20	43
Difficulty in sleeping	19	19	21	35	21	36
Concentration difficulties	8	11	8	21	9	9
Difficulties in relationships	21	48	33	46	14	18
None of the above	26	11	17	3	27	6

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced physical/sexual violence and identified a most serious incident: n indicates number of women who said the most serious incident was physical only in nature or included sexual violence

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
* Including data collected in Kosovo

The psychological impact of violence perpetrated by a previous partner was generally more pronounced than that of violence perpetrated by a current partner or non-partner. This could be due to recognition and identification of abuse after separation

10.2: Emotional responses to intimate partner and non-partner violence

Almost all of the women who shared experiences of physical and/or sexual violence felt at least one of the emotional reactions mentioned in Table 10.5. The most common responses following the most serious incidents of violence are fear (59%) and anger (59%). These are also the most common reactions reported in the EU.

Table 10.5: Emotional responses to physical and/or sexual violence (most serious incident) – all perpetrators

Thinking about the most serious incident, did you feel any of the following as a result?

0% 67%

	Alabama	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Moldova	Ukraine	OSCE-led survey average*	Data collected in Kosovo
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Base size (n)	*329*	*271*	*85*	*212*	*407*	*515*	*579*	*2763*	*265*
Fear	37	67	48	57	59	60	60	59	51
Anger	54	50	31	53	55	52	61	59	61
Shock	33	46	38	35	42	39	43	43	31
Annoyance	54	32	40	58	44	29	41	41	58
Shame	23	38	21	40	26	29	28	28	30
Aggressiveness	22	19	13	28	15	23	27	25	28
Embarrassment	21	40	27	46	35	13	22	24	39
Guilt	12	17	18	11	7	10	10	10	14
None of the above	5	4	11	5	3	3	1	2	3

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced intimate partner or non-partner physical and/or sexual violence and who identified a most serious incident (n in italics)

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
* Including data collected in Kosovo

Anger and fear are the most common responses to the most serious incident regardless of whether the perpetrator was a current or previous partner or a non-partner.

When the most serious incident experienced involved some form of sexual violence, certain emotions were felt more acutely. Survivors of non-partner sexual violence were much more likely to experience fear if the incident was sexual, with the proportion who felt this way increasing to 74% compared to 50% who felt afraid if the most serious incident was only physical. The proportion who felt shocked increases to 65% among victims of sexual assault by non-partners, and survivors of such attacks were also more likely to feel ashamed (40%) than those whose most serious incident was physical.

Similar patterns can be seen in relation to the most serious incidents of current and previous partner violence. Survivors of current partner sexual violence are three times more likely to say they felt ashamed (33%) compared with when there was no element of sexual violence (11%) and twice as likely to have felt guilt (15% versus 7%, respectively).
The proportion who felt shocked is also higher among victims of current partner sexual violence (30% compared with 19% when the incident was physical only).

It was also more likely for women to be shocked following the most serious incident of sexual violence committed by a previous partner (45% compared with 35% when the incident was only physical), but it is worth noting that shock is less commonly mentioned by victims of intimate partner sexual violence compared with non-partner sexual violence. As women in the qualitative research discussed, sex within relationships is often seen as an obligation, which perhaps explains this.

Feelings of shame (49%), embarrassment (31%) and guilt (23%) are also more common among those who have experienced previous partner sexual violence, a reflection of the taboo nature that still persists around discussing such experiences and victim-blaming views.

Table 10.6: Emotional responses to physical and/or sexual violence (most serious incident) – by type of perpetrator

Thinking about the most serious incident, did you feel any of the following as a result?

0% 74%

	Current partner		Previous partner		Non-partner	
	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %
Base size (n)	*892*	*176*	*863*	*216*	*1,113*	*185*
Anger	57	60	57	49	51	39
Aggressiveness	23	29	23	23	18	23
Shock	19	30	35	45	36	65
Fear	39	45	61	62	50	74
Shame	11	33	21	49	23	40
Embarrassment	17	20	11	31	23	29
Guilt	7	15	5	23	7	14
Annoyance	37	47	36	42	32	31
None of the above	2	4	3	0	3	0

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced physical/sexual violence and who identified a most serious incident: n indicates number of women who said the most serious incident was physical only in nature or included sexual violence

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
* Including data collected in Kosovo

10.3: Impacts of sexual harassment and stalking

As with the most serious incidents of violence, most women had an emotional response to their most serious incidents of sexual harassment. While fear was evoked less often, anger is mentioned by 39% of victims, and embarrassment also features more prominently, with 34% saying this is how the incident made them feel. This illustrates that responsibility for sexual harassment is often placed on the victim and her actions rather than on the perpetrator.

Women who experienced stalking are most likely to say they felt annoyance (50%) (perhaps linked to the ongoing nature of this type of abuse) and anger (50%) when describing their most serious incident. Around one-third of women felt afraid.

Longer-term psychological consequences are less often indicated following the most serious incidents of sexual harassment and stalking, though they were experienced by 49% of women in response to sexual harassment and 56% of women in response to stalking.

The most serious incidents of harassment caused a sense of vulnerability and anxiety in 19% and 18% of women, respectively, while 14% of women lost self-confidence, and 10% experienced difficulties in their relationships. Anxiety is the most often mentioned psychological consequence of the most serious incident of stalking (31%), while 22% of women say they were left feeling vulnerable, and 20% say that they subsequently had difficulties sleeping.

7%

Less than 10% of survivors of an incident of current-partner violence identified as the most serious contacted the police following the incident.

11. Reporting and overcoming experiences of violence, sexual harassment and stalking

11.1: Reporting experiences of violence, sexual harassment and stalking

In the survey, women were asked whether the police or other organizations[35] were informed about the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence that they had experienced.[36]

Even following the most serious incidents of physical and/or sexual violence, the police were not informed in the majority of cases, as seen in Figure 11.1 below. Victims of non-partner violence are most likely to report their most serious incident to the police, with 19% doing so.

Victims of previous partners (15%) are more than twice as likely as victims of current partners (7%) to go to the police about their most serious incident. According to the FRA survey, fewer women in the EU reported their most serious incident of non-partner violence to the police (13%), while similar proportions reported their most serious incidents of previous partner (16%) and current partner violence (7%).

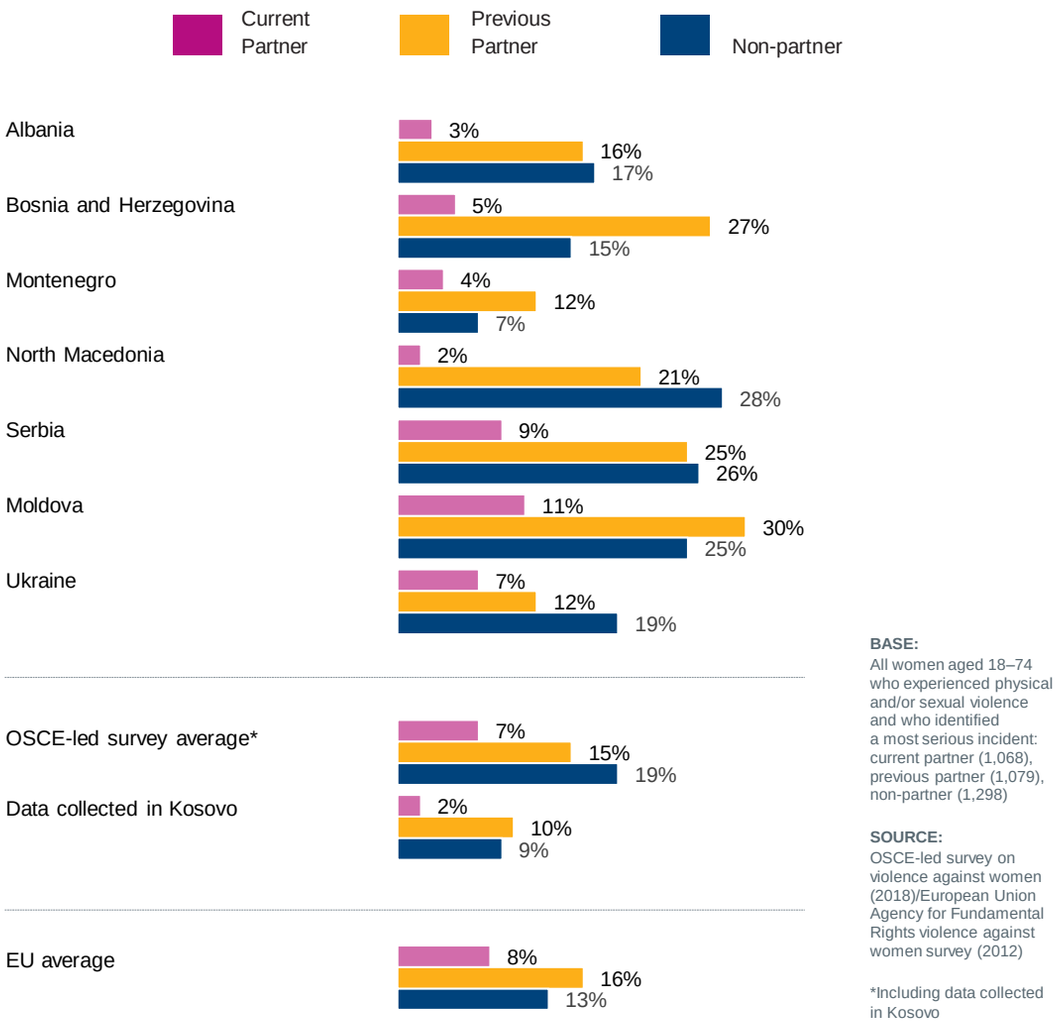
Women are more likely to have reported previous partner violence to the police if the violence was the main reason for ending the relationship (22%), perhaps suggesting that the violence would have had to be severe before the victim sought help from the police.

Even following the most serious incidents of physical and/or sexual violence, the police were not informed in the majority of cases

35 The other organizations asked about were: hospitals, doctors and other health care institutions, legal services or lawyers, church or faith-based organizations, social services, victim support organizations, women's shelters or another organizations/services.
36 The most serious incident asked about included threats of physical and sexual violence.

Figure 11.1: Contact with the police following victims' most serious incident of current-, previous- or non-partner violence

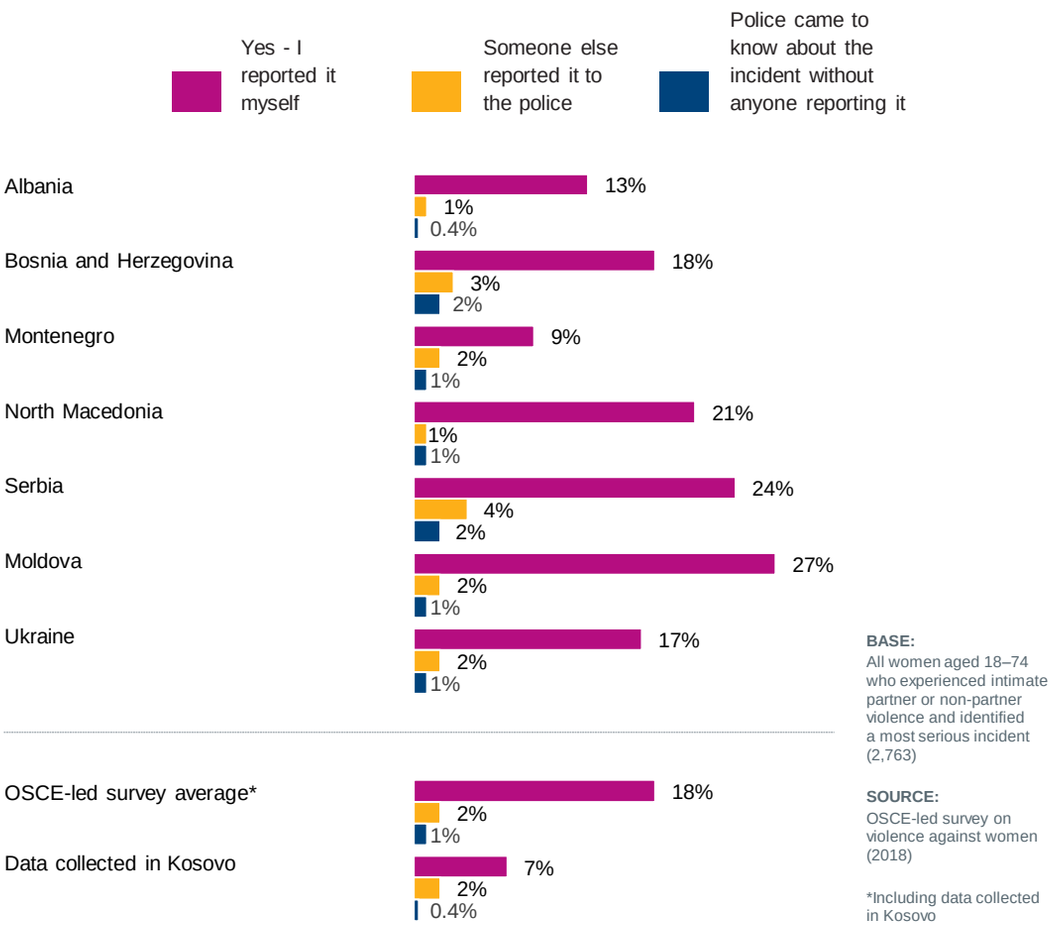
Did the police come to know about the most serious incident? (% self-reported)



The police are even less likely to be informed by other people about severe cases of violence. For previous partner violence, 4% of women who identified a most serious incident say that someone else reported it to the police or that the police learned about it without someone reporting it, while the same is true of 3% of women in cases of non-partner violence and just over 0.5% of women for current partner violence. In the EU, the police learned about the most serious incidents of non-partner violence in ways other than a direct report in 6% of cases and of partner violence in 5% of cases.

Figure 11.2: How the police learned of the most serious incident (all perpetrators)

Did the police come to know about the [most serious] incident?



Only 2% of victims of sexual harassment contacted the police about their most serious incident. This figure is higher among victims of stalking, with 13% reporting their most serious incident to the police (21% in the EU).

Women also tended not to contact other services. In relation to current partner violence, 81% did not contact the police or any other organization about their most serious incident. The same is true for 65% of victims of previous partner violence and 53% of victims of non-partner violence. In the EU, more or less the same proportions of survivors of current partner violence and previous partner violence who identified a most serious incident did not contact any services (81% and 66%, respectively). Non-reporting of the most serious incident of non-partner violence is much higher in the EU, with 81% saying that they did not contact the police or other services.

Of the other services that surveyed women were asked about, healthcare is the most likely to have been sought either at a hospital or from a doctor or other healthcare institution, while very few women contacted a women's shelter or victim support organization.

Table 11.1: Contacts after victims' most serious incident of violence

Did you contact any of the following services as a result of the most serious incident?

0% 81%

	Current partner	Previous partner	Non-partner
	%	%	%
Police (self-reported)	7	15	19
Hospital	7	13	17
Doctor, other health services	7	12	16
Legal service/lawyer	4	10	8
Church/faith-based organization	4	5	6
Social services	1	3	1
Victim support organization	0.4	0.2	0.4
Women's shelter	0.1	0.4	0.3
Another service/organization	0.3	1	1
No organization or police contacted	81	65	53

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence and who identified a most serious incident: current partner (1,068), previous partner (1,079) or non-partner violence (1,298)

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Certain groups are less likely to contact the police or other organizations:

- For victims of **non-partners**, women aged 18–29 are the least likely to contact the police or another organization (63% did not do so), while women over the age of 60 are most likely, with 46% having no contact. Women with a current partner are less likely than those without a partner to contact the police or other organizations (57% had no contact versus 47% of those without a partner), as are women without children in the household (57% had no contact versus 51% with children). Women with tertiary education are less likely than those with secondary education to have contact (59% had no contact versus 48%). Women finding it difficult to get by on their present income (58%) are also less likely to contact someone in comparison to women who are comfortable (51%) or coping on their current income (51%).
- For victims of **current partners,** 18–29-year-olds are again the least likely to contact the police or another organization (90% did not do so), while women aged 50–59 are most likely to do so (72% had no contact). Women with children at home were more likely (85%) to not have contacted any service compared with those without children at home (76%). Unlike in the case of non-partner violence, women with tertiary education are more likely to have contacted the police or another organization than women with secondary education (77% had no contact versus 87% among those with primary education or less).
- For victims of **previous partners,** young women aged 18–29 again have the highest levels of non-contact with the police or another organization (83%), and 30–39-year-olds are also more likely to have not contacted any services (65%) compared with older women (ranging from 60% to 62% among the women over 40). In contrast with current partner violence, women with tertiary education (70%) are more likely to have made no contact with the police or another organization compared to women with secondary (62%) and primary (43%) education. Those who believe domestic violence is a private matter are more likely to have not contacted anyone than those who disagree (69% versus 63%).

Reporting to the police and other organizations also varies depending on the nature of the violence experienced. When the victim's most serious incident of violence includes only threats (whether physical or sexual), even fewer women contact the police or other organizations.

If the victim's most serious incident includes some form of physical or sexual violence, then there is an increase in the number of women who contact the police or some other organization.

When the victim's most serious incident involves a sex-related crime, victims of all three perpetrator types are less likely to contact the police than if the crime was only physical in nature. This is not surprising given the elevated levels of shame and embarrassment women feel when they experience sexual violence, not to mention the fact that some women feel that they are obligated to have sex within their marriage, as noted in the qualitative research.

Figure 11.3: No contact with the police or other organizations in relation to the type of violence involved in the victims' most serious incident

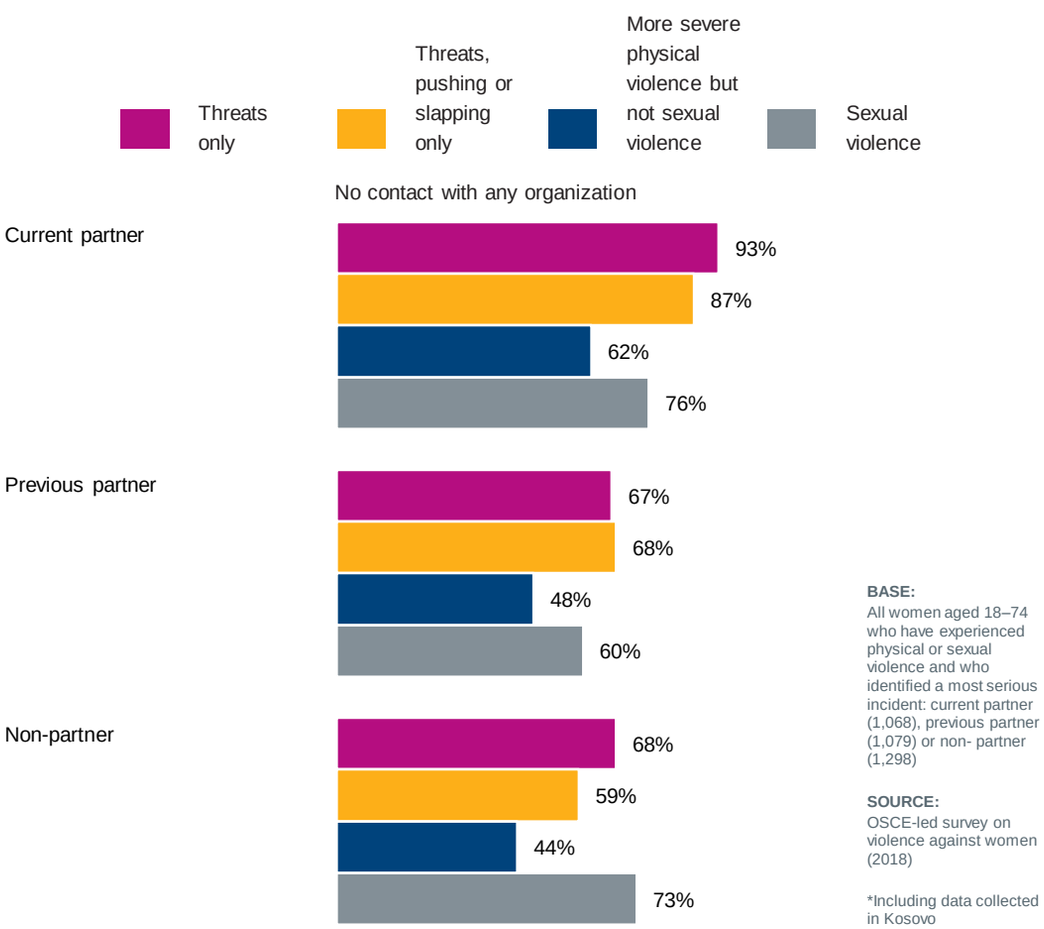
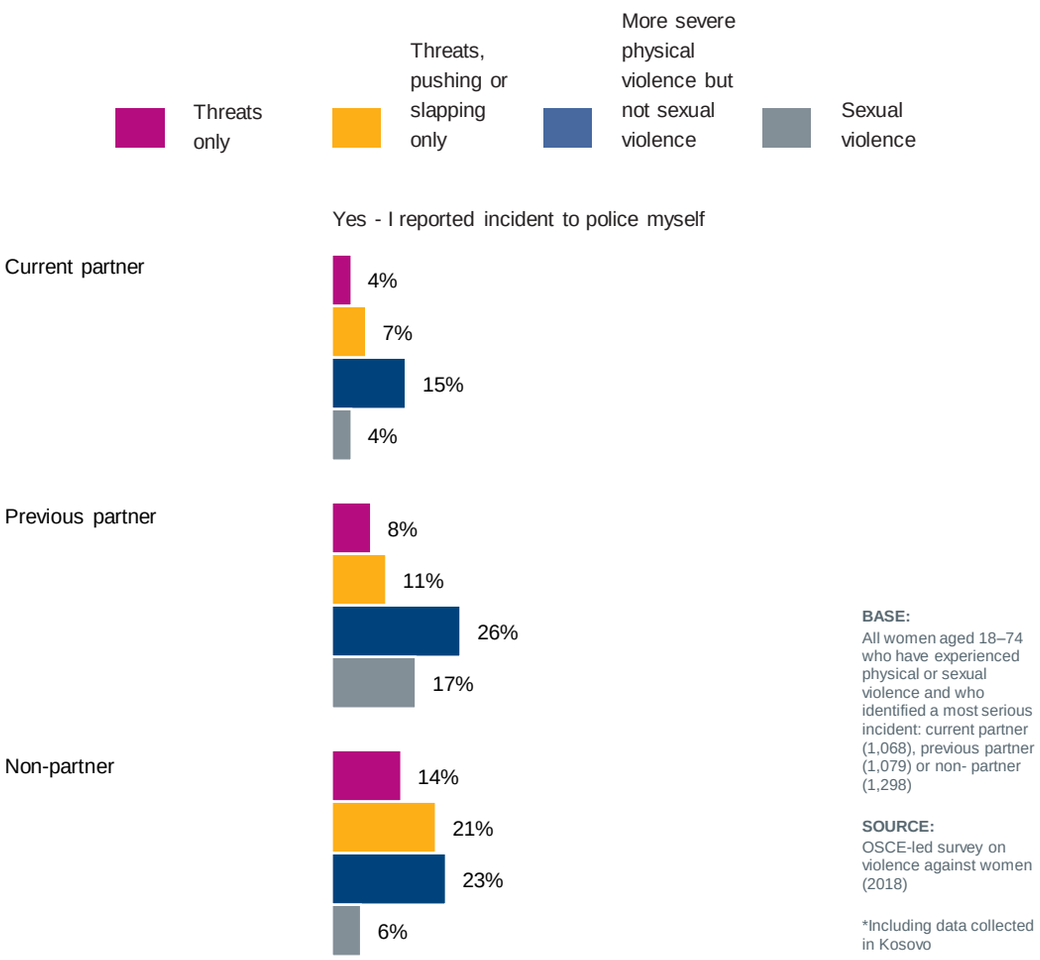


Figure 11.4: Contact with the police in relation to the type of violence involved in the victims' most serious incident



Women who contacted the police were more likely to have suffered from at least one psychological consequence of the most serious incident of violence they experienced. Among victims of current-partner violence, virtually all the women (99%) who contacted the police had experienced at least one of these reactions. Of those who did not contact the police following the most serious incident of violence they experienced, 73% suffered psychological consequences. The situation is similar for victims of previous partner violence: 93% of those who contacted the police had suffered one or more psychological consequences compared with 79% of those who did not contact the police. While there is little difference among victims of non-partner violence between those who did and did not contact the police (those contacting the police were only slightly more likely to have experienced psychological consequences), the data would suggest that having a mental-health issue as a result of violence is a driver for contacting the police. As might be expected, where the violence results in an injury, women are more likely to contact the police and other service providers, but the vast majority of even those cases where non-partner violence resulted in injuries more severe than bruises and scratches remained unreported to law enforcement (67%). These incidents are completely invisible to the authorities, meaning official statistics on such crimes must be underestimating the issue.

Leaving aside the fact that women are less likely to seek help when they experience sexual violence, these findings suggest that violence needs to be more extreme or have a more negative impact before women will seek help from the police or another support organization, and even then, the vast majority of cases are never brought to the attention of the authorities.

The main reason that victims did not report their most serious incident of violence to the police is that they decided to deal with the incident on their own, perhaps only involving friends and

family. The belief that the incident was too minor to report, wanting to keep things private, feelings of shame and embarrassment, fear of the offender and a belief that nothing would be done were other common reasons, as detailed in Table 11.2 below.

Table 11.2: Reasons victims did not contact the police

Why did you not contact the police?

0% 53%

	Current partner %	Previous partner %	Non-partner %
Dealt with it myself/involved a friend/family matter	53	51	36
Too minor/not serious enough/never occurred to me	25	13	21
Didn't want anyone to know/kept it private	20	16	12
Didn't want my partner/the offender arrested or to get in trouble with police	10	10	3
Shame, embarrassment	9	14	12
Fear of partner/offender	9	14	10
Did not want the relationship to end	9	3	n/a
Did not think they would do anything	7	14	13
Did not think they could do anything	7	11	5
My partner did not let me	4	1	n/a
Thought it was my fault	3	3	2
Went someplace else for help	2	2	2
Somebody (else) stopped me or discouraged me	2	4	3
Could not report to police because of conflict	1	0	4
Too emotionally upset to contact the police	1	6	5
Afraid I would lose the children (where applicable)	1	2	n/a
Would not be believed	1	2	3
Fear of reprisal from someone other than partner/offender	1	2	4
Somebody else had reported it, or police came to know about it on their own	*	*	2
Went directly to a magistrate or judge to report the incident	0	*	0
Other reason	4	3	7

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 and who did not report the most serious incident to the police: current partner (996), previous partner (848) or non-partner (1,054)

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Among those whose most serious incident involved sexual violence, a number of reasons are mentioned more often than when the incident was physical only. Victims of non-partner sexual violence who decided not to contact the police are particularly likely to believe that the police would not do anything (22%). Shame (38%) and wanting to keep the incident private (27%) are also more prevalent reasons that victims of sexual violence provided for not contacting the police.

Among victims of intimate partner violence, fear of the perpetrator (their partner) is more pronounced when the violence was sexual (28%). Shame is also a barrier for these women more often, particularly for victims of previous partners (37%, compared with 16% for victims of current partners).

Similar trends can be seen among victims of sexual harassment. The main reason for not contacting the police or another organization about the most serious incident experienced was that the victim felt that she could deal with it herself (63%). This was followed by it being considered too minor/not serious enough (26%), feelings of shame (12%), thinking it would not help (10%) and not wanting anyone to know (9%). Indeed, nearly half of women (49%) did not speak to anyone about the most serious incident of harassment that they experienced. Around a quarter talked to a friend (25%) or a family member or relative (24%). No one contacted a victim support organization.

With regard to stalking, the most common reason for not reporting the most serious incident to the police was because the victim decided to deal with it herself, which was mentioned by almost half of respondents (48%). Other common reasons provided were the belief that the incident was too minor/not serious enough (28%) or that the police would not do anything about it (15%). Wanting to keep it private (10%) was also a factor, and 6% of women mentioned shame/embarrassment or fear of the offender.

Attitudes are another barrier to reporting. Women who agree that domestic violence is a private matter are more likely to have had no contact with the police or any other organization following their most serious incident of non-partner violence (56% compared to 49% among those who disagree), current partner violence (84% versus 77%) and previous partner violence (69% versus 63%).

For current and previous partner violence, women who believe their friends would agree that it is a woman's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it are also more likely not to contact the police or another organization about their most serious incident than those who disagree with this (85% of those agreeing did not report current partner violence to any services compared with 80% of those disagreeing). For previous partner violence, the equivalent figures are 69% not reporting among those who agree and 62% not reporting among those who disagree.

The reasons given by victims of partner and non-partner violence for not contacting other services are similar to those given for not contacting the police, although fear of the perpetrator is less commonly mentioned.

Deciding to deal with the incident themselves is the most common reason given for not contacting the police or other service providers (as in the EU). In the qualitative research, the reasons why women did not involve the police (or other services) were discussed in more detail. The barriers identified may contribute to why women prefer to deal with incidents of violence themselves and are discussed below.

- **Shame,** including shame associated with certain types of violence and with divorce.
- **Financial reasons,** including concerns that the woman would not be able to support herself and her children financially and would not receive support from her family.
- **Lack of trust in institutions:** women did not expect an effective response from the police or feared that they would not be believed.
- **Lack of awareness of specialist services:** women did not know where else they could go to get help.
- **Fear of retribution on the part of the perpetrator:** women were afraid that the violence could escalate.

Shame was seen to be a key factor in not reporting violence. This seems to have both internal and external components. Internally, women can blame themselves for the violence they experienced, while external components relate to feelings of shame about the perceptions of family members and the wider community. One of the reasons for this is a belief that intimate partner violence does not happen for no reason, so the implication is that the woman must have done something to deserve it. This is linked to a broader notion that violence is the woman's fault in some way.

> **"Here, people would say: 'Come on, how could she report her husband to the police? It's her husband. He is a man after all. Wasn't she ashamed? She has three children."**
>
> **Female, aged 19–40, Roma, Albania**

Women were particularly concerned about what their families might think of them. Some believed that, while family members such as their mothers might be sympathetic towards them, they would also advise them to stay with their partner.

> **"There are parents who say: 'Keep silent and endure it. It's better that way.' Also, when a woman gets married, they would say: 'Don't embarrass me there, for there is no coming back. You can jump into the Moraca [River] as far as we are concerned if something happens. "**
>
> **Female, aged 51+, urban, Montenegro**

There is stigma involved in separation and divorce for both women and their family. It is seen as shameful for a woman to be unable to make her marriage work. A woman is expected to endure difficulties and not to leave her marriage.

> **"I think that a mother would tell her [daughter] to endure, that women have to endure, that she has two children, and that things might change. [A mother would say] that you will bring shame on me, so it is better to endure, and to keep silent."**
>
> **Female, aged 30–40, rural, Moldovan, Moldova**

> **"At first, I didn't want to tell my parents, because I didn't want to upset them. I had been married for only one month and was afraid that people would think that I wasn't a virgin when I got married and that's why I was returning to my father's home. After the violence continued and I had talked about the abuse with my family, my father didn't want me to go to the police station to report the violence, because he was ashamed of what the community would think about our family. He wanted to solve the problem through the intervention of both birth families."**
>
> **Female, survivor of violence, aged 19–40, Albania**

In North Macedonia, women of Albanian origin pointed out that it was considered very shameful for someone in their community to seek support from a psychologist. They explained that seeing a psychologist was considered taboo for them and that any woman who chose to do so would immediately be labelled by the community as mentally ill. They expressed the notion that seeking help from a psychologist was not considered taboo for ethnic-Macedonian women.

> **"Going to a psychologist in our society is a taboo, and you are considered insane [if you do so]."**
>
> **Female, aged 35–50, Albanian, urban, North Macedonia**

Some women highlighted **financial reasons as a significant barrier to reporting violence**. They expressed the belief that a woman would not leave her partner if she was unable to support herself or if she could not find anywhere else to live. Some women said that it was particularly unlikely that a woman with children would risk leaving her husband if she could not provide for herself and for them financially.

> **"When a person starts complaining that he is this and that and the other thing, then you tell her, 'If he is so-and-so, then why do you live with him? Leave.' But she can't leave. Where would she go?"**
>
> **Female, aged 56+, urban, Ukrainian, Ukraine**

> **"I had examples where women didn't know what to do with [their children], where to go to live with them if she left [her husband], and she would stay quiet until a certain point, until they grew up or I don't know. I think that is the problem here. If a woman is working, if she has her own apartment, if she is in a situation where she can pay for the kindergarten on her own or pay someone to look after her child, I believe nobody would put up with [domestic violence]."**
>
> **Female, aged 18–37, rural, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Some women who took part in the qualitative research expressed the belief that if a woman did not have the financial means to support herself, the only option she would have if she wanted to leave her partner would be to turn to her birth family. For the reasons discussed above, the woman's family may be unwilling to help her.

> **"If my parents don't understand [why I want a divorce], I can't handle it alone, since I [would] have nowhere to live."**
>
> **Female, aged 18–34, Albanian, rural, North Macedonia**

Another key barrier identified by some women was a **lack of trust in various institutions.** There are a number of different facets to this. Some women said they were concerned that they would not be believed and that institutions like the police were not interested in violence. It would only be in cases of extreme physical violence, they said, that women's complaints would be taken seriously.

> **"When [a woman] goes to the police, they first ask her for her ID card and ask questions: how, why, what … At the very beginning, they act like she is responsible for what happened to her."**
>
> **Female, aged 38–55, conflict-affected, urban, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

There is also a sense among some women that certain institutions would be unable to help. In the case of the police, concerns were expressed that fining or detaining perpetrators for a few hours would lead to retaliation rather than providing the victim with protection. Fears were also expressed that the police and other institutions would side with the perpetrator, particularly if he has personal contacts he can exploit.

> **"I think that [women] don't turn to institutions because they don't trust them. I have never heard of a positive outcome, I have never heard of a woman being helped by an institution. I don't trust them."**
>
> **Female, aged 30–50, rural, Montenegro**

> **"I would never turn to the police. You need to pull strings for that too. One woman's husband held a very important position. He beat her up. She reported him. He pulled strings and nothing happened."**
>
> **Female, aged 35–55, urban, minority group, (Bosniak), Serbia**

Some women in Roma communities expressed the belief that if they reported intimate partner violence, it would be ignored by the police. They thought that the attitude towards their community was that violence was normal and part of their lifestyle.

> **"A battered Roma woman is not treated in the same way as a battered white woman. When she goes to the police, they will say, that's how you do it, go home. Things will be sorted out by themselves."**
>
> **Female, aged 18–29, urban/rural, minority group (Roma), Serbia**

> **"There is a woman with six children who was beaten on many occasions and thrown out of her home. She went to the police two or three times, reported [her husband]. As soon as the police let him out ... you go report him, but the police do nothing … he already made her bleed, broke everything ... but she has no one she can go to."**
>
> **Female, aged 20–40, Roma, urban, North Macedonia**

Some women also expressed concerns about the confidentiality of institutions such as the police.

> **"There is nowhere you can hide. You go to the social services, and the officials there will gossip about you, and the whole town will find out about you. They will tell a friend, that friend will tell another friend, that friend will tell your husband, and he will come and beat you up."**
>
> **Female, aged 35–50, Macedonian, rural, North Macedonia**

Many of the women who took part in the qualitative research seemed to have **little awareness of where they could go to receive support and of the kind of support they could get.**

> **"How can you know where this safe house is, who to address? There is probably something available. I don't know anything about that."**
>
> **Female, aged 56+, urban, conflict-affected, Serbia**

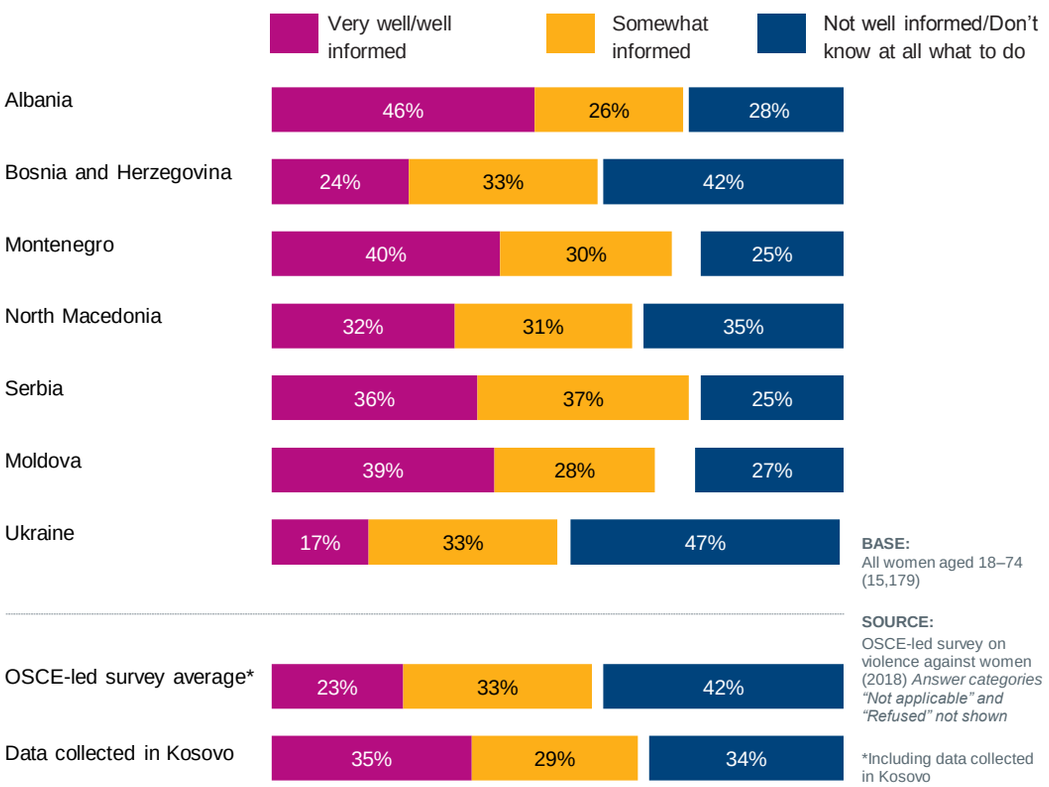
Another significant barrier mentioned by some women who took part in the qualitative research was **fear of repercussions on the part of the perpetrator.** Some women shared concerns that the police would not respond quickly and that they might not arrest the perpetrator. Even if he were arrested, they said, he would only be held by the police for a few days and would then be able to go home and commit further violence. Worries were also expressed that the police and other services would not maintain confidentiality, informing the perpetrator, for instance, about who reported the violence. This could lead to an escalation of violence, in addition to making the problem public knowledge.

11.3: Awareness of services

In the survey, women were asked how well informed they thought they were about what to do if they experienced violence. Slightly over half (56%) indicated feeling at least somewhat informed, though a small percentage said that they thought they were either very well informed (7%) or well informed (17%). Furthermore, more than two in five (42%) indicated that they thought they were not well informed.

Figure 11.5: Awareness of what to do after experiencing violence

How well informed do you feel about what to do if you experience violence?



This varies by age, with younger women generally more likely to indicate feeling at least somewhat informed (61% among 30–39-year-olds compared with 48% among women 60 and over). Education also plays a role: women with tertiary education indicated greater awareness (59%), while those with no education or only primary education indicated the least (43%). In line with this, women who are more comfortable financially indicate greater awareness than those who are struggling on their income (71% of those living comfortably versus 45% of those finding it very difficult).

The women surveyed were also asked whether they had ever heard of three local organizations or services that provide support to women who are victims of violence.
The list of organizations that participants were asked about is provided in Annex 1.

Across the area covered by the OSCE-led survey, 37% of respondents indicate that they never heard of any of the three organizations they were asked about (as seen in Figure 11.6 below).[37] A similar proportion (41%) indicate being aware of just one of the three organizations, while 15% indicate being aware of two of them, and just 6% say they have heard of all three.

37 Awareness of the police in Ukraine is not included in this analysis.

Figure 11.6: Proportion of women who indicate that they are unaware of any of the support organizations asked about

Have you heard of the following organizations or services?

There are clear differences in levels of awareness of support organizations by demographic group. For example, women aged 18–29 and those 60 or over are more likely than those aged 30–59 to indicate that they are not aware of any of the organizations mentioned.

Table 11.3: Awareness of support organizations, by age (% unaware)

Have you ever heard of the following organizations or services?

	Avg %	18–29 %	30–39 %	40–49 %	50–59 %	60+ %
Base size (n)	***15,179***	***2,537***	***2,770***	***2,846***	***2,955***	***4,071***
Share of women who have ***not*** heard of any of the organizations	37	38	33	31	35	47

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Awareness of support organizations also varies according to level of education. Six in ten of those with primary education or less indicate that they are unaware of any of the support organizations mentioned (60%), while this figure drops to 28% among women with tertiary education.

Table 11.4: Awareness of support organizations, by level of education (% unaware)
Have you ever heard of the following organizations or services?

	Average, %	No formal education/ Primary, %	Secondary, %	Tertiary, %
Base size (n)	*15,179*	*1,954*	*9,847*	*3,302*
Share of women who have **not** heard of any of the organizations	37	60	41	28

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Looking at the differences in awareness among other demographic groups, the data suggests that women in rural areas are somewhat more likely to indicate that they are unaware of any of the organizations mentioned (38% versus 37% of women living in urban areas). Women who are finding it very difficult to cope on their current income are also unlikely to have heard of any of the organizations mentioned (44%).

Table 11.5: Awareness of support organizations, by income (% unaware)
Have you ever heard of the following organizations or services?

	Average, %	Living comfortably on present income, %	Coping on present income, %	Finding it difficult on present income, %	Finding it very difficult on present income, %
Base size (n)	*15,179*	*4,488*	*564*	*180*	*3,384*
Share of women who have **not** heard of any of the organizations	37	38	36	36	44

BASE: All women aged 18–74 (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

11.4: Satisfaction with services

Although small numbers of women stated that they contacted organizations and institutions following their most serious incident of violence, those who did were, on the whole, satisfied with the help or advice that they received. At least six in ten women who contacted a hospital or doctor were satisfied, albeit with satisfaction notably lower in relation to non-partner violence compared with partner violence.

With the exception of the police, the lowest level of satisfaction is with legal services, with 58% of women who contacted a legal service reporting that they were satisfied in relation to violence committed by a non-partner.

Feedback on contact with the police is more divided. Forty-nine per cent of those who reported their most serious incident of non-partner violence to the police were satisfied with the contact they had, but 45% were dissatisfied, including 33% who were very dissatisfied. In relation to the most serious incident of previous partner violence, 46% of those who contacted the police were satisfied, but another 46% were dissatisfied, including 28% who were very dissatisfied. For incidents of current partner violence, 39% were satisfied, but 50% were dissatisfied and 19% very dissatisfied.

Table 11.6: Satisfaction with help or advice received from services contacted

How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the help or advice you received?

0% 95%

	Current partner	Previous partner	Non-partner
	% satisfied	% satisfied	% satisfied
Police	39	46	49
Hospital	87	80	61
Doctor, other health services	95	83	69
Legal service/lawyer	-	75	58
Church/faith-based organisation	83	92	92
Social services	-	68	-

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 and who identified a most serious incident and contacted a service in relation to current partner, previous partner, or non-partner violence. Data for services contacted by fewer than 30 people is not included. Percentages in italics indicate that the base size is between 30 and 50 and data should be treated with appropriate caution.

SOURCE:
OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Among those women who contacted the police about sexual harassment, only 34% were satisfied with the response they received, while 45% were dissatisfied, with 27% very dissatisfied.

In the qualitative research, survivors described mostly negative experiences with the police. Some women said their complaints were completely ignored (in some cases on the grounds that the violence had taken place too long ago), were not followed up thoroughly enough or were not dealt with appropriately, e.g., the perpetrator was merely given a verbal warning.

"The social worker was his neighbour, and all they could do was keep me away, declare me an unfit mother, and that's what they did"

> **"I called the police, but they didn't come, because they consider this a domestic matter. They said a police officer would come the next day. The police officer did not come, and when I met him at an outdoor market and asked why, he said, 'Why should I?'"**
>
> **Female, aged 36–55, urban, Ukrainian, Ukraine**

> **"I went to the police. The police inspector told me that, according to the law, nothing could be done because I had to report it when the violence occurred. How could I report violence when my life was in danger? I insisted, but nothing happened."**
>
> **Female, in-depth interview, aged 56+, IDP, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

> **"When I made the decision [to call the police], I understood that nothing would have happened even if I had reported him earlier.**
> **I did not find any understanding on their part. The first thing that the inspector did was to phone my husband and say, 'Hello, my old friend, what have you done again?'"**
>
> **Female, in-depth interview, aged 38–55, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The women who took part in the qualitative research also discussed instances where they had been pressured by the police to drop the charges. For example, one woman filed a complaint about a male colleague for sexual harassment but was pressured to withdraw it because the police officer was friends with the perpetrator. A survivor went to the police following a particularly serious physical assault that required medical attention. The police later arrested her partner but forced the woman to come to the police station as well. They then pressured her to drop the charges, even though she had only asked that the police give her husband a warning. She felt that the behaviour of the police officers towards her was discriminatory due to her ethnicity.

> **"When I reported the violence to the police, they told me they could not look for my husband to arrest him, but rather that I should inform them when he arrived home. Even though I was afraid, I returned home and informed the police when my husband got back. The police came to my house and arrested my husband, but they also requested that I go with them to the police station. At the police station, I experienced discrimination based on my ethnicity. Also, even though I had requested that the police not arrest my husband but only warn him not to repeat this kind of behaviour again, some police officers advised me in an aggressive way to drop the charges."**
>
> **Female, survivor of violence, aged 19–40, minority ethnic group, Albania**

Not all women in the qualitative research disclosed having negative experiences with the police however. For example, one survivor from Albania found the police to be very supportive. The woman had been subjected to intense beatings, and when she reported this to the police, they were

understanding, non-judgemental and informed her of services providing free legal aid and psychological support.

Women also shared negative experiences with other institutions. For example, women faced difficulties when they contacted social welfare centres. One survivor explained that, after reporting to the police and a social welfare centre that she had experienced repeated physical abuse at the hands of her partner, she was told that she could stay at a women's shelter for a week, but they recommended that she return to her husband and attempt to resolve the problem directly with him. Another woman said that a social welfare centre treated her with disrespect because of her disability.

> **"[People from the social welfare centre and the police] told me I could spend seven days at a safe house, but that wasn't a solution. 'The best would be to go home and talk.' That's what they advised me to do."**
>
> **Female, in-depth interview, aged 38–55, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Perceptions of social welfare centres were negatively influenced by recent incidents of violence against women that took place at such centres and that were extensively covered by the media. For one survivor, turning to a social welfare centre resulted in her abusive ex-husband gaining custody of their child.

> **"Yes, the social welfare centre, we had to [go there] because our child was little. They didn't do anything because he had connections there. The social worker was his neighbour, and all they could do was keep me away, declare me an unfit mother, and that's what they did."**
>
> **Female, in-depth interview, aged 35–55, Serbia**

Some survivors shared positive experiences of support from NGOs. Some women expressed gratitude for the psychological support they had received to help them cope with their experiences and for practical support, e.g., in finding housing and obtaining a divorce, which helped them make a new life for themselves. The women who took part in the qualitative research said they valued the support they were given, which was seen to be confidential and caring.

> **"After I left home, I simply had a need to share [what happened] with someone. I [spoke] with a psychologist. I was able to tell someone about everything without thinking that the story would get around. I could say anything, knowing that it would all stay within four walls. I trusted them somehow. She showed me that I had a right to live, to think. She opened my eyes and really encouraged me."**
>
> **Female, in-depth interview aged 38–55, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Some women shared positive experiences of being able to access a safe house, including receiving support from a psychologist.

> **"The first and the most important [help I got from the safe house] was a roof over my head. So many times, I wanted to leave, but I couldn't because I didn't have a place to go - no job or roof over my head. [To put it simply], I was broke. The second good thing was the psychological support [I was given]. A psychologist would visit us every week, and it meant a lot. At the time, I would say to myself that I was not capable of this or that. But if you talk with someone and get certain answers, you realize that you are not what you thought [you were]."**
>
> **Female, in-depth interview, aged 38–55, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

11.5: Support that survivors of violence want

All respondents who said they had experienced physical and/or sexual violence were asked what type of assistance they would have liked to have received following the most serious incident that they experienced.

The most-mentioned source of information, advice or support women say they wanted after their most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner was, as in the EU, just someone to talk to who could provide moral support. Protection from further violence and harassment was particularly important for victims of previous partners and non-partners (20% and 16%, respectively) and all the more so when the most serious incident included a form of sexual violence (increasing to 37% and 27%, respectively).

Practical help, medical help and financial support are other common needs, again all the more frequently called for in relation to previous-partner and non-partner violence.

Table 11.7: Types of information, advice and support wanted after an incident

What types of information, advice or support would you say you wanted following the most serious incident you experienced?

0% 56%

	Current partner		Previous partner		Non-partner	
	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %	Physical %	Sexual %
Information from the police	3	4	9	9	10	5
Information about security/crime prevention	4	8	9	11	9	7
Practical help	10	10	16	19	17	22
Someone to talk to/moral support	31	28	37	44	31	56
Help with insurance or compensation claim	2	1	2	2	4	2
Protection from further victimization/harassment	9	11	16	37	22	27
Help in reporting the incident/dealing with the police	2	10	4	11	10	14
Medical help	7	12	12	21	17	20
Financial support	5	12	14	24	10	17
None of these/did not want any support	5	48	34	15	27	18

BASE:
All women aged 18–74 who have experienced physical/sexual violence and identified a most serious incident: current partner (1,068), previous partner (1,079), non-partner (1,996)

SOURCE:
OSCE-led violence against women survey (2018)

Women whose most serious incident of non-partner violence was sexual in nature wanted, in particular, someone to talk to. As discussed in the previous chapter, reporting of such crimes to the police or other service providers was much lower than following incidents of a physical nature. Victims of sexual violence are also less likely to have spoken with someone other than the institutions specifically asked about in the survey (51% say they spoke with someone, compared with 64% of victims when the violence did not involve a sexual element). This indicates that victims of sexual violence may feel particularly isolated.

While relatively small percentages of women overall say that they wanted help in reporting an incident or dealing with the police, there are greater calls for this sort of assistance among victims of sexual violence.

The type of support women want following experiences of violence was discussed in more detail during the in-depth interviews. For many women who had been subjected to violence, the key unmet need was psychological support.

> **"Some people just need to talk with a psychologist ... some of them have suicidal thoughts. Do you know how many suicides we have?"**
>
> **Survivor of violence, IDP, Ukraine**

The women who took part in the qualitative research were often unaware of any places that could offer this type of help. They also suggested that feelings of shame and distrust of institutions were other barriers. In Serbia, some women had visited medical institutions, but they were referred to psychiatrists, who would only provide medication.
These women said that what they really needed was access to specialized talk therapy so they could describe what had happened to them and the impact of these experiences.

Some survivors of violence highlighted the importance of practical support to enable women to leave their partners and start a new life.

> **"Social services should offer some form of help, at least for a period of time, like in Scandinavian countries. There, the woman is protected, gets an apartment and a job so that she can support herself and her children, at least for six months or so, until she gets on her own two feet."**
>
> **Female, aged 18–29, urban, Montenegro**

Survivors of violence highlighted the importance of practical support to enable women to leave their partners and start a new life

11.6: Overcoming intimate partner violence

Victims of current partner and previous partner violence were asked what had helped them overcome the violence. Around a quarter say there were no consequences of the violence, while 4% of victims say they do not feel like they have overcome the violence.

For 26% of victims of previous partner violence, separation from the perpetrator was a factor that enabled them to surmount the violence.

Among victims of current partner violence, 20% say that the perpetrator changing his behaviour helped them overcome the violence. Younger women in particular mention this (33% of 18–29-year-olds and 26% of 30–39-year-olds). In contrast, only 3% of victims of previous partner violence say the same, perhaps indicating that behaviour change on the part of the perpetrator does not always last.

The support of family and friends was cited by about one in five survivors of current partner violence (18%) and previous partner violence (20%), and the survivor's own personal strength was a factor for 13% and 15% of victims, respectively.

Professional support, on the other hand, does not feature strongly, with just 1% of victims saying this has helped them overcome their experiences.

Figure 11.7: Factors that helped women overcome their experiences of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence

What has helped you to overcome the violence?

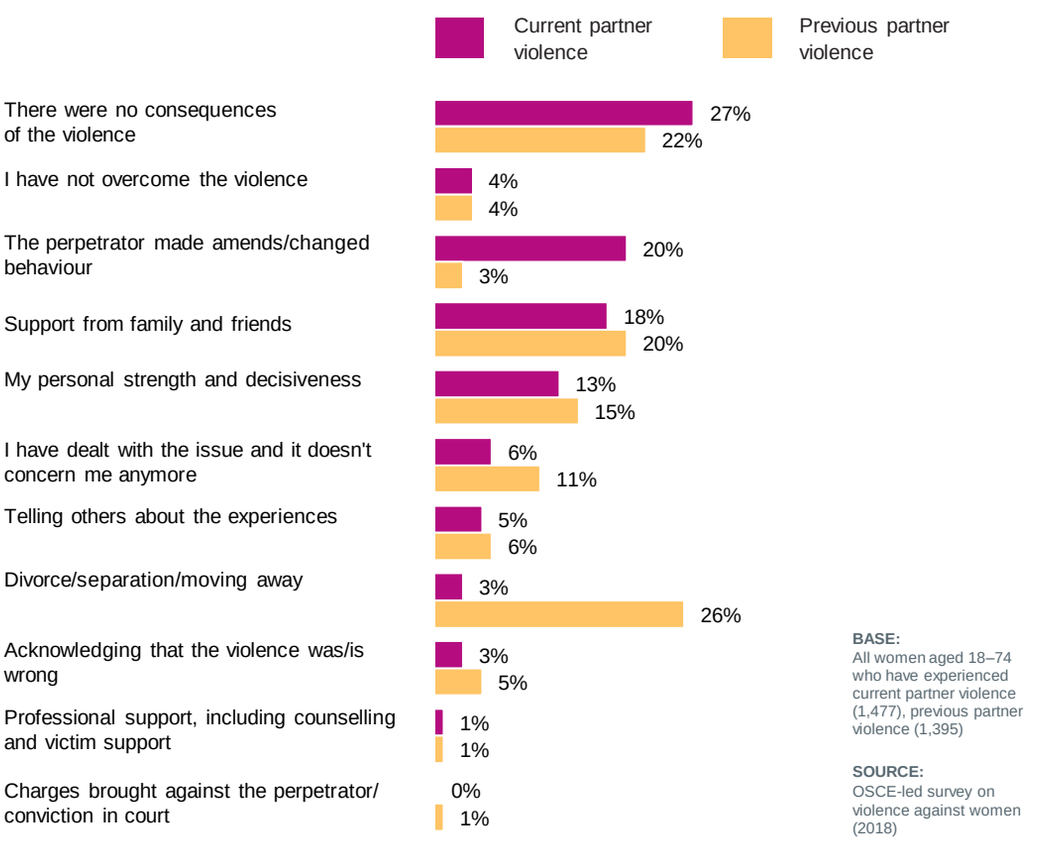


Table 11.8: Factors that helped women overcome their experiences of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, by place

What has helped you to overcome the violence?

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
Base size (n)	***331***	***250***	***176***	***179***	***359***	***633***	***517***	***2,681***	***236***
There were no consequences of the violence	40	21	35	32	32	16	24	25	47
I have not overcome the violence	5	8	10	5	5	3	4	4	4
The perpetrator made amends/changed behaviour	8	9	8	7	7	17	12	11	7
Telling others about the experiences	3	4	3	3	8	5	6	6	5
Support from family and friends	11	18	12	18	22	24	20	20	9
Professional support including counselling and victim support	0	2	1	*	3	*	1	1	1
Charges brought against the perpetrator/conviction in court	2	1	0	2	2	2	0	1	1
I have dealt with the issue and it doesn't concern me anymore	8	13	9	10	10	12	10	10	10
My personal strength and decisiveness	10	17	12	13	27	20	13	15	4
Acknowledging that the violence was/is wrong	4	2	4	2	5	4	5	5	2
Divorce/separation/moving away	7	20	13	13	21	13	19	18	2

BASE: All women aged 18–74 who have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence (n in italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
***** Including data collected in Kosovo

12. Experiences of violence among specific groups of women

12.1: Drivers of the likelihood of experiencing violence

In order to understand which characteristics are the strongest predictors of a woman's likelihood to experience violence, a CHAID analysis (multi-variance analysis) was undertaken on the full data set. This method takes a dependent variable, e.g., experience of any form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey, and explores which of a predetermined set of potential drivers, e.g., age, work status, is the strongest predictor of that target variable. Once this is identified, it then looks for the next strongest predictor and so on. The predictor is determined using a contingency table for each candidate variable and using a chi-squared test to identify the strongest differentiation.

The results are presented in the form of a tree. The trunk of the tree is the total data set. The CHAID analysis then creates a first layer of branches by displaying values of the strongest predictor of the dependent variable. The analysis then looks for what will be the tree's second layer, or branches, and so on.

A CHAID analysis was used to establish the strongest predictors of:

- Experience of any abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (this includes sexual harassment, stalking, non-partner and intimate partner physical and sexual violence);
- Experience of any abuse since the age of 15 (this also includes sexual harassment, stalking, non-partner and intimate partner physical and sexual violence).

The potential predictors included in the analysis are:

- Age (in five bands: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59 and 60+);
- Whether the respondent has children or has ever had children;
- Employment status;
- Whether the respondent is currently in a relationship or not;
- Whether the respondent had any previous relationships;
- Income (how comfortable the respondent feels with her current household income);
- Extent of financial deprivation (a derived variable based on three questions about recent experience concerning the availability of household money);[38]
- Level of education;
- Whether the respondent lives in an urban or rural area;
- Whether the respondent considers herself to be part of an ethnic or religious minority;
- Whether the respondent has her own bank account;
- Any experience of childhood psychological, physical or sexual violence by an adult;
- How often the respondent's partner gets drunk; and
- How often the respondent's partner uses drugs.

38: A deprivation variable was created based on the questions regarding whether women had been unable to afford to pay for food for their family in the 12 months prior to the survey, whether they had been unable to provide adequate shelter for their family in the 12 months prior to the survey and how they were coping on their household's current income at the time of the survey. Women who had been unable to afford food or shelter were classified as having "very serious income deprivation", those who were finding it difficult or very difficult on their income at the time of the survey but who had not been unable to afford food or shelter were classified as having "serious income deprivation", those who were coping on their income at the time of the survey as having "income deprivation" and those who were living comfortably on their income as having "no income deprivation".

Turning first to the CHAID analysis of experiencing any abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey, 31% of all respondents said that they had experienced such abuse. The analysis shows that the strongest predictor (and the first branch of the tree) of a woman experiencing abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey is whether she had experienced childhood violence.

- Among the women who did not experience violence in their childhood, 23% say that they experienced abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey;
- Among the women who did experience violence in their childhood, 53% say they experienced abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Within both groups of women, the next strongest predictor of abuse in adulthood was whether or not they had a current partner. In both cases, women with a current partner were more likely to report that they had experienced abuse in adulthood than women without a current partner. Within each of the four groups created, however, different patterns emerge.

The strongest predictor for women who did not experience abuse in childhood and who have a current partner was financial deprivation. Women who face more extreme income deprivation (unable to pay for food or shelter in the 12 months prior to the survey, women who are finding it very difficult to cope on their current income) were more likely to report abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey. Within this group, 22% of women who say they are living comfortably experienced abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey, compared with 56% of women who say they are finding it difficult on their current income.

The strongest predictor for women who did not experience abuse in childhood and who do not have a current partner is the presence of children at home. Women were more likely to report abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey if they did not have children or if their household included step-children or foster children (27%). This group was dominated by women without children, as the number of women in the sample who do not have a current partner but who also have step- and/or foster children was small. Rates were lower for women who had children and who said the only children in their household were their own (14%).

Finally, the strongest predictor for women who had experienced abuse as a child but did not have a current partner was their age. Overall, the proportion of women who experienced abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey decreased with age. However, the rates peak at 74% of women between the ages of 30 and 39, compared with 20% for those over 60.

With regard to the impact of age, younger women are far more likely to experience a number of forms of sexual harassment, which may in part be due to the fact that they are young, more socially active and use technology more often. As discussed in Chapter 4, young women tend to hold views that are less subservient, victim blaming and silencing regarding violence than older women, which may also play a part in the increased stated experience of harassment and violence, i.e., they are better able to identify it and less likely to be tolerant of such behaviours.

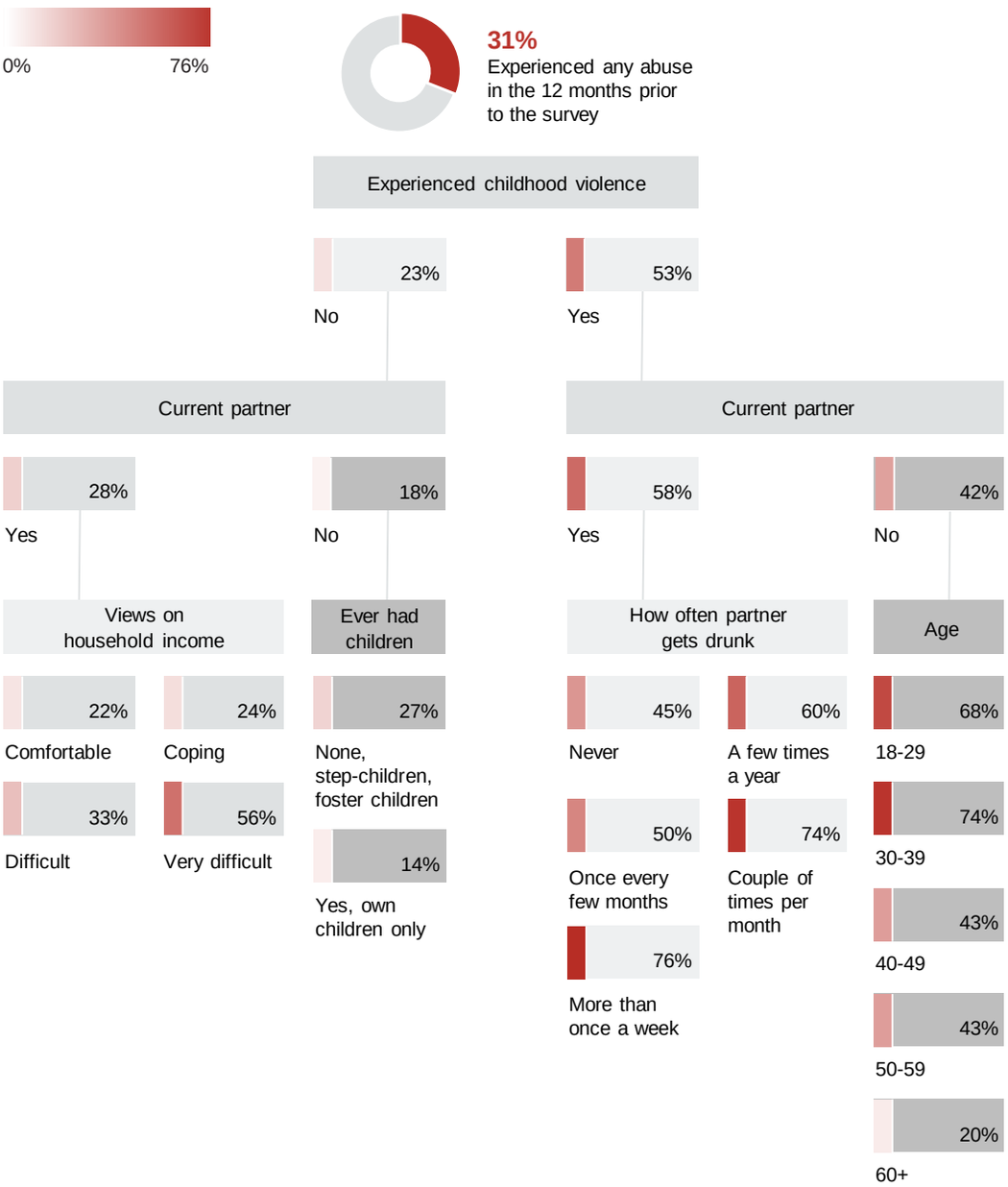
When considering experiences of abuse since the age of 15, childhood violence is again the strongest predictor. As before, the second predictor is the same for both branches: in this instance, whether a woman has a current or previous partner. Having a current or previous partner increases the likelihood of experiencing some form of abuse as an adult.

For those who had not experienced childhood violence, the third branch for those without a previous partner was poverty. Among this group, the proportion of women who had experienced abuse since the age of 15 increased as income deprivation increased. This ranged from 73% of women in this group who were experiencing serious income deprivation to 43% of women in this group with no income deprivation.

For those who had experienced violence in childhood, the third branch, regardless of partner status, was education. Those with a higher level of education are more likely to indicate that they had experienced violence. As discussed in Chapter 5, this may be linked to a higher degree of awareness of abusive and violent behaviours and being better equipped to leave abusive relationships, given that these women are more likely to be employed.

Figure 12.1: Experience of any abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey

Predictors of experiencing any abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey



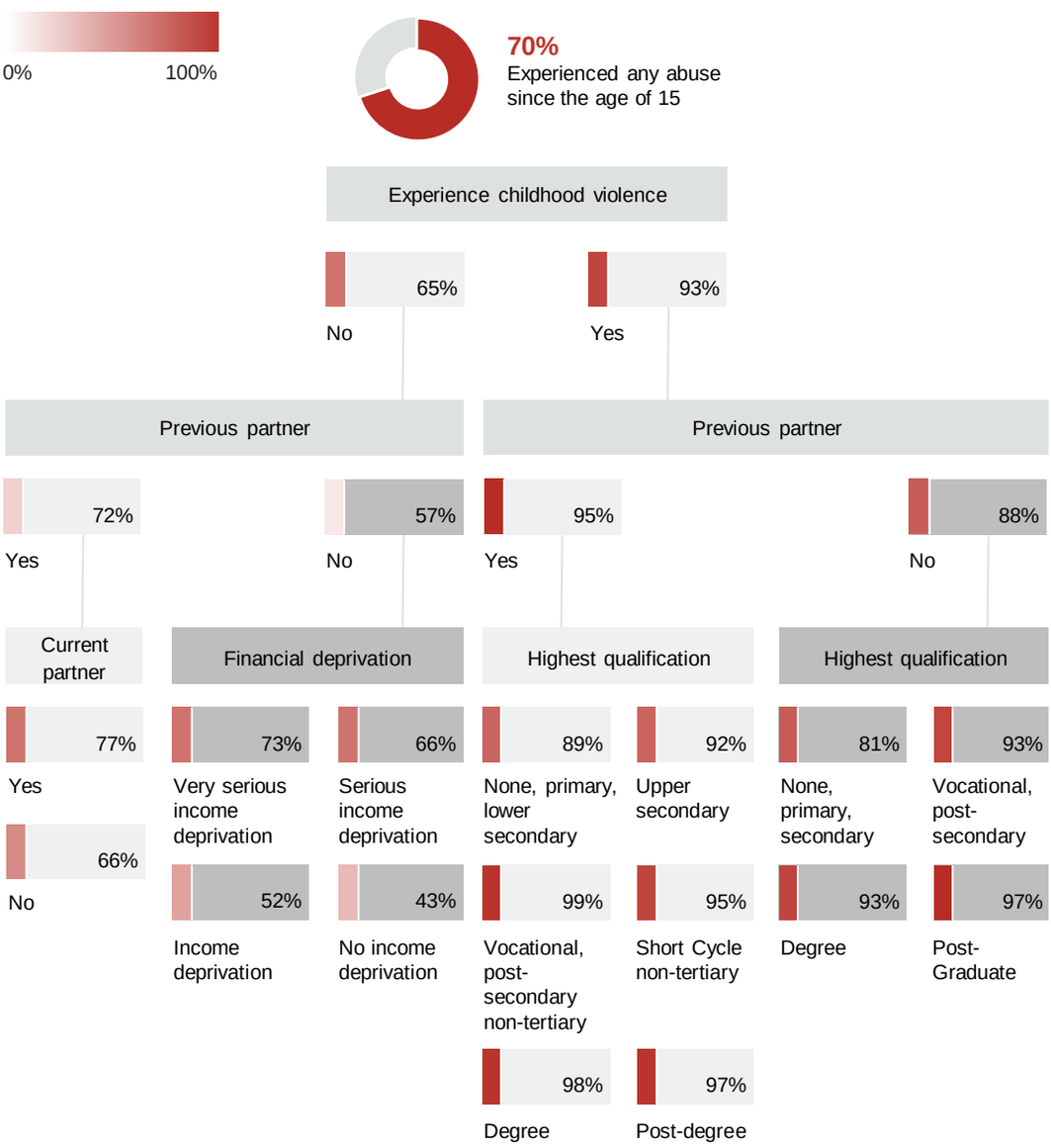
When considering experiences of abuse since the age of 15, childhood violence is again the strongest predictor. As before, the second predictor is the same for both branches: in this instance, whether a woman has a current or previous partner. Having a current or previous partner increases the likelihood of experiencing some form of abuse as an adult.

For those who had not experienced childhood violence, the third branch for those without a previous partner was poverty. Among this group, the proportion of women who had experienced abuse since the age of 15 increased as income deprivation increased. This ranged from 73% of women in this group who were experiencing serious income deprivation to 43% of women in this group with no income deprivation.

For those who had experienced violence in childhood, the third branch, regardless of partner status, was education. Those with a higher level of education are more likely to indicate that they had experienced violence. As discussed in Chapter 5, this may be linked to a higher degree of awareness of abusive and violent behaviours and being better equipped to leave abusive relationships, given that these women are more likely to be employed.

Figure 12.2: Experience of any abuse since the age of 15

Predictors of experiencing any abuse since the age of 15



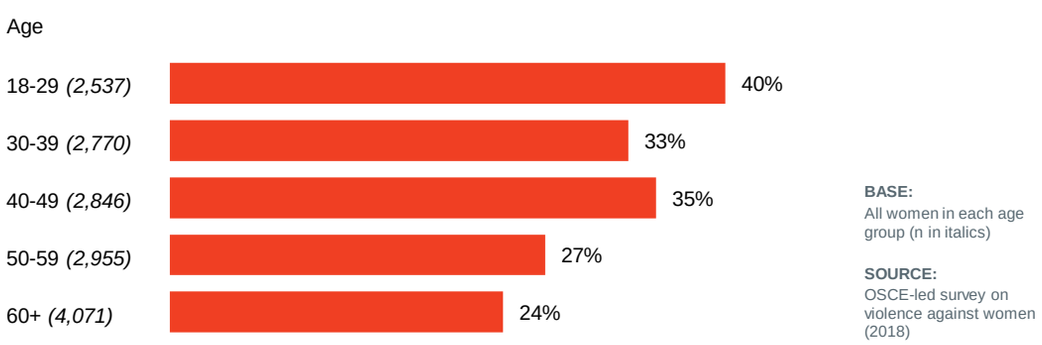
12.2: Experiences of violence among specific groups of women

In addition to a CHAID analysis, experiences of violence were compared between different groups of women on the basis of a number of factors. The purpose of this is to improve our understanding of the prevalence and risk of violence for specific groups. This chapter focuses on statistically significant differences in the stated experiences of all forms of violence over the 12 months prior to the survey, including sexual harassment.

Age is a significant factor for differences in experiences of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey. Women aged 18–29 are more likely to disclose that they experienced any form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (40% compared to 31% overall), while women over 60 are the least likely (24%). The stated incidence of abuse among 50–59-year-olds (27%) is lower than among 18–29-year-olds, 30–39-year-olds (33%) and 40–49-year-olds (35%).

Figure 12.3: Stated incidence of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey, by age

% who have experienced sexual harassment, stalking, psychological violence, physical violence or sexual violence



Looking at specific forms of abuse, 18–29-year-olds are more likely to have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (10%) than 50–59-year-olds (4%) and women over 60 (5%). The same pattern can be seen with psychological violence committed by a partner, which is indicated by 15% of 50–59-year-olds and 16% of women over 60, compared with 19% of 18–39-year-olds and 21% of 40–49-year-olds. Women aged 18–29 are also more likely to say they were stalked (5% compared to 2% overall) or experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey (28% versus 16% on average), while women over 60 are less likely to do so (8%).

Women over 50 (4%) are less likely than women aged 18–29 (6%) or 40–49 (6%) to indicate that they have experienced non-partner physical and/or sexual violence.

Looking at specific forms of abuse, 18–29-year-olds are more likely to have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (10%) than 50–59-year-olds (4%) and women over 60 (5%).

Relationship status

The survey data was analysed to determine whether respondents have a current partner (currently married, living together without being married or involved in a relationship without living together), had a previous partner (same definition as for a current partner) or have never had a partner.

Women with a current partner are particularly likely to disclose that they experienced any form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (34% compared to 23% among those without a partner). This can also be seen among women who have had a previous partner (33%) compared to those who have not (30%), pointing to the significant role of intimate partner violence in the overall prevalence of violence.

Women who have never had a partner (6%) are more likely to say they were stalked in the 12 months prior to the survey than those who have had a partner (2%).

The prevalence of physical and/or sexual non-partner violence in the 12 months prior to the survey is the same between women who have ever had a partner (5%) and women who have never had a partner (5%). Women with a previous partner are more likely to say that they experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey (20%) than those without (13%); however, women who have never had a partner (27%) are more likely than women who have had a partner (16%) to say that they have had such an experience at some point in their lives, which is in line with the fact that rates of sexual harassment are highest among younger women.

Women who have never had a partner (6%) are more likely to say they were stalked in the 12 months prior to the survey than those who have had a partner (2%). Again, this is in line with the higher prevalence of stalking among the younger generation.

Choice in marriage

Women who did not have a say in the choice of their spouse are more likely than those who did to indicate that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (39% versus 32%). The stated prevalence of psychological violence committed by a partner is also higher among women who did not have a choice in marriage (31% versus 21%). This is also true of physical and sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner (12% versus 9%).

Employment status and occupation

There are differences in the stated incidence of violence according to both employment status and occupation. Women who are students (43%), working in a family business (42%) or not working due to illness or disability (46%) are more likely to say they experienced abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey, while women who are retired (23%) are less likely.

In terms of occupation, women who are a building, crafts or a related tradesperson (45%) or who are a skilled agricultural, forestry or fishery worker (45%) or a manager (37%) are more likely to say that they have experienced abuse, while women who are plant and machine operators or assemblers (23%) are less likely.

In terms of specific forms of violence, the following differences can be seen in relation to employment status and occupation:

- Women **doing unpaid work in a family business** are more likely to say they have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual violence (26%) at the hands of a partner (16%) or non-partner (11%), psychological violence committed by a partner (26%) or sexual harassment (28%).
- **Students** are more likely to indicate that they have experienced sexual harassment (40%) and stalking (8%) but less likely to disclose psychological violence committed by a partner (10%).
- Women who are **not working due to illness or disability** are more likely to say they have experienced psychological violence committed by a partner (26%), physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner (10%) or that they have been stalked (4%).
- Women who are **fulfilling domestic duties** are more likely to share that they have experienced psychological violence committed by a partner (24%) but less likely to say that they have been sexually harassed (13%).
- Women who are **retired** are less likely to say they have experienced sexual harassment (8%) or physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner (4%) but more likely to say they have experienced psychological violence committed by their current partner (27%).
- Women with a **professional role** are less likely to disclose that they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner (3%), psychological violence committed by a partner (10%) or physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner (3%). However, they are more likely to say that they have experienced sexual harassment (22%). This pattern of a higher stated incidence of sexual harassment can also be seen among women who are **building, crafts or related tradespersons (27%), in a clerical support role, or in a technician (20%) or associate professional role (20%)**.

Education

There is a clear pattern of differences in experiencing abuse according to education. Women with tertiary education are more likely to indicate that they experienced any form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (34%) than women with secondary education (30%) or primary education or no formal education (28%).

They are more likely to indicate that they were sexually harassed (20%) than women with secondary education (15%) or less (9%). This may be due to greater awareness of what constitutes this form of violence, and more exposure to it.

The prevalence of non-partner physical and/or sexual violence is also higher among those with tertiary education (6%) than those with less education (4%).

However, this trend is reversed when it comes to psychological violence; women with no formal or education or with only primary education have the highest indicated prevalence of this form of violence (23%), while women with tertiary education indicate the lowest (16%).

Income and deprivation

Women participating in the survey were analysed according to four income groups: those living comfortably on their present income, those coping, those finding it difficult and those finding it very difficult. Across the majority of forms of violence, the indicated prevalence is substantially higher among women who are finding it very difficult to cope on their current income than it is among those living comfortably or coping on their income. Among women finding it very difficult to cope on their current income, 42% disclose that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey, compared with 27% of women who are comfortable on their income. The same pattern can be seen in terms of the income-deprivation variable described above in Section 12.1, with 42% of those who are very seriously income-deprived indicating that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey, and 27% of those with no income deprivation saying the same.

The stated incidence of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner is 13% among women who are finding it very difficult to cope and 5% among women who are comfortable or coping. Similarly, in terms of psychological violence committed by a partner, the figures are 29% for women who are finding it very difficult to cope versus 15% for the those living comfortably or coping. In terms of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner, 10% of women who are finding it very difficult to cope say they have had such an experience in the 12 months prior to the survey compared with 3% of women who are comfortably off.

Minority groups and refugees/displaced women

Women were asked if they considered themselves to belong to one or more of seven minority groups in relation to where they were living: an ethnic minority or religious minority (which are combined for analysis purposes), an immigrant minority, a sexual minority, a disabled person, a refugee/displaced person or a returnee/former IDP/refugee.

Women with a disability are more likely to indicate that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (41%), as are, to a lesser extent, women who are refugees or displaced (34%). Women with a disability indicate that they experienced, in particular, sexual harassment, sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner, and psychological violence committed by their current partner more often than on average, while refugees seem more at risk of current-partner psychological violence and non-partner physical violence.

Women with a disability are more likely to indicate that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (41%)

Women with children

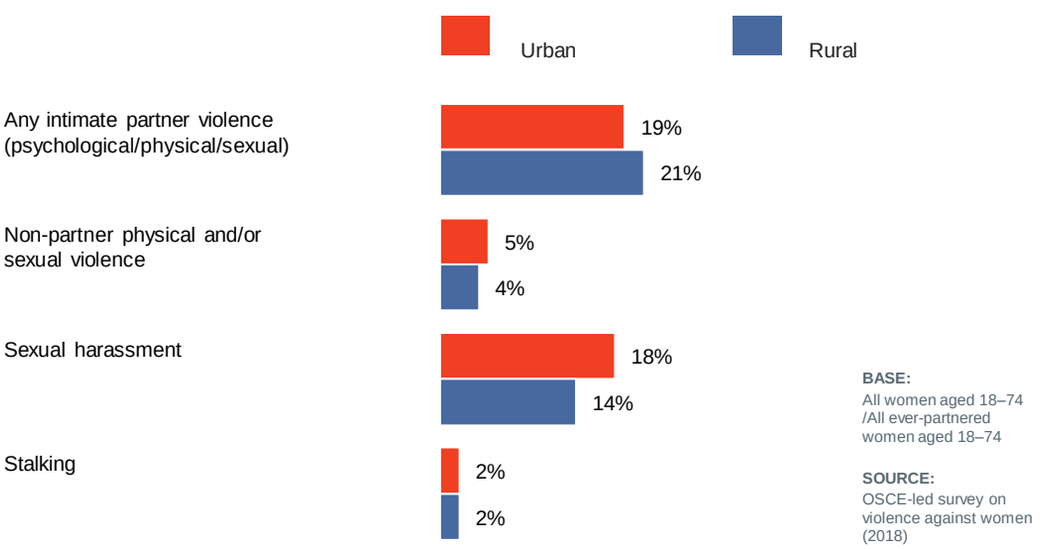
Women with children at home are more likely to disclose that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (35% compared to 28% without children). Women with children at home are more likely to say they experienced almost all the forms of violence they were asked about in the 12 months prior to the survey: physical and/or sexual abuse at the hands of a partner (8% versus 5% of women without children at home), psychological violence committed by a partner (21% versus 15%, respectively) and sexual harassment (18% versus 15%, respectively).

Location

Women living in urban areas (32%) are somewhat more likely than women living in rural areas (30%) to say that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey. The stated incidence of sexual harassment is higher among urban (18%) than rural (14%) women. However, women in rural areas are more likely to disclose that they experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence (8% versus 6%, respectively) and psychological violence (19% versus 17%, respectively).

Women with children at home are more likely to disclose that they experienced some form of abuse in the 12 months prior to the survey (35% compared to 28% without children)

Figure 12.4: Prevalence of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey, by urban/rural residential location



13. Key conclusions and proposed action points

This report on the main results of the OSCE-led survey on the safety and well-being of women and girls reveals a number of trends and findings regarding the prevalence, impact and underlying social norms and stereotypes related to violence against women and girls, as well as risk factors. In analyzing the key findings of the survey, it is important to take into account that different prevalence rates should be interpreted with care and could be a reflection of changing attitudes and norms around violence against women in different locations.

For each key finding, several possible action points are proposed to participating States and OSCE executive structures.

Violence against women is a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women, and a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. As gender inequality lies at the root of gender-based violence, it is important to take into account the broader context of women's status in the area covered by the survey in order to assess their safety and well-being.

These key conclusions build on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Istanbul Convention and recommendations by UN bodies, as well as the evidence gathered from face-to-face interviews with more than 15,179 women aged 18–74. The OSCE recognizes the importance of combating violence against women to achieve comprehensive security, and reach the Sustainable Development Goals. A detailed list of disaggregated data concerning the relevant SDG 5.2 indicators can be found in Annex 6.

13.1. Responding to all forms of violence against women and girls

The scale of violence against women and girls in the area covered by the survey calls for enhanced efforts to implement legislation and improve or develop action plans that will address all forms of violence experienced by women and girls, including women from disadvantaged groups and minorities.

13.1.1: Prevalence of all forms of violence against women and girls

Seventy per cent of women in the survey, which translates into an estimated 16 million women, disclose that they have experienced some form of violence since the age of 15, and 31% of women say they experienced some form of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.

- Thirty-one per cent of women, or an estimated 7 million, have experienced **physical and/or sexual violence** since the age of 15 at the hands of a partner or non-partner, and 10% experienced such violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Nineteen per cent of women and girls have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner since the age of 15. Five per cent of women and girls experienced this in the 12 months prior to the survey, and 0.8% of women and girls (aged 18–74) were subjected to **sexual violence by a non-partner** in the 12 months prior to the survey (SDG Indicator 5.2.2).
- Twenty-three per cent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner since the age of 15.
- Sixty per cent of women have experienced psychological violence committed by an intimate partner since the age of 15.
- Almost half of women have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment since they were 15 years old, and 16% experienced this in the 12 months prior to the survey,

which means that an estimated 4 million women experienced some form of sexual harassment in the year leading up to the survey.

- Ten per cent of women have experienced stalking at some point since they were 15 years old, and 2% were stalked in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Of those with children or who have had children, 31% say children living with them are aware of violent incidents involving their current partner, which rises to 36% in the case of violence at the hands of a previous partner.
- Twenty-one per cent of women experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence during their childhood (up to the age of 15).
- Women identified as conflict-affected were asked whether or not any of their experiences of physical or sexual violence were connected with armed conflict. Among those who have experienced non-partner physical or sexual violence (including threats thereof), 26% say that some of their experiences were related to conflict, rising to 34% when asked about their most serious incident.[39]

Perpetrators of non-partner physical and sexual violence

- In relation to **non-partner physical violence**, a relative or family member of the victim (26%) is identified as the perpetrator most often, followed by a friend, acquaintance, neighbour (24%) or someone else the victim knew but did not specify from the list of perpetrator types (23%). Nearly one in five (18%) say the perpetrator was someone they did not know.
- While 23% of women who say they have experienced **non-partner sexual violence** identify the perpetrator as a stranger, the same proportion say the perpetrator was a friend, acquaintance or neighbour, and 22% say that it was someone else they knew but that they did not wish to specify further from the list of categories provided. Fewer women say that incidents of non-partner sexual violence are committed by a relative or family member (3%) or by a relative or family member of their partner (6%).

13.1.2: Factors contributing to a higher risk of violence, sexual harassment and stalking

The survey clearly finds that all women, regardless of their economic or social status, can experience violence, but **some groups of women are at a higher risk**. These risk factors include being younger, being a refugee or internally displaced, having a disability, being poor, being economically dependent or having children. Institutions and service providers should take risk factors into account, including by making an effort to remove barriers that prevent women from seeking support.

- Younger women aged 18–29 are most likely to have been stalked since the age of 15, and 5% of them say they had a recent experience. Younger women tend to have experiences of nearly all forms of sexual harassment in higher proportions compared with their older counterparts (54% of 18–29 year olds have experienced sexual harassment compared to 42% of those aged 30 or older), in particular in relation to cyber-harassment, i.e., via mobile and Internet technology.
- The prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey is highest among those aged 18–29 (10%) and those aged 40–49 (9%).
- Since the age of 15, the prevalence of any physical and/or sexual violence is highest among those aged 40–49 (35% compared to 31% of all surveyed women).
- Lifetime prevalence of any physical and/or sexual violence among women who consider themselves to have a disability (47%) and among those who say they are refugees or internally displaced (38%) is much higher than the average of all surveyed women (31%).

39 The survey asked women who had experienced physical and/or sexual violence to provide further details about the incident they considered the most serious over their lifetime, i.e., the one that had the most impact on them. This could have included actual violent acts as well as threats thereof.

- Women who have children at home are more likely to have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence than women who do not have children at home, both in their lifetime (24% versus 22% respectively) and in the 12 months prior to the survey (8% versus 5% respectively).
- Women doing unpaid work in a family business are more likely to have experienced both intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence (33% versus 23% on average) and non-partner physical and/or sexual violence (38%) since the age of 15. The prevalence of intimate partner physical and sexual violence is also higher among those who are not working due to illness or disability (32%). Both of these groups of women are more likely to have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey as well as intimate partner psychological violence.
- Women who face extreme income deprivation[40] were more likely to experience any form of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey (42% compared to 27% of women who are not financially deprived).
- Women who survived physical, sexual or psychological violence in childhood are more likely to experience it in adult life. Among those women who experienced childhood violence, nearly all of them (93%) say they have had some experience of violence, sexual harassment or stalking as adults, compared with 65% of women who did not experience some form of violence in childhood.

Prevalence of violence in the EU

The table below provides the average prevalence of the various forms of violence in the EU (according to the FRA VAW survey) and for the area covered by the OSCE-led survey.

	EU average, %	OSCE-led survey average, %
Any **intimate partner or non-partner** physical and/or sexual violence (lifetime/since the age of 15)	33	31
Intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence	22	23
Non-partner physical and/or sexual violence since the age 15	22	19
Sexual harassment since the age of 15	55	45
Stalking since the age of 15	18	10

40 These are women who said that in the 12 months prior to the survey that they were unable to provide food or shelter or housing for themselves or their families.

13.1.3: Nature and scale of intimate partner violence as the most common form of violence against women

Increased focus on the implementation of existing legislation and prevention and protection measures is required. To effectively respond, institutions must treat intimate partner violence as a public, rather than private, matter and take psychological violence seriously. The more severe nature of violence at the hands of previous partners and the fact that women continue to experience violence at the hands of their former partners even after the relationship has ended suggest a need for better protection of victims.

- Of women who are or have been in a relationship, 23% have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner, and 7% indicate that this occurred in the 12 months prior to the survey. Among those women aged 18–49 who have ever had a partner, 8% say they experienced intimate physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey
- Of women (aged 18–74) who are or have been in a relationship, 20% were subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or previous intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey (SDG Indicator 5.2.1)
- Among those women who have ever had a partner and who indicate that they have experienced physical violence, two-thirds say that they have experienced two of more different forms of physical violence, including 32% who say they have experienced four or more.
- For many women who have experienced various forms of intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence, these are not isolated experiences. For sexual violence and most types of physical violence, including those that might be considered more serious, more than half of those who have had such an experience say this has happened more than once.
- Violence in relationships happens on a continuum. Rather than being an isolated incident, it tends to happen more than once over a period of time. Of those women who say they experienced the first incident of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of their current partner five or more years ago, 22% experienced the most recent incident in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Of women and girls who had a previous partner, 25% have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a previous partner. Three-quarters of those who identified a most serious incident of violence at the hands of their previous partner say that the violence experienced was one of the reasons, if not the main reason, why the relationship ended.

Psychological violence is the most widespread form of intimate partner violence reported in the survey. The qualitative research confirms that psychological violence is considered so common in the area covered by the survey that it is a norm. Multiple and repetitive forms of psychological violence need to be recognized as undermining women's autonomy and well-being, and police and other services should be trained to recognize and understand the nature and impact of psychological violence.

- Sixty per cent of women who are or have been in a relationship have experienced psychological violence committed by an intimate partner.
- Overall, 48% of women who have ever had a partner have experienced controlling behaviours on the part of a current or previous partner, with partners insisting on knowing where they were going (beyond general concern) or becoming suspicious that they had been unfaithful the most common of these behaviours (each experienced by 31%).
- Around two in five women have experienced abusive behaviours. This includes over one-third of respondents who say they have been belittled or humiliated in private (36%) and around one in five women who indicate that their partners have scared them on purpose (23%) or belittled or humiliated them in public (21%).

- Economic violence has been experienced by nearly one in five women (19%).
- Seven per cent of women have experienced blackmail involving their children, which includes actions such as threatening to take their children away, threatening to hurt their children, hurting their children or making threats concerning the custody of their children (previous partner only).

Sexual violence in relationships including marital rape[41] is a reality in the surveyed area. Four per cent of women, or approximately 810,000 women, say they have been raped by their partners. This suggests that laws and the implementation thereof should treat rape within marriage the same as rape by a non-partner.

- The overall lifetime prevalence of intimate partner sexual violence is 7%, including 4% of women who have been raped by their partner.
- In the qualitative research, women discussed how sex within marriage was often expected, and indeed the survey data shows that a significant minority believe that non-consensual sex between partners can be justified (17%), which may indicate that many women do not disclose when this form of violence happens.

The **characteristics and behaviour of perpetrators** also need to be taken into consideration as possible risk factors contributing to intimate partner violence. If practitioners recognize these factors, they can be alerted to them as a possible warning sign of violence.

- Women whose current partner drinks on a weekly (19%) or daily basis (37%) are more likely to have experienced intimate partner violence in the 12 months prior to the survey (compared to 5% of those whose partner rarely drinks). Indeed, 67% of current partners and 71% of previous partners were drunk and/or under the influence of drugs at the time of the incident reported as the most serious.
- Women whose current partner is not working, whether due to unemployment (17%), because of illness or disability (35%), or retirement (17%), are more likely to have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime compared with 14% of all surveyed women in a current relationship. The same holds true for the prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Women whose current partner has fought in an armed conflict are more likely to experience physical and sexual violence at the hands of their current intimate partner both in their lifetime (19% versus 14% respectively) and in the 12 months prior to the survey (9% versus 6% respectively) compared with those whose partners have not fought in an armed conflict.

41 This is based on all women who have ever been in a relationship who say they were forced into sexual intercourse by their current or previous partner by holding them down or hurting them in some way.

Action points

Participating States

- Update and implement national legal frameworks to prevent and address in a holistic manner all forms of violence against women and girls, including online violence, sexual harassment, stalking and psychological violence in full compliance with CEDAW and its General Recommendations Nos. 19 and 35 and with the Istanbul Convention's standards and norms.
- Participating States covered by the survey have to improve the collection, analysis and use of data for the purposes of evidence-based policy-making. Improving data quality and accessibility have to be prioritized and linked with commitments on the part of participating States to monitor the progress of SDG 5 and SDG 16 by using internationally agreed comparable data disaggregated by sex, age, rural/urban group. This enables to review progress and challenges international commitments for ending violence against women and girls.
- Ensure the regular review and monitoring of recently introduced laws and policies on combating violence against women, e.g., women who seek help should be surveyed on a regular basis to determine their level of satisfaction with the assistance they received.
- Ensure engagement of national human rights institutions to promote gender equality and human rights of women and girls, and ensure transparent monitoring of the support provided to victims of violence.
- Provide the necessary resources and support for national mechanisms and relevant ministries for gender equality, so that they are able to conduct their key role in the implementation and monitoring of the policy and legal frameworks.
- Prevention of violence and response measures and policies should accommodate the needs of disadvantaged groups of women and girls.
- Provide specific support for (former) soldiers and their families.
- Consider addressing heavy alcohol use as a compounding factor to violence against women and girls.
- Share examples and best practices of programmes that address men of all ages, including programmes that deal with online violence.

OSCE executive structures

- Carry out a comparative study (meta study) based on existing studies by UN agencies and EU institutions on the costs of violence against women and the allocated budgets for prevention and response.
- Integrate the topic of preventing and combating VAWG and the data from the survey into all OSCE projects with security sector actors.
- Develop tailor-made approaches to accommodate the needs and challenges of disadvantaged groups of women in OSCE projects and activities.
- Research, document and share good practices in the implementation of legal and policy frameworks, as well as effective implementation plans to combat all forms of violence, including online violence against women and girls in the OSCE region.

A continuous effort is needed to empower women to recognize that violence against them is a violation of their rights and to increase gender equality in general

13.2: Responding to the impact of attitudes and norms on women's experiences of violence

A continuous effort is needed to empower women to recognize that violence against them is a violation of their rights and to increase gender equality in general. The survey data suggests that beliefs in female subservience, spousal obedience, victim blaming and silence surrounding violence against women continue to persist in the area covered by the survey and that those women who hold these beliefs are more likely to say they have experienced violence. Since other research has shown that these views are also held by men, campaigns on, and responses to, violence against women and girls must take these attitudes and norms into account, they must target society as a whole, and they must also be directed at men and boys.

- Women who agree with statements on female subservience, spousal obedience, victim blaming and silence surrounding violence are more likely to say they have experienced sexual harassment, non-partner physical and/or sexual violence, and intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence. For example:
  - Women who **agree that domestic violence is a private matter** are almost twice as likely to say they have experienced current partner physical violence than those who disagree (18% versus 10% respectively).
  - Women who think that their friends **would agree that it is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it** are also more likely to say they have experienced violence at the hands of their current partner than those who disagree (with physical violence indicated by 18% of those agreeing and 12% of those disagreeing and sexual violence by 8% and 3% respectively).
  - Women who agree that **violence is often provoked by the victim** or that **women exaggerate claims of abuse or rape** are generally more likely to say they have experienced all forms of violence.
- Women participating in the qualitative research thought that such attitudes were changing, and findings from the quantitative survey show that younger women think their friends are less likely to adhere to norms of female subservience and are also less likely to place responsibility for violence on the victim rather than the perpetrator.

Action points

Participating States

Overarching efforts are needed to change gender stereotypes, prejudices and biases, including:

- Mainstream information about gender equality and violence against women and girls in the education system, including by incorporating it into curricula (from kindergarten to university) and by training teachers and other education professionals.
- Implement awareness-raising campaigns for men and women on the importance of gender equality. Interventions should target society as a whole by involving men and boys. They should address, in particular, sexual violence in intimate relationships and sexual harassment. Campaigns and interventions should use the survey data and other evidence to be tailored to different groups in society.
- Improve the co-ordination of both prevention and support efforts (including with international partners), recognizing how they are interconnected, and allocate resources to address the root causes of violence against women.
- Use the data from the OSCE survey to calculate the EIGE Gender Equality Index in order to monitor changes in gender attitudes and behaviour.

OSCE executive structures

- Collect lessons learned and good practices on changing attitudes that condone violence against women and on addressing the root causes, including for specific target groups like legal professionals, police, parliamentarians and policymakers.
- Develop innovative materials for various target groups (with a focus on police and judiciary) to change attitudes of individuals, organizations and society at large.
- Share information and good practices on preventing violence against women in the OSCE's main areas of work through seminars, round tables and peer-to-peer learning.
- Participate in interagency efforts at the national and regional level to promote gender equality and combat violence against women and girls.
- Support gender ethics training for the media with the aim of raising awareness among participating States of the need to address discriminatory and harmful stereotypes through the media.
- Work with education systems to establish curricula on gender equality in schools and universities.

13.3: Responding to the impact of violence on women's well-being, reporting to institutions, and raising awareness of available support

Violence has a severe physical and psychological impact, and women in the area surveyed suffer from health problems as a result of their experiences of violence. Data is essential to measure whether women's needs are being met in practice and to determine the most efficient way to spend resources to assist women. The vast majority of women do not report violence to the police. Eleven per cent of women who have experienced previous partner physical and/or sexual violence say that incidents of violence happened after they broke up with their partner, pointing to the need for continued protection and support even after women leave abusive relationships.

13.4: Long-term impact of violence on women's health and public health

The experiences women shared in the survey make it clear that violence against women is a public health issue with significant direct and long-term consequences that may translate into economic costs for the health sector. Well-trained healthcare professionals can play a significant role in identifying and helping prevent cases of violence against women.

- Fifty-five per cent of victims of the most serious incidents of intimate partner and non-partner physical and/or sexual violence have experienced one or more physical consequences as a result of the incident. This translates into approximately 3.25 million women in the area covered by the survey who were left with an injury or physical consequence of the violence they experienced, considering only the most severe cases they identified during their adult lifetime. More specifically:
  - 2.5 million had bruises or scratches
  - 700,000 suffered wounds, sprains or burns
  - 652,000 experienced concussion or another brain injury
  - 352,000 had fractures or broken teeth
  - 147,000 experienced internal injuries
  - 82,000 experienced a miscarriage
  - 70,000 contracted an infection or sexually transmitted disease
  - 53,000 became pregnant
  - 29,000 were left infertile or unable to carry a pregnancy to term

The psychological impact of violence can be severe and long-lasting. The majority of survivors of physical and/or sexual violence develop longer-term psychological symptoms. Anxiety was mentioned most often (39%) among the women surveyed, followed by feelings of vulnerability (32%). About three in ten women say they have experienced difficulties in their relationships (29%) or depression (28%) as a result of their experience.

13.5: Reporting rates to the police and other institutions are low

Based on the data from the survey, it is clear that women do not report the vast majority of incidents to the police, and they rarely seek support from other institutions. The findings suggest that only in cases of more extreme violence do women seek help from the police or another support organization. Even then, the vast majority of cases are never brought to the attention of the authorities or a specialized service. Very few women contact a shelter or victim support organization.

Based on the data from the survey, it is clear that women do not report the vast majority of incidents to the police, and they rarely seek support from other institutions

- Eighty-one per cent of victims of current partner violence, 65% of victims of previous partner violence and 53% of victims of non-partner violence did not contact the police or any other organization about their most serious incident.
- Victims of non-partner violence are most likely to report their most serious incident to the police (19%). Victims of previous partner violence (15%) are more than twice as likely as victims of current partner violence (7%) to go to the police.
- When the most serious incident involves a sexual assault, victims of all three perpetrator types (non-partner, current partner and previous partner) are less likely to contact the police than if the assault was of a physical nature.
- Among victims of sexual harassment, only 2% contacted the police about their most serious incident. The figure is higher among victims of stalking, with 13% reporting their most serious incident to the police.

13.6: Barriers to reporting

Barriers to seeking help are rooted in attitudes that silence women and protect abusers and in women's lack of trust in the authorities to help and protect them. Shame and a lack of expectations of help from the authorities play a particular role when it comes to sexual violence by intimate partners and other perpetrators. The response of professionals has to be based on a zero-tolerance policy for violence that is free of any victim-blaming attitudes and makes the victim's needs the priority.

- The main reason for not reporting their most serious incident of violence to the police is that the victims decided to deal with the incident on their own, perhaps only involving friends and family This reason for non-reporting is cited by more than half of victims of intimate partner violence (53% of victims of their current partner and 51% of victims of a previous partner) and 36% of non-partner violence. The belief that the incident was too minor to report, wanting to keep things private, feelings of shame and embarrassment, fear of the offender and a belief that nothing would be done were other common reasons.
- Women who **agree that domestic violence is a private matter** are less likely to contact the police or any other organization following their most serious incident of non-partner violence (56% did not report the incident, compared to 49% among those who disagree), current partner violence (84% versus 77%) and previous partner violence (69% versus 63%).
- Victims of non-partner sexual violence who did not call the police are particularly likely to believe that the police would not do anything (22%). Shame (38%) and wanting to keep the matter private (27%) are also prevalent reasons. Among victims of intimate partner violence, fear of the perpetrator (their partner) is more pronounced when the violence was sexual (mentioned by 28%) than when it involved some form of physical violence only. Shame is also a common barrier for these women, particularly victims of previous partners (37%).

In the qualitative research, several barriers were identified that may play a role in women's decision not to seek help after incidents of violence:

- **Shame** - including shame associated with certain types of violence and with divorce.
- **Financial reasons** - including concerns that the woman would not be able to financially support herself and her children and would not receive support from her family.
- **Lack of trust in institutions** - women did not expect an effective response from the police or feared that they would not be believed.
- **Lack of awareness of specialist services** - women did not know where else they could go to get help.
- **Fear of repercussions from the perpetrator** - women were afraid that the violence could escalate.

13.7: Lack of satisfaction with the police and legal services

Victims' lack of satisfaction with the police and legal services needs to be addressed by applying existing response and protection measures and monitoring their implementation.

- Almost half (49%) of women who reported a most serious incident of non-partner violence to the police were satisfied with the contact they had, but 45% were dissatisfied, including 33% who were very dissatisfied. Satisfaction is lower when violence by a previous partner (46%) or a current partner (39%) was reported.
- In regard to legal services, 58% of women contacting such services in relation to a non-partner were satisfied.
- In the qualitative research, survivors described mostly negative experiences with the police. Some women said their complaints were completely ignored, were not followed up thoroughly enough or were not dealt with appropriately, e.g., the perpetrator was merely given a verbal warning. Lack of confidentiality, particularly in rural areas, was also mentioned throughout the area covered by the study.

In the qualitative research, survivors described mostly negative experiences with the police

13.8: Poor awareness among women of specialized victim support services and the needs expressed by women

The data illustrates that a majority of women do not know what to do in case they experience violence and that they are not aware of local specialized organizations offering support. Awareness-raising campaigns on violence against women need to be based on credible data to ensure that they target their message at the right audience.

- Overall, 42% of women across the area covered by the survey feel that they are not well informed about what to do if they experience violence, and nearly four in ten women (37%) indicate that they have never heard of any of the three specialized organizations they were asked about[42]. A similar proportion (41%) indicate being aware of just one of the three organizations, and only 6% say they have heard of all three.
- The most-mentioned source of information, advice or support women say they wanted after their most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner was just to have someone to talk to who could provide moral support (36%). Protection from further violence and harassment was particularly important for victims of previous partners and non-partners (20% and 16% respectively) and all the more so when the most serious incident included a form of sexual violence (increasing to 37% and 27% respectively). Practical help, medical help and financial support are other common needs.

42 A list of organizations tested can be found in Annex1.

Action points

Participating States

- Establish coordinated, multisectoral response mechanisms with a sufficient capacity for service providers to deliver public services based on the specific needs of different groups of women and girls. At the same time, improve the quality of, and access to, specialized services for women and girls, including psychosocial support and shelters (free of charge). All specialized services should be accessible for all (available in minority languages) and should be integrated into the response mechanisms.
- Inform women and girls about available services, including through easily accessible websites, and develop long-term information campaigns using innovative approaches (posters, radio, websites, public announcements) about the steps women can take to seek support.
- Ensure state-supported and/or NGO-provided legal aid.
- Train the police and judiciary on how to protect and support victims, applying a victim-centred approach and improving reporting systems (e.g., accommodating reporting in a confidential and safe way).
- Support and make available specialist support services that take into account the elevated levels of shame in relation to sexual assaults and address self-blaming and longer-term psychological consequences.

OSCE executive structures

- Contribute to a multisectoral approach to support women who have experienced violence, including by promoting better collaboration and co-ordination between security actors, the health sector and other service providers.
- Support the OSCE participating States in addressing low reporting rates of non-partner and intimate partner violence to the police, including by sharing and reviewing different models and good practices in the OSCE region on the extent to which they protect victims and meet their needs in practice.
- Identify, collect and share good practices regarding victim/survivor protection and longer-term support for victims, including in cases of psychological violence, as well as access to justice in response to all forms of violence against women.
- Improve OSCE training manuals for security sector actors, and include the data and findings from the survey to better inform future projects and activities on all forms of violence against women and girls, including emerging forms.
- Organize training events for the police and judiciary on practices that enhance victim's access to justice.
- Support participating States in developing protocols for maintaining confidentiality and providing victim support.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of support organizations mentioned in the survey

Table A1.1: List of support organizations mentioned in the OSCE participating States covered in the survey

	"Have you ever heard of the following organizations or services?"	Yes, %
Albania	Counselling Line for Girls and Women – Tirana	65
	Centre for Legal Civic Initiatives	41
	Gender Alliance Centre for Development	44
Bosnia and Herzegovina	SOS line for victims of domestic violence 1265 (asked about in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina only)	56
	Medica Zenica (asked in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District only)	32
	Foundation for Local Democracy (Sarajevo) (asked about in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovinaand the Brčko District only)	16
	Lara Bijelina (asked about in Republika Srpksa only)	26
	SOS line for victims of domestic violence 1264 (asked about in Republika Srpksa only)	49
	United Women, Banja Luka (asked about in Republika Srpksa only)	35
Montenegro	NGO SOS Line Nikšić	52
	NGO SOS Telephone Podgorica	62
	NGO Women's Safe House Podgorica	85
North Macedonia	Health Education and Research Association, HERA	24
	Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women, ESE	13
	National Council for Gender Equality, NCGE	26
Serbia	Regional SOS helpline for women victims of violence in Vojvodina	23
	Counselling centre for combating violence against women – SOS hotline and safe house, Belgrade	70
	Autonomous women's centre, Belgrade	35
Moldova	Trustline for women administered by the La Strada International Centre	56
	Refugiul Casa Marioarei (shelter)	28
	Assistance and Protection Centre for Victims	52
Ukraine	Centre of Social Services for Families, Children and Youth	59
	La Strada Ukraine	15
	The Police	94

Table A1.2: List of support organizations respondents were asked about in Kosovo

	"Have you ever heard of the following organizations or services?"	Yes %
Kosovo	Criminal Victim Assistance Line (public prosecutor)	27
	Gjakovë/Đakovica safe house	37
	The Kosova Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims	37

Annex 2: Ethical and safety considerations

Given the sensitivity of the survey, a number of steps were taken to protect both respondents and interviewers from potential harm and to provide sources of support in the event of distress:

- All interviewers and moderators were women who had experience conducting surveys on sensitive issues and who were native speakers of the language used for the interviews. All interviewers and moderators attended a two-day briefing.
- For the protection of both respondents and interviewers, interviewers were instructed not to disclose in advance that the survey was about violence, and to conduct the survey in private.
- At the end of the survey, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, all respondents were offered information on support organizations that they could contact should they wish to discuss any issues arising as a result of taking part in the survey.
- The project co-ordinator was available for interviewers and moderators to speak with at any time during fieldwork, and individual meetings with counsellors could be arranged if needed.
- Adherence to ethical principles is a cornerstone of the research methodology used for the OSCE-led survey, and the procedures used by the World Health Organization[43] and the United Nations Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women[44] were taken into account.

Adherence to ethical principles is a cornerstone of the research methodology used for the OSCE-led survey

43 Ethical and safety recommendations for intervention research on violence against women. Building on lessons from the WHO publication Putting women first: ethical and safety recommendations for research on domestic violence against women (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2016), accessed 12 February 2019, https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/251759/9789241510189-eng.pdf;jsessionid=8E35B9DA678667DD989016A395720263?sequence=1

44 Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women: Statistical Surveys (New York: United Nations, 2014), accessed 14 February 2019, https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/docs/guidelines_statistics_vaw.pdf.

Annex 3: Surveys on violence against women

Table A3.1 provides a summary of other surveys that were conducted prior to the OSCE-led survey and that measure violence against women. The results of these surveys are not directly comparable with the results of the OSCE-led survey due to differences in the survey methodologies and survey instruments used.

Table A3.1: Sample details of previous surveys that measured violence against women in the OSCE participating States covered by this survey

	Survey	Data collection year	Sample size	Target population
Albania	VAW	2007	2,600	Women 15–49
	VAW	2013	3,600	Women 18–55
	Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)[45]	2008–2009	Households: 7,999 Women: 7,584 Men: 3,013	Women: 15–49 Men: 15–59
	Demographic and Health Survey	2017	Households: 15,823 Women: 10,861 Men: 6,142	Women: 15–49 Men: 15–59
Bosnia and Herzegovina	VAW	2012	Bosnia and Herzegovina: 3,300 Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: 2113 Republika Srpska: 1,187	Women 18–75
Montenegro	VAW	2011	1,103	Women and men 18+
North Macedonia	VAW	2012	2,100	Women and men 15+
Serbia	International Violence against women Survey (IVAW)	2003	1,456	Women 18–49
	VAW – covering the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina	2009	516	Women 18+
	VAW – covering central Serbia	2010	2,500	Women 18–75
Moldova	IVAW (DHS)	2005	Households: 11,095 Women: 7,440 Men: 2,508	Women: 15–49 Men: 15–59
	VAW	2010	1,575	Women 15–65
Ukraine	IVAW (DHS)	2007	Women: 6,841 Men: 3,178	Women: 15–49 Men: 15–49
	VAW	2014	1,606	Women 15–49

45 No VAW module was included in this DHS.

Table A3.2: Sample details of previous surveys that have measured violence against women in Kosovo

	Survey	Data collection year	Sample size	Target population
Kosovo	VAW	2007	2,600	Women 15–49
	VAW	2013	3,600	Women 18–55

Annex 4: Survey and qualitative fieldwork

The OSCE commissioned Ipsos to undertake a qualitative and quantitative study of violence against women in seven OSCE participating States. The research was also conducted in Kosovo. This is the first comparative study of its kind in this area, and it is intended to be used to improve policy-making in future by both local and international stakeholders working on policy and programme implementation in the area covered by the survey.

The key research questions for the project are as follows:

- What is the extent of violence experienced by women in non-conflict and in conflict situations?
- Which different forms of violence do women experience in non-conflict and in conflict situations?
- Who are the perpetrators of violence against women in non-conflict and in conflict situations?
- What are the consequences of violence?
- Do women report their experiences to the police or other authorities or organizations?
- Are there differences between women's experiences of violence depending on their age, education, professional status, whether or not they have experienced conflict or if they can be defined as an internally displaced person or a migrant?
- What are the social attitudes towards VAW in general and VAW in conflict situations?

Quantitative survey

A quantitative survey was conducted among a representative sample of women aged 18 to 74 living in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, , Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine. The survey was also conducted in Kosovo. Fieldwork was conducted between April and August 2018.

Sampling

The following section describes the sampling approach used for the survey.

Sample frames

In the preparatory phase for the main survey, suitable sample frames that made it possible to create representative random probability samples were obtained in each OSCE participating State. This was also done in Kosovo.

Table 4.1: Sample frames/primary sampling unit (PSU) lists in covered OSCE participating States

	Name of the PSU list	Provider of the list	Update	PSUs	Average PSU size
Albania	List of polling station territories	Electoral Commission	2017	Electoral polling station territories	644 voters
Bosnia and Herzegovina	List of census enumeration areas (CEAs)	Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina	2013	Units created by combining several neighbouring CEAs	73 households
Montenegro	List of CEAs	Statistical Office of Montenegro	2011	Units created by combining several neighbouring CEAs	73 households
North Macedonia	List of polling station territories	Electoral Commission	2016	Electoral polling station territories	593 voters
Serbia	List of CEAs	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia	2011	Units created by combining several neighbouring CEAs	88 households
Moldova	List of polling station territories	Central Electoral Commission	2016	Electoral polling station territories	1,415 voters
Ukraine	List of electoral polling station territories list	Central Election Commission of Ukraine	2014	Electoral polling station territories	1,068 voters

Table 4.2 Sample frames/PSU lists in Kosovo

	Name of the PSU list	Provider of the list	Update	PSUs	Average PSU size
Kosovo	List of polling station territories	Electoral Commission	2014	Electoral polling station territories	751 voters

In Montenegro and Serbia, address registers were available for part of the sample. This included areas where there were sufficient address details (street names and address numbers) to uniquely identify the addresses.

Survey population and sample size

The target population for this survey is women aged 18 to 74 residing in one of the OSCE participating States covered. The same target population of women aged 18 to 74 was covered in Kosovo.

In the majority of OSCE participating States covered, the target sample size was 1,750. The same target sample size was used in Kosovo. Due to the smaller overall population in Montenegro, the sample size there was 1,150 interviews. In Ukraine, 2,000 interviews were targeted, including a booster of 250 interviews to increase the number of conflict-affected women in the sample (via the addition of 25 sampling points in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, covering only those considered safe enough for interviewers to work in). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2,070 women were targeted. This was to allow for 1,000 interviews to be conducted in each of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska, and 70 interviews in the Brčko District. The sample of 1,750 interviews in Kosovo included an oversample of areas predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs, targeting 300 interviews in these areas.

The survey aimed to cover the whole population of women aged 18–74 in each OSCE targeted participating State

Coverage

The survey aimed to cover the whole population of women aged 18–74 in each OSCE participating State. The survey also aimed to cover the whole population of women aged 18–74 in Kosovo. In certain participating States, however, the actual coverage is slightly lower than 100% either due to non-coverage of the sample frame or as a result of accommodating to fieldwork practicalities. The fieldwork coverage assumed, and a description of areas not covered is given in Table A4.3 and Table A4.4 below.

Table A4.3: Fieldwork coverage in covered OSCE participating States

	Coverage	Areas not included in coverage
Albania	100%	The sample frame covered all territories in Albania. Due to fieldwork practicalities, six PSUs with fewer than 100 voters were excluded from the selection, as these were regarded as remote and secluded. These accounted for less than 0.1% of the population.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	97%	The sample frame covered all territories in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Due to fieldwork practicalities, all settlements with fewer than 40 households were excluded, as these were considered to be remote and secluded. Three per cent of the population live in these settlements.
Montenegro	96%	All settlements with fewer than 30 households were excluded, these represent 4% of the population. (Montenegro is highly mountainous with a lot of remote areas with a small number of inhabitants. Since these areas are hard to reach and very sparsely populated, so impractical to cover, they are excluded from the coverage.) Additionally, homes built or inhabited since 2011 are not covered, since they were not available in the sample frame. The effect this had on coverage was not expected to be significant, but the actual proportion is not known.
North Macedonia	99%	The sample frame covered all territories in North Macedonia. Due to fieldwork practicalities, PSUs with fewer than 70 voters were excluded from the selection, as these were usually remote and secluded. They covered 1% of the population.
Serbia	98%	Areas in south Serbia with an Albanian majority (who did not participate in the latest census) are not covered. This population represents 1% of the total population. Additionally, homes built or inhabited since 2011 were not covered, since they were not available in the sample frame. The effect this had on coverage was not expected to be significant, but the actual proportion is not known. Finally, all settlements with fewer than 30 households were excluded, as they are considered to be remote and secluded. They represent 1% of the population.
Moldova[46]	99%	Due to fieldwork practicalities, localities with fewer than 300 registered voters were excluded from the coverage. These are usually very small villages with difficult access (roads are not well developed). These represent 1% of the population who voted.
Ukraine	84%	The survey could not cover non-government- controlled areas or areas near the contact line. In practice, this meant that the Autonomous Republic of Crimea could not be covered, as well as parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In total, 16% of the Ukrainian population lives in these areas. Additionally, PSUs with fewer than 100 voters were excluded from the selection, as these were regarded as remote and secluded. These areas cover 0.1% of the population.

46 The Transdniestrian region was not covered and is not included in the coverage calculation.

Table A4.4: Fieldwork coverage in Kosovo

	Coverage	Areas not included in coverage
Kosovo	100%	Due to fieldwork practicalities, PSUs with fewer than 100 voters were excluded from the selection, as these were regarded as remote and secluded. Only five PSUs in Kosovo were excluded for this reason. These accounted for less than 0.1% of the population.

In each OSCE participating State, a multistage, stratified, random probability sample was designed. A multistage, stratified, random probability sample was also designed for Kosovo. The random probability sampling approach assumes that each individual has a known and non-zero chance of being included in the sample.

Stratification

Stratification increases the precision of survey estimates if done correctly and if using variables that are linked to the key survey variables. In all the OSCE participating States covered a combination of region and urbanity level was used as a stratification variable. In Kosovo, a combination of region and urbanity level was used as a stratification variable, and an additional layer of stratification was used that separates areas with a predominant Kosovo Albanian population and areas with a predominant Kosovo Serbian population.

Prior to the sample selection, PSUs were distributed across strata according to the proportions in the survey population across strata.

Stages of sample selection

Stage 1: Selection of PSUs

Within each stratum, PSUs were selected randomly, with probability proportional to size.

Stage 2: Selection of addresses/dwellings

A set number of addresses was selected within each sampled PSU. Addresses were selected randomly, either from a register in areas where one was available in Montenegro and Serbia, prior to the start of the fieldwork, or when the interviews were carried out, following the random walk rules specified for this survey.

Stage 3: Selection of households at the address/dwelling

There is usually a one-to-one relationship between households and addresses. In a small number of cases, however, where more than one household was identified at a selected address, the electronic contact sheet randomly selected one household.

Stage 4: Selection of respondents in the household

In each sampled household, one woman was selected for the interview. The respondent was selected randomly from a list of all eligible women in the selected household, i.e., all women aged 18–74 within the household were listed by age in descending order on the electronic contact sheet. The contact sheet then randomly selected one of them using a random-number generator.

No substitutions of selected households or respondents were permitted once the selection was made. Interviewers were required to make a minimum of three visits (contacts) to each selected household to establish eligibility and secure an interview in order to maximize the response rate.

Weighting

The weights for each OSCE participating State were calculated in two stages: a) sampling design weights and b) post-stratification weights. The same approach was used in Kosovo. The design weights reflected probabilities of selection at each sampling stage: selection of PSUs, selection of addresses, then households within addresses (if applied) and selection of respondents. The post-stratification weights were calculated to compensate for non-response. Region, urbanity level and age categories were used for post-stratification.

As explained earlier, the samples for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine oversampled certain parts of their territories. The sample that was used for Kosovo also oversampled certain parts of the territory. The Republika Srpska and the Brčko District were over-represented in the sample for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Areas predominantly inhabited by Kosovo Serbs were oversampled in the sample used for Kosovo. Government-controlled areas were over-represented in the sample for Ukraine. These disproportions were corrected in the post-stratification weighting stage, so that the proportion of the population living in each of the oversampled areas in the final weighted samples represented their actual share in the overall target population of these OSCE participating States. The same approach was used in Kosovo.

This weight reflects the distribution of the survey population across the OSCE participating States. The weight also reflects the distribution of the survey population in Kosovo

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, two additional weights were calculated in addition to the overall weight that allowed analysis at the level of the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The two weights were calculated to allow reporting for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and for Republika Srpska separately (entity-level weights).

Finally, an additional weight (population weight) was calculated to allow reporting for the entire sample of all OSCE participating States, or for a group of these. The same approach was used in Kosovo. This weight reflects the distribution of the survey population across the OSCE participating States. The weight also reflects the distribution of the survey population in Kosovo.

Final sample size and response rates

Due to a better than expected response rate in all survey locations, the final sample size was greater than what was initially targeted. The final sample size and response rates are provided in Table A4.5 below.

Table A4.5: Final sample sizes and response rates in OSCE participating States covered in the survey

	Eligibility rate (households with at least one woman aged 18–74)	Response rate	Final sample size
Albania	93%	61%	1,858
Bosnia and Herzegovina	83%	45%	2,321
Montenegro	82%	34%	1,227
North Macedonia	91%	49%	1,910
Serbia	73%	41%	2,023
Moldova	88%	40%	1,802
Ukraine	78%	35%	2,048

Table A4.6: Final sample sizes and response rates in Kosovo

	Eligibility rate (households with at least one woman aged 18–74)	Response rate	Final sample size
Kosovo	96%	59%	1,990

The response rate was in accordance with the RR3 definition of response rates by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR).[47]

47 Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys, 7th edition (Oakbrook Terrace, IL: The American Association for Public Opinion Research, 2011), p. 46.

Table A4.7: Demographic breakdown of achieved sample

Age	Weighted, %	Unweighted, %
18–29	20	17
30–39	20	18
40–49	18	19
50–59	19	19
60+	23	27
Work status		
In paid work	42	30
Self-employed	4	4
Helping in a family business (unpaid)	1	1
Unemployed	11	22
Pupil, student, in training	5	4
Not working due to illness or disability	1	1
Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	13	15
Retired	21	22
Compulsory military/community service/other	1	0.4
Education		
No formal education	1	3
Primary education	3	10
Secondary education	60	65
Tertiary education	36	22
Location		
Urban	62	56
Rural	38	44
Conflict-affected		
Yes	16	33
No	84	67

Sampling tolerances

As the data is based on a sample rather than the entire population, and the percentage results (or estimates) are subject to sampling tolerance, not all differences between results are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. When calculating the confidence intervals, the effective sample size must be taken into consideration.

The effective sample size (or the design effect, a related concept) is linked to individual estimates and so it will vary across estimates. To calculate the design effects for the total sample size in each OSCE participating State and overall, the formula based on the following ratio was used:

Design effect = (unweighted sample size) * (Sum of the squared weights) / (Square of the sum of weights)[48]

This approach of design effect estimation is related to disproportional sampling (in the case of the OSCE survey the women in household were selected with unequal probability, depending on the number of eligible women in the household) as well as unequal nonresponse across population segments which were corrected with post-stratification weights (as described above).

The tables below summarize the design effect for the total sample size and conflict-affected sample size and provide confidence intervals based on the effective sample size for a survey estimate of 50%.

Table A4.8: Effective sample sizes for the OSCE participating states – total sample

	N	Design effect	Effective sample size	95% confidence interval for a survey estimate of 50% based on a weighted sample	
				Lower	Upper
Albania	1,858	1.257	1,478	47.5%	52.5%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,321	1.367	1,698	47.6%	52.4%
Montenegro	1,227	1.377	891	46.7%	53.3%
North Macedonia	1,910	1.434	1,332	47.3%	52.7%
Serbia	2,023	1.398	1,447	47.4%	52.6%
Moldova	1,802	1.367	1,318	47.3%	52.7%
Ukraine	2,048	1.199	1,708	47.6%	52.4%
Total sample	15,179	4.090	3,711	48.4%	51.6%

48: Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi. Journal of Official Statistics, vol. 8, pp. 183-200

Table A4.9: Effective sample sizes for Kosovo – total sample

	N	Design effect	Effective sample size	95% confidence interval for a survey estimate of 50% based on a weighted sample	
				Lower	Upper
Kosovo	1,990	1.420	1,401	47.4%	52.6%

Table A4.10: Effective sample sizes for the OSCE participating states – conflict-affected sample

	N	Design effect	Effective sample size	95% confidence interval for a survey estimate of 50% based on a weighted sample	
				Lower	Upper
Albania	386	1.227	315	44.5%	55.5%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,498	1.366	1,097	47%	53%
Montenegro	139	1.240	112	40.7	59.3%
North Macedonia	364	1.515	240	43.7%	56.3%
Serbia	539	1.372	393	45.1%	54.9%
Moldova	148	1.354	109	40.6%	59.4%
Ukraine	318	1.387	229	43.5%	56.5%
Total conflict-affected sample	4,954	3.084	1,606	47.6%	52.4%

Table A4.11: Effective sample sizes for Kosovo – conflict-affected sample

	N	Design effect	Effective sample size	95% confidence interval for a survey estimate of 50% based on a weighted sample	
				Lower	Upper
Kosovo	1,562	1.403	1,114	47.1%	52.9%

Questionnaire development

The FRA questionnaire was used in this OSCE-led survey. However, due to the addition of questions measuring the impact of conflict on women's experiences of violence, several steps were taken to ensure that the questionnaire would be suitable for this purpose.

First, an expert consultation was held in which experts in the fields of survey design, gender-based violence and conflict were asked to provide feedback on the initial draft of the questionnaire. Feedback was received in writing and in some cases by telephone. A second draft of the questionnaire was developed on the basis of their feedback.

Following this, a selection of new and existing questions were cognitively tested with 19 respondents in each of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Ukraine. The questions were also tested with 19 respondents in Kosovo. The aim of the testing was to provide insight into how well the questions were understood by the intended survey audience. A further round of revisions was undertaken based on this feedback.

Finally, the questionnaire was piloted in its entirety with 285 respondents (including 118 conflict-affected women). In order to ensure that the full questionnaire was tested, respondents were recruited both randomly and with the aid of local NGOs that provide support to women who have experienced violence and conflict. A final round of revisions was made following the pilot.

The questionnaire was translated using the TRAPD approach prior to the pilot and updated following the pilot by the cApStAn translation agency and local fieldwork agencies. The following languages were used:

Table A4.12: Languages of interviews used in OSCE participating States

	Language
Albania	Albanian
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnian
Montenegro	Montenegrin
North Macedonia	Macedonian, Albanian
Serbia	Serbian
Moldova	Romanian for Moldova, Russian
Ukraine	Russian, Ukrainian

Table A4.13: Languages of interviews used in OSCE participating States

	Language
Kosovo	Albanian, Serbian

Annex 5.: Qualitative research details

In addition to the quantitative survey, a qualitative study was conducted involving focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. The focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted by experienced moderators working for the local fieldwork agencies. All moderators received project-specific training prior to embarking on any fieldwork. A discussion guide was developed and used during the focus groups and in-depth interviews. This was translated into the relevant local languages by the local fieldwork agencies.

Focus group discussions

Between seven and nine focus group discussions (FGDs) were held in each of the seven OSCE participating States, including groups with women from minority ethnic groups and women with experience of conflict. The same was done in Kosovo. Pilot FGDs took place in February 2018, with all others taking place between June and September 2018.

Participants were recruited for the focus group discussions via free-find methods. The composition of the groups was determined in such a way as to provide coverage of urban and rural areas and to include women of different age groups and women from ethnic-minority groups as described below.

Table A5.1: Composition of FGDs in OSCE participating States

	Number of FGDs	Urban / Rural	Composition	Age
Albania	7	4 Urban	6 Albanian 1 Roma	3 18–35 years 4 36+ years
Bosnia and Herzegovina	9	3 Rural	4 Bosnian 4 Serbian 1 Roma	3 18–37 years 4 38–55 years 2 56+ years
Montenegro	8	3 Rural	4 Mixed Montenegrin / Serbian 2 Macedonian 1 Albanian 1 Roma	2 18–29 years 4 30–55 years 2 51+ years
North Macedonia	9	4 Urban	5 Macedonian 2 Albanian 2 Roma	3 18–34 years 2 20–45 years 3 35–55 years 1 55–74 years
Serbia	8	2 Mixed Urban / Rural	4 Serbian 2 Roma 1 Bosniak 1 Hungarian	2 18–34 years 5 35–55 years 1 56+ years
Moldova	8	6 Urban	5 Moldovan (including 1 with women from the Transdniestrian region) 1 Moldovan/Russian 1 Roma 1 Gaguz	3 18–34 years 2 20–45 years 3 35–54 years 1 55–74 years
Ukraine	8	3 Rural	N/A but 3 FGDs were conducted with IDPs	2 18–35 years 1 18–50 years 3 36–55 years 2 56+

Table A5.2: Composition of FGDs in Kosovo

	Number of FGDs	Urban / Rural	Composition	Age
Kosovo	8	5 Urban 3 Rural	5 Kosovo Albanian 2 Kosovo Serbian 1 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian	3 18–29 years 3 25–55 years 2 40+

In addition, the groups included a mix of women who were in paid employment and not economically active, women who did and did not have children, and women who have lived through a period of conflict.

The broad aims of the focus group discussions were as follows:

- To understand societal attitudes/cultural norms concerning women generally, VAW and perpetrators of VAW. To explore how this has changed over time, including in times of conflict.
- To explore awareness of, and views on, existing support/barriers to disclosure.
- To identify how prevention and support could be improved.

During recruitment, women were not asked if they had any experiences of intimate partner or non-partner violence. While it was not intended to ask women about such experiences directly during the focus groups, there were some women who had experienced violence and chose to talk about this during the discussions.

In-depth interviews

Thirty-five in-depth interviews were conducted with women who had experienced violence. Some of the in-depth interview participants were recruited via the survey, with women who agreed to be contacted for further research at the end of the interview. Others were recruited with the assistance of local NGOs. As far as was possible within the existing sample frame, women from minority groups were recruited for the in-depth interviews. In total, six interviews were conducted with women who were IDPs, six with women from an ethnic-minority background and seven with women who had a long-term health condition or disability.

During recruitment, all potential respondents were informed that the interview would go into more detail about their experiences of violence. This was done so that they could decide whether they wished to participate or not given the sensitive and potentially emotional nature of the interview.

The in-depth interviews were held at each woman's place of residence or at another location of their choice. All interviews were conducted in private.

The broad aims of the in-depth interviews were as follows:

- To explore the forms of violence that women have experienced and how this has changed over time.
- To understand the role of conflict in women's lives over time and its linkages to gender-based violence.
- To identify the barriers to disclosing experiences and seeking support, and to explore women's decision-making process when deciding whether or not to disclose their experiences.
- To understand the support they received and to identify gaps in service provision.
- To identify any specific barriers for different groups, including women from ethnic-minority groups or women living with a disability, and support needs for these groups.
- For women who have accessed support (formal or informal), to understand how they accessed support and the impact that this had on them.

The broad aims of the in-depth interviews included understanding the role of conflict in women's lives over time and its linkages to gender-based violence

Annex 6: Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

Table A6.1: SDG Indicator 5.2.2: Proportion of women and girls aged 15 or older subjected to sexual violence by individuals other than an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey, by age, area and education.

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
All women 18–74 years old	0.2% *(1,858)*	0.4% *(2,321)*	0.4% *(1,227)*	0.1% *(1,910)*	0.5% *(2,023)*	0.8% *(1,802)*	1% *(2,048)*	0.8% *(15,179)*	0.2% *(1,990)*
18–29 years old	0.3% *(362)*	0.2% *(413)*	0 *(284)*	0 *(254)*	1.4% *(209)*	0.6% *(250)*	1.1% *(372)*	0.9% *(2,537)*	0.4% *(392)*
30–39 years old	0 *(282)*	0.6% *(436)*	1.2% *(197)*	0 *(329)*	0.3% *(320)*	0.7% *(342)*	0.2% *(456)*	0.3% *(2,770)*	0.1% *(404)*
40–49 years old	0.2% *(387)*	0.8% *(385)*	0 *(241)*	0.2% *(360)*	0 *(376)*	1.9% *(304)*	2.3% *(390)*	1.7% *(2,846)*	0 *(448)*
50–59 years old	0.2% *(350)*	0.1% *(436)*	0.3% *(224)*	0.4% *(457)*	0.8% *(404)*	0.2% *(330)*	0.6% *(360)*	0.6% *(2,955)*	0.4% *(386)*
60+ years old	0.2% *(473)*	0.4% *(646)*	0% *(276)*	0 *(510)*	0.3% *(710)*	0.6% *(630)*	0.7% *(454)*	3.8% *(4,071)*	0.1% *(356)*
Residents of urban areas	0.3% *(1,006)*	0.4% *(1,149)*	0.5% *(889)*	0.1% *(1,117)*	0.2% *(1,305)*	0.8% *(701)*	0.9% *(1,404)*	0.7% *(8,435)*	0.1% *(864)*
Residents of rural areas	0.1% *(852)*	0.4% *(1,172)*	0 *(338)*	0.2% *(793)*	1% *(718)*	0.7% *(1,101)*	1.1% *(644)*	0.9% *(6,744)*	0.3% *(1,126)*
No/primary education	0.4% *(507)*	0 *(251)*	0 *(40)*	0.2% *(657)*	0 *(93)*	3% *(40)*	0 *(131)*	0.2% *(1,954)*	0.3% *(353)*
Secondary education	0.2% *(1,009)*	0.5% *(1,695)*	0.5% *(949)*	0.1% *(927)*	0.7% *(1,491)*	0.7% *(1,355)*	0.4% *(1,127)*	0.5% *(9,847)*	0.3% *(1,294)*
Tertiary education	0 *(342)*	0 *(312)*	0 *(230)*	0 *(326)*	0.1% *(439)*	0.9% *(406)*	1.7% *(904)*	1.4% *(3,302)*	0 *(343)*

BASE: All women in each category (number in brackets/italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
*Includes data collected in Kosovo

Table A6.2: SDG Indicator 5.2.1: Proportion of women and girls aged 18–74 who have ever had a partner and who were subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey, by age, area and education.

	Albania, %	Bosnia and Herzegovina, %	Montenegro, %	North Macedonia, %	Serbia, %	Moldova, %	Ukraine, %	OSCE-led survey average*, %	Data collected in Kosovo, %
All women 18–74 years old	31% *(1,618)*	10% *(2,159)*	10% *(1,117)*	13% *(1,778)*	9% *(1,973)*	25% *(1,698)*	21% *(1,955)*	20% *(14,085)*	20% *(1,714)*
18–29 years old	35% *(227)*	10% *(341)*	8% *(226)*	17% *(201)*	7% *(189)*	35% *(226)*	23% *(306)*	22% *(1,956)*	23% *(234)*
30–39 years old	39% *(258)*	11% *(426)*	11% *(186)*	15% *(313)*	8% *(312)*	27% *(337)*	23% *(451)*	21% *(2,674)*	25% *(375)*
40–49 years old	29% *(369)*	14% *(374)*	13% *(235)*	11% *(315)*	11% *(372)*	25% *(235)*	27% *(394)*	24% *(2,771)*	10% *(429)*
50–59 years old	29% *(332)*	9% *(424)*	8% *(213)*	12% *(439)*	10% *(378)*	22% *(314)*	15% *(353)*	16% *(2,850)*	17% *(360)*
60+ years old	24% *(428)*	9% *(424)*	10% *(240)*	8% *(471)*	7% *(698)*	14% *(582)*	19% *(446)*	17% *(3,834)*	20% *(315)*
Residents of urban areas	29% *(871)*	10% *(1,079)*	10% *(812)*	11% *(1,107)*	8% *(1,256)*	22% *(669)*	21% *(1,331)*	19% *(7,289)*	22% *(736)*
Residents of rural areas	33% *(747)*	10% *(1,111)*	9% *(3058)*	15% *(641)*	9% *(708)*	28% *(1,029)*	23% *(624)*	21% *(6,256)*	19% *(978)*
No/primary education	40% *(458)*	10% *(240)*	12% *(37)*	15% *(617)*	11% *(91)*	27% *(37)*	23% *(13)*	23 *(1817)*	22% *(308)*
Secondary education	28% *(883)*	11% *(1,603)*	11% *(856)*	13% *(852)*	9% *(1,461)*	26% *(1,274)*	22% *(1,071)*	20% *(9,161)*	22% *(1,144)*
Tertiary education	25% *(277)*	6% *(294)*	3% *(217)*	7% *(309)*	6% *(421)*	19% *(386)*	20% *(868)*	18% *(3,043)*	14% *(262)*

BASE: All women in each category (number in brackets/italics)
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)
*Includes data collected in Kosovo

Calculating the prevalence of psychological violence for SDG indicator 5.2.1:
Women were asked how often they had experienced different forms of psychological violence at the hands of their current partner (answer categories included: never, sometimes, often or all of the time).

For previous partner violence, women were asked if they had *ever* experienced various forms of psychological violence. Threats of physical or sexual violence, included here as forms of psychological violence, are the only forms of psychological violence for which prevalence was recorded in the 12 months prior to the survey.

As such, a proxy had to be used to calculate the prevalence of psychological violence committed by either a current or previous partner in the 12 months prior to the survey. Women who indicated experiencing the following were included in the prevalence of psychological violence for SDG indicator 5.2.1:

- women who experienced threats of physical or sexual violence at the hands of their current or a previous partner in the 12 months prior to the survey;
- women who have experienced any of the other forms of psychological violence "often" or "all the time" at the hands of their current partner;
- women who experienced any of the forms of physical or sexual violence at the hands of their current or previous partners in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Annex 7: Fieldwork agencies response for data collection and qualitative fieldwork

Table A7.1: Fieldwork agencies responsible for data collection and qualitative fieldwork in OSCE participating States

	Agency
Albania	Ipsos Albania
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ipsos Bosnia and Herzegovina
Montenegro	Ipsos Montenegro
North Macedonia	Ipsos Macedonia
Serbia	Ipsos Serbia
Moldova	IMAS
Ukraine	Ipsos Ukraine

Table A7.2: Fieldwork agency responsible for data collection and qualitative fieldwork in Kosovo

	Agency
Kosovo	Ipsos Kosovo

Annex 8: Acknowledgements

This study was commissioned by the OSCE and implemented by Ipsos, a large international survey company. The OSCE would like to thank the central Ipsos team for their commitment and dedication. They have managed the fieldwork, analyzed the data and drafted the reports. Ipsos local branch offices and IMAS in the area where the study was conducted have supported this work.

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The OSCE project management team consisted of Serani Siegel and Dušica Đukić.

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A total of 461 professional interviewers conducted the interviews with great care and professionalism and gave visibility to a topic that is often hidden in everyday life.

A sincere thank you goes to all the women who participated in the survey, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews and shared their opinions and personal experiences. Without their trust, this study would not have been possible.

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