

21st of November 2025

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, IN AND OUTSIDE THE FAMILY

## FIRST RESULTS 2025

The Survey on Violence Against Women – called “Women’s Safety” – is the data collection tool that, through interviews with a representative sample of women, makes it possible to estimate the number of victims of male violence, including experiences that were never reported to the authorities (the “hidden” part of violence).

It is an internationally harmonized survey that produces data comparable at the European level and is the result of cooperation with the Department for Equal Opportunities (DPO) at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, based on the 2017 Istat–DPO Agreement. It is required by Law 53/2022 on Statistical provisions for measuring violence against women (Art. 2), as well as by the Istanbul Convention (2011) and by EU Directive 2024/1385 of the European Parliament and the Council of 14 May 2024 on combating violence against women and domestic violence (Art. 44).

Istat has already carried out the Survey on Violence Against Women in 2006 and 2014. The third edition is still ongoing for the section involving foreign women, who are considered better interviewed in person due to their specific linguistic and cultural situations. Italian citizens, on the other hand—around 17,500 women aged 16 to 75—were interviewed by phone between March and August 2025. For comparison with the previous survey conducted in 2014, some of the data presented refer to the 16–70 age group.

This report provides an overview of the preliminary estimates obtained from the survey currently underway, while the full results will be released in 2026, once the interviews with foreign women have been completed.

### Main Findings

- About 6.4 million Italian women (31.9%) aged 16 to 75 have experienced at least one physical or sexual violence during their lifetime (from age 16 onwards). 18.8% have suffered physical violence and 23.4% sexual violence; among the latter, 5.7% of women have been raped or subjected to attempted rape.
- 26.5% of women have experienced physical or sexual violence from relatives, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, or strangers.
- Among women who currently have a partner or have had one in the past, 12.6% have been victims of physical or sexual violence within the couple. Women also experience psychological violence (17.9%) and economic violence (6.6%) from their partners.
- In 2025, the number of victims of physical or sexual violence in the five years preceding the interview is essentially stable compared to the same data recorded in 2014.
- The significant increases in violence experienced by very young women (16–24 years) and female students do not change the overall average.
- The picture provided by the survey results highlights a greater awareness of risks among women; indeed, there is a decrease in experiences of violence from their current partner, whether physical, sexual, psychological, or economic.
- Greater awareness is also reflected in the increase of victims who consider what they experienced a crime and in those who seek help from anti-violence centers and specialized services, especially for violence suffered at the hands of partners.
- Reporting behaviors, however, remain stable (10.5% of victims reported violence by partners or ex-partners in the last five years), while the number of violent incidents causing injuries or posing a threat to life has decreased.

## At least one physical or sexual assault for 31.9% of women aged 16–75

About 6.4 million women (31.9%) have experienced at least one physical or sexual assault since the age of 16. Among them, 18.8% (about 3.76 million) experienced physical violence, and 23.4% experienced sexual violence (Table 1.).

The forms of violence differ in severity: physical violence ranges from threats to attempted strangulation or suffocation, while sexual violence includes unwanted physical contact (19.2%) up to rape or attempted rape (5.7%).

Women experience violence both within a relationship (12.6% of women who have or had a partner) and outside of it (26.5% of women), committed by other men such as relatives, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, or strangers.

Ex-partners are the main perpetrators of physical or sexual violence: this happens to 18.9% of women who had an ex-partner at the time of the interview.

Women who are currently in a relationship experienced violence from their husband, cohabiting partner, or boyfriend in 2.8% of cases. Among women who have both an ex-partner and a current partner, 0.3% suffered violence from both.

Around 2.441 million women have experienced physical violence or threats from relatives, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, or strangers — 12.2% of women aged 16 to 75. Also, 20.8% of women (about 4.17 million) have experienced at least one form of sexual violence. Among these, more than 3.8 million (19.2% of women) suffered unwanted sexual touching. The most serious forms — rape or attempted rape — affected about 705,500 women, equal to 3.5%.

Within a current relationship, about 323,530 women experience physical abuse (2.2% of women with a partner), and 146,271 experience sexual violence (1%), including almost 39,000 cases of rape or attempted rape.

About 1.720 million women have experienced physical violence from an ex-partner (15.9% of women with an ex). Sexual violence from ex-partners affected almost 950,000 women (8.7% of those who have had a partner in the past).

Violence by an ex-partner includes acts committed during the relationship as well as after it ended. However, in most cases (84.1%), the violence occurred during the relationship.

It should also be noted that among women who had a violent partner at the time of the interview, almost half (45.9%) left the relationship because of the violence, while for another 26.3% violence was only one of the reasons for the separation.

**TABLE 1. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 75 WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE, BY TYPE OF PERPETRATOR (\*).** Year 2025, absolute values and per 100 women with the same characteristics.

TYPE OF VIOLENCE	Current Partner(a)		Former partner (b)		Current or Former partner (c)		Non partner (d)		Total (d)	
	Absolute value	%	Absolute value	%	Absolute value	%	Absolute value	%	Absolute value	%
Physical or sexual violence	417,194	2.8	2,049,537	18.9	2,401,241	12.6	5,307,197	26.5	6,393,143	31.9
Physical violence	323,530	2.2	1,719,868	15.9	2,007,812	10.5	2,441,449	12.2	3,764,308	18.8
Sexual violence (e)	146,271	1.0	946,854	8.7	1,072,503	5.6	4,173,548	20.8	4,689,490	23.4
Of which: sexual harassment involving physical contact	-		-		-		3,844,574	19.2	-	-
Rape or attempted rape	38,983	0.3	518,316	4.8	557,299	2.9	705,503	3.5	1,146,891	5.7
Rape	36,514	0.3	456,672	4.2	493,187	2.6	345,370	1.7	773,225	3.9
Attempted rape	13,115	0.1	186,333	1.7	199,448	1.1	456,112	2.3	622,347	3.1
Psychological violence (f)	518,793	3.5	3,024,695	27.9	3,413,023	17.9	-	-	-	-
Economic violence (f)	164,613	1.1	1,103,322	10.2	1,248,618	6.6	-	-	-	-
Stalking	52,407	0.4	1,597,684	14.7	1,623,894	8.5	1,798,960	9.0	3,108,637	15.5

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2025

(\*) Women were asked to report episodes that occurred from the age of 16 onwards. (a) per 100 Italian women who currently have a partner; (b) per 100 Italian women who have a former partner; (c) per 100 Italian women with a current or former partner; (d) per 100 Italian women aged 16 to 75; (e) including rape and attempted rape; (f) forms recorded only for current and former partners.

6.6% of women have experienced violence both within the couple and from other men, and about one third have suffered both physical and sexual violence.

11.0% of women aged 16–75 have been threatened with physical harm; 10.5% have been pushed, grabbed, pulled, had their arm twisted, or had their hair pulled.

5.6% have been hit with objects, and a similar share have been slapped, kicked, punched, or bitten.

More severe forms of physical violence are less common, such as the use or threat of using a gun or knife (1.6%), or attempted strangulation, suffocation, or burning (also 1.6%).

Regarding sexual violence, unwanted touching is the most common, followed by unwanted sexual intercourse (4.5%), rape (3.9%), attempted rape (3.1%), and degrading or humiliating sexual acts (1.6%).

To a lesser extent, women have been forced to have sexual intercourse when they were not able to refuse or resist (1%), have been forced or nearly forced to have sexual activity with other people (0.4%), or have suffered other forms of sexual violence (0.2%).

In addition to physical and sexual violence, women also experience *stalking*<sup>1</sup>, mainly by ex-partners at the time of or after separation (14.7%), as well as by other perpetrators outside of a relationship (9%).

For women who are or have been in a couple, psychological violence (17.9%) and economic violence (6.6%) must also be considered.

## Rapes mainly committed by partners

Current and former partners are responsible for the highest share of all forms of physical violence, with rates above 50% (except for threats), as well as for some types of sexual violence such as rape and unwanted sexual intercourse that women endure because they are afraid of the consequences. In fact, 63.8% of rapes are committed by partners (59.1% by ex-partners, 4.7% by the current partner), 19.4% by acquaintance, and 10.9% by friends. Only 6.9% are committed by strangers (Table 2). As for attempted rapes, besides those committed by ex-partners (29.9%), they are more often perpetrated by acquaintances (24.1%), friends (13.4%), and strangers (17.2%).

In 2025, for the first time, a type of rape was recorded that is already recognized internationally: situations in which the victim is unable to refuse or resist because she has been drugged or is under the influence of alcohol. This affects 1% of women and is mainly connected to ex-partners (38.9%), acquaintances (35.3%), friends (23.4%), and strangers (8.3%).

19.2% of women have experienced sexual harassment. In 58.7% of these cases, the perpetrator was a stranger, and in 19.5% it was an acquaintance.

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<sup>1</sup> Decree Law 11/2009 (the so-called “Security Decree”), converted into Law 38/2009 and recently amended by Law No. 69/2019 (“Red Code”), defines stalking as repeated acts of harassment over time that are capable of causing anxiety and fear in the victim, to the point of affecting their daily habits.

**TABLE 2. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 75 WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE, BY TYPE OF PERPETRATOR AND FORMS OF (\*). Year 2025, values per 100 women and per 100 forms of the same type (a).**

FORMS OF VIOLENCE	Per 100 women	Partner or former partner	Partner	Former partner	Relative	Acquaintance	Friend	Family friend	Colleague / Supervisor	Stranger	Other	Perpetrator not specified
		PER 100 VIOLENZE DELLO STESSO TIPO										
Threatened with physical assault	11.0	48.0	6.8	42.0	16.2	14.8	6.0	0.4	8.0	18.9	0.3	0.8
Hit with an object or had something thrown	5.6	57.7	8.7	49.7	13.4	7.6	8.7	0.1	9.3	10.4	0.2	1.9
Pushed, grabbed, shaken, arm twisted, hair pulled	10.6	62.3	8.3	54.8	10.0	12.5	5.7	0.2	4.4	14.9	0.3	0.9
Slapped, kicked or punched, bitten	5.6	74.5	8.9	65.6	11.2	3.7	4.7	0.2	2.5	4.3	0.3	1.3
Attempted to strangle, suffocate or burn	1.6	75.4	5.6	69.9	7.7	6.8	6.1	0.6	1.8	2.8	0.3	0.3
Used or threatened to use a gun or a knife	1.6	56.2	3.7	52.5	10.0	8.8	1.5	0.4	6.8	16.8	0.0	0.6
Physical violence in another way	1.4	17.2	0.6	16.7	14.5	20.0	10.7	0.3	13.1	24.2	0.7	2.6
Rape	3.9	63.8	4.7	59.1	3.4	19.4	10.9	0.9	4.1	6.9	0.9	0.4
Attempted rape	3.1	32.0	2.1	29.9	4.1	24.1	13.4	2.1	9.8	17.2	3.3	0.5
Sexual violence in another way	0.2	58.3	1.4	56.8	3.7	12.8	3.0	0.0	1.9	15.7	7.8	0.0
Forced to have sexual intercourse with other people	0.4	48.9	3.1	46.1	1.6	7.4	16.8	0.0	10.5	19.4	4.8	0.0
Degrading or humiliating sexual acts	1.5	100.0	6.0	94.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Unwanted sexual intercourse experienced as violence	4.5	87.3	13.9	75.6	0.5	8.3	6.7	0.2	2.4	1.6	0.1	0.5
Sexual intercourse when unable to resist	1.0	39.4	0.5	38.9	0.0	35.3	23.3	0.0	1.8	8.3	1.2	0.0
Physical sexual harassment	19.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	19.5	7.4	1.4	17.0	58.7	1.8	0.2

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2025

(\*) Women were asked to report episodes that happened to them starting from the age of 16.

(a) Percentages are calculated per 100 cases of the same type of violence. The total exceeds 100 because the same act of violence may be committed by more than one perpetrator.

## Very high hidden violence and perception of danger

It can be said that violence is still highly hidden. Among women who have experienced more than one form of violence in their lives, committed by any perpetrator, only 13.3% (around 537,000 women) reported at least one of the physical or sexual assaults they suffered.

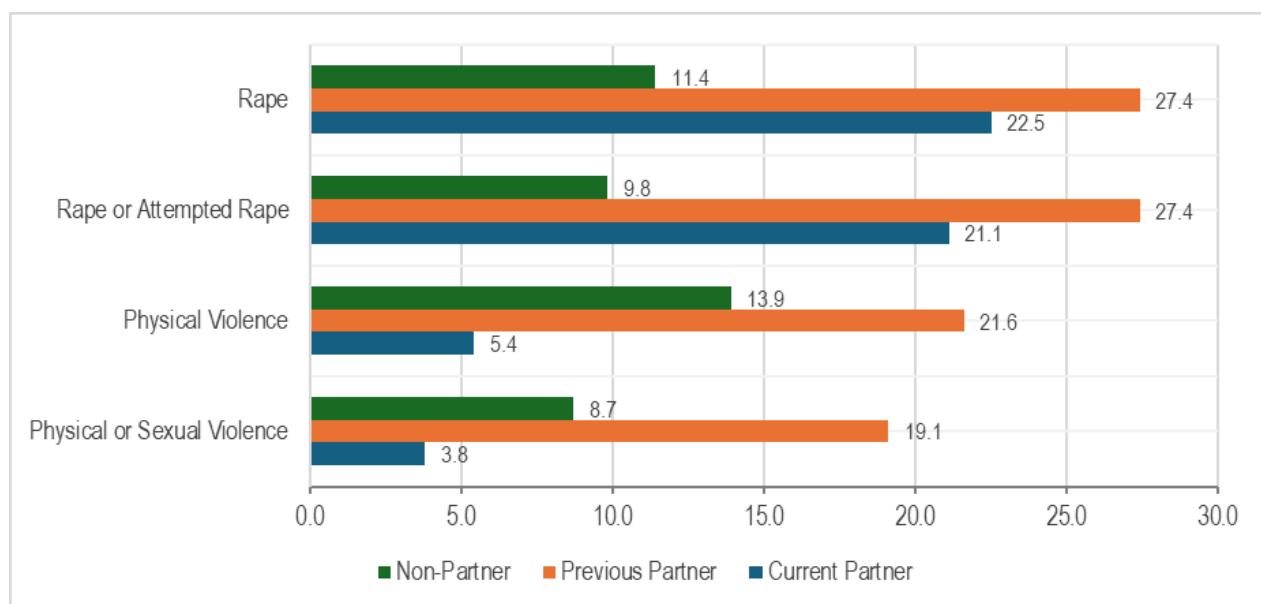
Reporting rates are especially low for physical or sexual violence committed by the current partner (about 9,800 victims, 3.8% of women with a current partner). Violence committed by ex-partners is reported more often (about 286,000 cases, 19.1% of victims of this type of violence), as well as rapes — the most severe forms of sexual violence (Figure 1).

Violence within a couple usually follows an escalation, in which sexual violence represents the most severe stage. For this reason, the higher frequency of reporting this type of violence is linked not only to its seriousness, but also to the fact that the violence tends to continue over time within the relationship.

The likelihood of reporting violence committed by ex-partners increases with the duration of the abuse and reaches 40% when it has lasted for more than 10 years. The same trend applies to current partners, except in cases where the violence has continued for many years, where reporting is lower.

These are particularly serious forms of violence. Considering “fear for one’s life” as an indicator of the severity of the episode, this condition affects between one fifth and almost half of the cases: 46.8% of women abused by an ex-partner felt their life was in danger, and this rises to 55.6% among those who experienced rape or attempted rape. The same happens for 21.3% of women abused by their current partner and 25.4% of those abused by men outside a relationship, again with peaks in cases of physical violence and especially rapes.

**FIGURE 1. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 75 WHO REPORTED THE VIOLENCE THEY EXPERIENCED (\*), BY SELECTED FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND TYPE OF PERPETRATOR.** Year 2025, per 100 victims of the same type of violence committed by the same perpetrator.



(\*) Women were asked to report incidents that happened to them from the age of 16 onward.

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2025

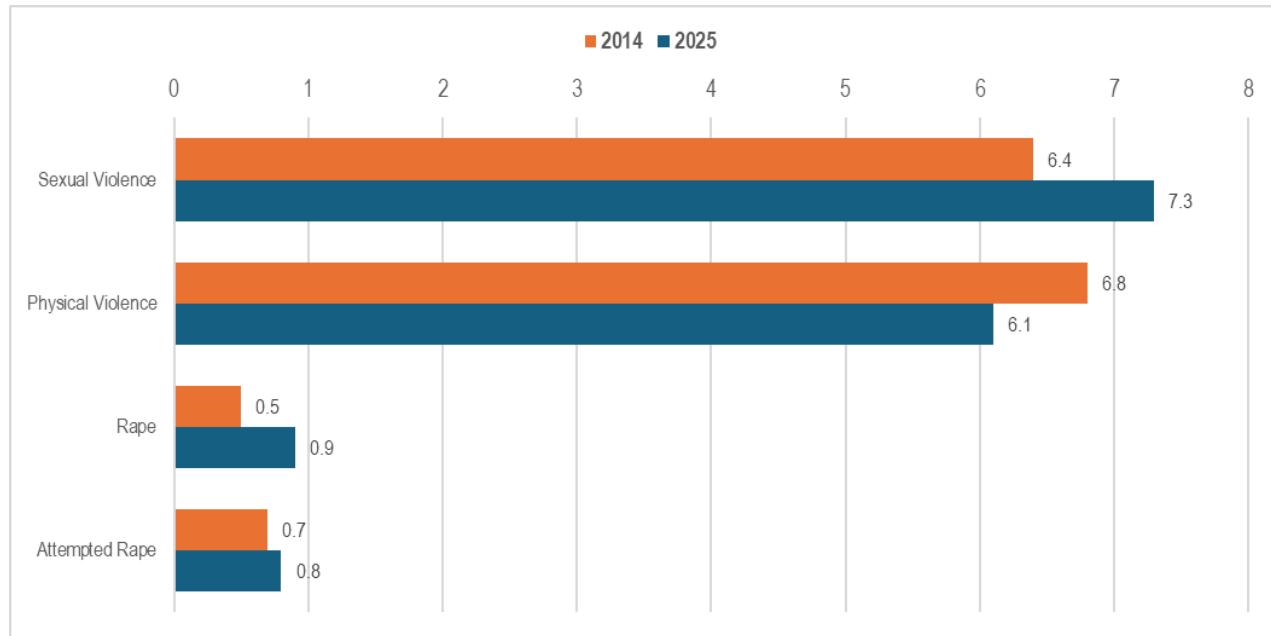
## Forms of violence stable over time

To understand how violence against women has changed over time, data on violence experienced by women in the five years before the 2025 interview were compared with the same data collected in the 2014 survey. The comparison considers Italian women aged 16–70, in order to ensure full comparability between the two surveys.

About 11% of women experienced physical or sexual violence in the five years before the interview (Table 3), compared to 11.2% in 2014 — a basically stable figure.

The data show an increase in sexual violence (Figure 2) in the last five years (from 6.4% to 7.3%) and a slight decrease in the share of women who suffered physical violence (from 6.8% to 6.1%).

**FIGURE 2. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 70 WHO EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE FIVE YEARS PRECEDING THE INTERVIEW, BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE.** Years 2014 and 2025, per 100 women.



Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2025

A decrease can also be seen in violence committed by the partner the woman lives with, from 2.8% to 1.6%. This decrease concerns all forms of violence, both physical and sexual.

Violence outside the couple affects 8.7% of women, compared to 7.8% in 2014.

**TABLE 3. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 70 WHO EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE FIVE YEARS PRECEDING THE INTERVIEW, BY TYPE OF PERPETRATOR AND TYPE OF VIOLENCE.** Years 2014 and 2025, absolute values and per 100 women with the same characteristics.

TYPE OF VIOLENCE	VIOLENCE PERPETRATED BY:																			
	Partner (a)				Former partner (b)				Partner or former partner (c)				Non partner (d)				Total (d)			
	2014		2025		2014		2025		2014		2025		2014		2025		2014		2025	
	%	A.V.	%	A.V.	%	A.V.	%	A.V.	%	A.V..	%	A.V..	%	A.V..	%	A.V..	%	A.V.	%	A.V.
Physical or sexual violence	2.8	421,550	1.6	224,668	4.9	477,127	4.5	461,636	4.7	883,805	3.9	680,713	7.8	1,514,226	8.7	1,618,532	11.2	2,180,428	11.0	2,033,723
Physical violence	2.2	324,281	1.2	162,465	4.0	392,883	3.1	318,333	3.8	710,515	2.7	478,069	3.7	719,804	4.1	759,810	6.8	1,326,059	6.1	1,133,743
Sexual violence	1.0	149,357	0.6	82,347	2.1	202,258	2.5	250,764	1.8	343,608	1.9	329,954	5.0	964,555	6.3	1,161,648	6.4	1,244,727	7.3	1,352,394
Rape or attempted rape	0.2	30,504	0.1	18,846	0.7	72,009	1.1	110,421	0.6	102,488	0.7	129,267	0.6	107,412	0.7	130,084	1.1	206,876	1.4	252,647
Rape	0.2	23,640	0.1	17,526	0.6	55,376	0.9	91,618	0.4	79,016	0.6	109,144	0.1	26,703	0.3	53,469	0.5	105,671	0.9	159,787
Attempted Rape	0.1	19,584	0.1	6,654	0.4	36,343	0.5	45,981	0.3	55,927	0.3	52,635	0.5	89,201	0.5	94,168	0.7	144,426	0.8	144,480

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2025

(a) per 100 Italian women who have a current partner; (b) per 100 Italian women who have a former partner; (c) per 100 Italian women with a current or former partner; (d) per 100 Italian women aged 16 to 70; (e) including rape and attempted rape.

Considering the individual forms of violence committed by ex-partners, cases of physical violence have decreased, while the number of rapes and attempted rapes has slightly increased (from 0.7% to 1.1% among women with an ex-partner). There are also few changes in the violence suffered outside the couple, with only a slight increase in less severe physical violence, such as threats and being hit with objects (Table 4).

**TABLE 4. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 70 WHO EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE FIVE YEARS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW, BY TYPE OF PERPETRATOR AND FORM OF VIOLENCE RECORDED.** Years 2014 and 2025, per 100 women with the same characteristics.

FORMS OF VIOLENCE	Partner or former partner (a)		Former partner (b)		partner (c)		Friends, colleagues, relatives, other acquaintances (d)		Stranger (d)		Total (d)	
	2014	2025	2014	2025	2014	2025	2014	2025	2014	2025	2014	2025
Threatened with being physically assaulted	2.2	1.3	2.4	1.6	1.2	0.6	1.3	1.4	0.5	0.8	3.9	3.3
Hit with an object or something was thrown	1.1	0.9	1.3	1.2	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.3	1.8	1.8
Pushed / grabbed / shaken / arm twisted / hair pulled	2.6	2.0	2.8	2.4	1.4	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.3	0.6	3.8	3.3
Slapped, kicked or punched, bitten	1.6	0.8	2.0	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.1
Attempted to strangle, suffocate or burn her	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4
Used or threatened to use a gun or a knife	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.3
Physical violence in other ways	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.5
Rape	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.9
Attempted rape	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.7	0.8
Sexual violence in other ways	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
Forced to have sexual intercourse with other people	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Degrading or humiliating sexual intercourse	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.1	-	-	-	-	0.4	0.4
Unwanted sexual intercourse experienced as violence	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.9	0.9	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	1.5	1.7
Sexual intercourse when she was unable to resist	-	0.2	-	0.3	-	0.0	-	0.2	-	0.0	-	0.3
Sexual physical harassment	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.4	1.9	2.9	2.6	4.3	5.6

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2014 and 2025

(a) per 100 Italian women who have a current partner; (b) per 100 Italian women who have a former partner; (c) per 100 Italian women with a current or former partner; (d) per 100 Italian women aged 16 to 70.

## Very young women are the most at risk

Considering the spread of physical and sexual violence in the last five years, single women are the most exposed to the risk of experiencing violence (22.4%, Table 5).

Single women are about twice as likely to suffer violence both from partners (7.9%, compared to the average value of 3.9% calculated for women with a current or former partner) and from non-partners (19.1% compared to the average of 8.7%).

They are followed by separated or divorced women (10.3%), who—although showing lower rates compared to 2014—experience higher levels of violence from partners (5.7%, compared to the average of 3.9%).

On the contrary, they experience less violence from non-partners (5.6% compared to the average of 8.7%), confirming their greater exposure to violence within a relationship.

Higher-than-average percentages are found among female students (36.2%) and younger women aged 16–24 (37.6%) and 25–34.

The same applies to university graduates (13.9%) and women with a high school diploma (12.2%).

Among female graduates aged 25–34, the percentage of violence in the last five years reaches 41.7%, while among diploma-holders aged 16–24 it reaches 48%.

The higher prevalence among women with higher education is also linked to a greater victimization by non-partners (10.8% compared to the 8.7% average), while educational differences do not appear for violence suffered within a couple.

Comparing 2025 data with 2014, there is a significant increase in violence suffered by very young women (16–

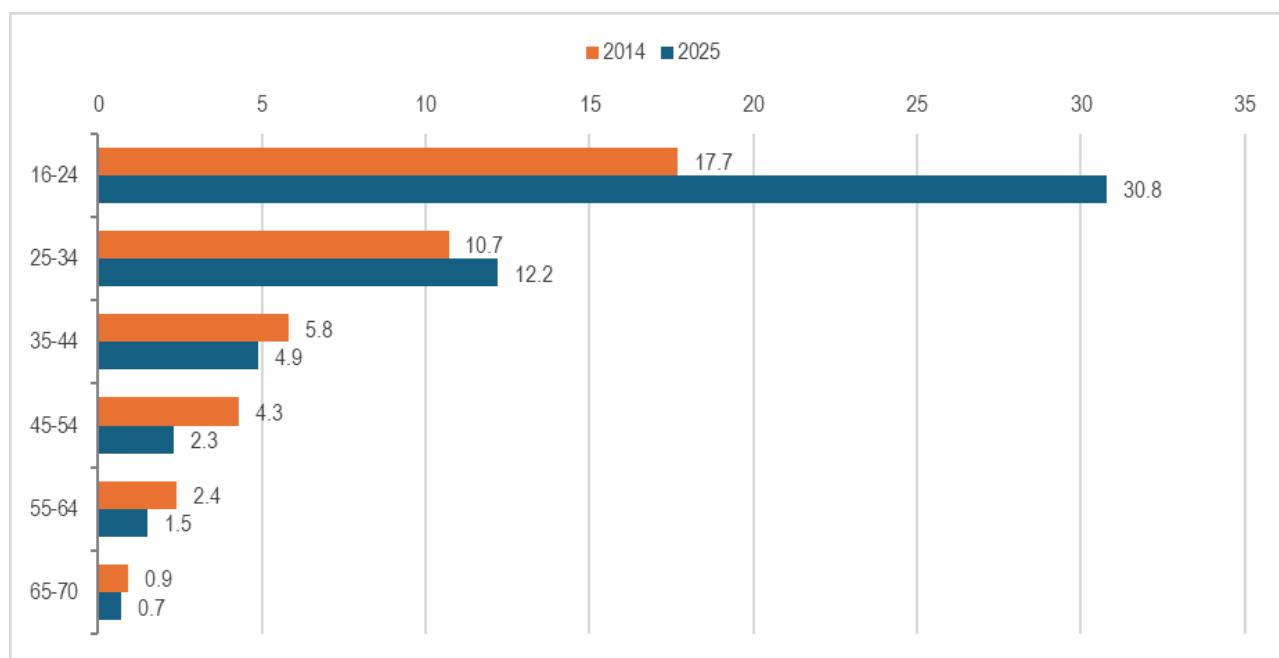
24 years old), rising from 28.4% to 37.6%, while other age groups show decreases or stability.

The increase is particularly strong for sexual violence, which goes up from 17.7% to 30.8% (Figure 3), while physical violence shows smaller variations.

Similar trends are also observed among female students.

The increase concerns all types of perpetrators, but it is more pronounced for violence committed by ex-partners, which rises from 5.7% in 2014 to 12.5% in 2025, and for violence committed by non-partners, which increases from 15.3% to 28.6% over the same period.

**FIGURE 3. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 70 WHO EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE FIVE YEARS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW, BY AGE OF THE VICTIM.** Years 2014 and 2025, per 100 women with the same characteristics.



Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2025

As with the youngest women, the increase is particularly driven by sexual violence, which rises from 16.9% to 29.1%. There is a significant growth both in violence committed by ex-partners (from 5.3% to 11.5% of female students with an ex-partner) and in violence occurring outside the couple (from 15.2% to 27.4% of women).

Overall, both among the youngest women and among students, there is a higher vulnerability to sexual violence, coming from both within the relationship and from external contexts.

**TABLE 5. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 70 WHO EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE IN THE FIVE YEARS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW, BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VICTIMS.** Years 2014 and 2025, absolute values and per 100 women with the same characteristics.

WOMEN'S CHARACTERISTICS	Physical or Sexual Violence		Physical Violence		Sexual Violence	
	2014	2025	2014	2025	2014	2025
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>						
Single	20.7	22.4	12.4	11.5	12.6	16.5
Married	6.1	3.5	3.9	2.3	3.1	1.6
Separated / Divorced	16.0	10.3	9.9	7.8	9.2	4.7
Widowed	3.5	0.9	2.0	0.8	1.6	0.1
<b>AGE</b>						
16-24	28.4	37.6	17.2	18.8	17.7	30.8
25-34	18.6	18.2	11.2	9.2	10.7	12.2
35-44	10.1	9.5	6.6	6.1	5.8	4.9
45-54	7.9	5.4	4.5	4.0	4.3	2.3
55-64	5.3	3.4	3.2	2.2	2.4	1.5
65-70	1.9	1.6	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.7
<b>EDUCATION LEVEL</b>						
Elementary / No diploma	2.8	2.3	1.8	1.6	1.3	1.0
Lower secondary school	10.3	8.2	4.9	3.7	5.7	5.8
Upper secondary school	12.9	12.2	6.7	5.6	7.4	8.2
Post-secondary	15.6	13.9	7.4	6.5	9.4	8.6
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS / PROFESSION</b>						
Managers / Business owners / Professionals	15.9	11.9	9.7	7.2	8.0	7.1
Executives / Office workers	12.5	10.5	8.0	6.1	6.8	6.2
Factory workers / Similar	10.8	9.8	7.1	4.6	5.0	7.0
Self-employed / Assistants	5.3	3.5	3.4	1.8	3.5	2.0
Looking for work	17.7	14.5	9.8	9.6	11.3	9.2
Housewives	4.5	3.7	2.6	2.4	2.7	1.6
Students	26.5	36.2	15.2	18.1	16.9	29.1
Retired	3.5	1.1	2.3	0.7	1.3	0.4
Other inactive	4.8	7.4	4.4	4.8	2.1	3.2
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL AREA</b>						
North-West	10.6	10.8	5.8	5.6	6.6	7.3
North-East	10.3	12.2	5.9	6.6	6.2	8.2
Centre	12.7	12.4	8.9	7.7	5.9	7.8
South	12.4	10.0	7.2	5.7	7.3	6.9
Islands	9.0	9.2	5.9	4.7	5.2	5.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>7.3</b>

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2014 and 2025

Considering the territorial distribution, violence experienced in the last five years is more common among women living in the North-East and the Center of Italy. For violence committed by non-partners, the highest rates are found among residents in the North-East (10.1%), the Center (9.7%), the North-West (9.1%), and metropolitan areas (10.1%).

Violence by current partners is more common in the South and the Center (2.0% and 1.8%, respectively), as is violence by ex-partners (4.9% and 4.7%, respectively).

## Women with health problems have experienced more violence

Women who have physical problems (they say they feel bad or very bad, have limitations in personal autonomy, or suffer from chronic illnesses) amount to 6.5 million (32.5% of women aged 16–70). Among them, 36.1% report having suffered physical or sexual violence (about 2.35 million), a higher percentage than the general average (31.9%).

Physical or sexual violence is more common among women who say they feel bad or very bad (38.8%, 332,783), those with chronic illnesses (37.1%, 2,109,160), and those with severe limitations (39.4%, 230,074). However, when considering violence experienced in the last five years, the rate is lower among women with health problems (9.5%, 540,560 women, compared with the 11% overall rate). About 60,000 victims are in poor health, about 39,000 have severe limitations, and about 479,000 report chronic illnesses.

## Growing awareness but no increase in reporting violence

The severity of violence suffered by partners or ex-partners has decreased. The share of victims reporting injuries linked to the most recent episode is 29.8%, compared to 40% in 2014 (Table 6), 28.9% felt their lives were in danger, while the rate was 33.4% in the five years before 2014.

However, victims' perception of the seriousness of the violence has changed: 82.3% consider the episode very or quite serious, compared with 77.7% in 2014. This increase may be linked to greater awareness of the harm they experienced.

Awareness also appears in other collected data: the share of victims who consider partner violence a crime has risen from 30.1% to 36.3%. Requests for help from anti-violence centres and other specialised services have doubled (from 4.4% in 2014 to 8.7% in 2025). This result is consistent with data from other sources about women's protection, such as calls to the national helpline 1522 (phone number against violence and stalking)<sup>2</sup> and surveys on the services provided by anti-violence centres<sup>3</sup>.

However, the number of reported crimes remains stable: compared with 2014, the share of women who report partner violence has not increased (around 10% for episodes in the last five years, about 58,000 women). Sharing experiences with others has not increased either.

Among victims of partner violence, 22.5% have never spoken to anyone about the violence (they talked about it for the first time during the interview), and this percentage rises to 37.8% for women who are still living with the violent partner.

Compared to 2014, satisfaction with the police has decreased (from 48.7% to 38.2%) among those who reported partner violence.

Among the women who contact the police, many believe that the intervention could be more effective: 55.1% want stronger actions against the offender, 37.7% ask for more immediate and concrete help, 21.3% want more information, and 4.2% hope for quicker intervention.

Furthermore, 29% want their complaint to be taken more seriously and to receive more attentive support; 23.4% ask for protection and help to leave home; and 44.6% believe that the violent person should be removed from the home.

In general, women agree on the importance of being referred to an anti-violence centre or a shelter, considering it essential support that the police should always provide.

<sup>2</sup> For more information see: <https://www.istat.it/statistiche-per-temi/focus/violenza-sulle-donne/la-fuoriuscita-dalla-violenza/numero-di-pubblica-utilita-1522/>, <https://www.istat.it/tavole-di-dati/il-numero-di-pubblica-utilita-1522-i-trimestre-2025/>.

<sup>3</sup> For more information see: <https://www.istat.it/statistiche-per-temi/focus/violenza-sulle-donne/la-fuoriuscita-dalla-violenza/centri-antiviolenza-e-case-rifugio/>, <https://www.istat.it/comunicato-stampa/le-case-rifugio-e-le-strutture-residenziali-non-specializzate-per-le-vittime-di-violenza-anno-2023/>.

The trend of violence experienced in the last five years outside the couple is similar to what was observed for violence within couples: the percentage of victims who consider what they suffered as a crime has increased (from 28.6% to 31.9%). There is also a slight increase in the number of women who go to anti-violence centres, who report the violence (from 6.7% to 7.2%), or who talk to someone about what happened.

Most women who have experienced violence tend to confide within their family or circle of friends: 54.6% talk to friends, neighbours, or classmates, 31.3% to a family member, and 19.3% to their partner.

Only a small minority, 3.2%, choose to seek help outside their personal network, such as from lawyers, judges, or the police.

The seriousness of violence suffered outside the couple — committed by relatives, friends, acquaintances, or even strangers — shows a slight increase: injuries are present in 24.4% of the episodes, compared with 21.2% in 2014. Most injuries are bruises (85% of cases), followed by cuts, scratches, burns or similar wounds (14.5%), while 1.1% of victims suffered fractures.

**TABLE 6. ITALIAN WOMEN AGED 16 TO 70 WHO IN THE FIVE YEARS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY A MAN, BY CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VIOLENCE AND TYPE OF PERPETRATOR.** Years 2014 and 2025, absolute numbers and per 100 victims with the same characteristics

CHARACTERISTICS OF VIOLENCE	PARTNER OR EX PARTNER				NON PARTNER			
	2014		2025		2014		2025	
	%	V.A.	%	V.A.	%	V.A.	%	V.A.
<b>Has injuries</b>	40.1	299,457	29.8	163,503	21.2	108,575	24.4	107,693
<b>Was afraid her life was in danger</b>	33.4	249,101	28.9	158,542	21.3	314,905	20.4	326,942
<b>The episode was very serious</b>	43.0	320,802	45.5	249,486	27.1	399,865	22.9	367,310
<b>The episode was fairly serious</b>	34.7	258,836	36.8	201,919	40.4	597,437	44.0	706,251
<b>Considers the episode she suffered: a crime</b>	30.1	224,932	36.3	199,257	28.6	422,466	31.9	512,261
<b>Considers the episode she suffered: something wrong but not a crime</b>	49.2	366,844	53.1	291,178	55.0	813,094	56.3	903,520
<b>Considers the episode she suffered: just something that happened</b>	19.5	145,518	9.7	53,246	14.5	213,852	11.2	180,210
<b>Talked to someone about the violence she suffered</b>	76.4	570,212	76.7	420,958	78.3	1,156,531	85.5	1,372,031
<b>Did not talk to anyone</b>	22.4	167,242	22.5	123,578	21.1	311,099	14.2	228,265
<b>Went to anti-violence centres (a)</b>	4.4	32,682	8.7	47,766	0.8	11,595	1.4	21,937
<b>Reported to the police (a)</b>	11.2	83,569	10.5	57,865	6.7	99,374	7.2	115,674
<b>SATISFACTION WITH HOW THE LAW ENFORCEMENT HANDLED THE CASE</b>								
<b>Very satisfied</b>	30.1	17,393	12.6	3,975	29.6	15,884	26.4	19,972
<b>Fairly satisfied</b>	18.6	10,771	25.6	8,062	31.1	16,702	32.4	24,472
<b>Not very satisfied</b>	25.2	14,582	26.9	8,479	21.3	11,438	28.9	21,882
<b>Not at all satisfied</b>	26.0	15,039	35.0	11,025	15.5	8,327	12.3	9,316

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety, 2025

(a) In the case of violence by a partner or ex-partner, the data also refer to other episodes before the most recent one.

## Partner violence is pervasive

Violence from a partner, both physical and sexual, is marked by its seriousness and long duration. Among women aged 16–75 who suffer repeated violence from their current partner (about 255,000), 19.2% report episodes lasting more than 10 years and 16.4% for more than five years. Even among victims of repeated violence by an ex-partner (about 1,413,000), the duration is often long: 21.9% report episodes lasting over five years.

In many cases, the violence causes significant physical consequences (about 718,000 women injured during their lifetime): 17.9% had to go to the emergency room due to violence suffered during the relationship, 17.4% were hospitalised, and 4.4% had to stop working. However, psychological and economic violence also makes daily life more difficult, as it keeps women in a condition of dependence and subordination.

As a result of repeated physical or sexual violence from partners (current or former), more than half of the victims report loss of confidence and self-esteem (54.8%).

Other very common consequences include anxiety, phobias and panic attacks (48.4%), feelings of despair and helplessness (44.4%), sleep and eating disorders (43.6%), depression (31.6%), difficulty concentrating and memory loss (26.4%), recurring physical pain (18.0%), self-harm or suicidal thoughts (11.7%), and difficulties in caring for children (10.7%).

## Psychological violence is decreasing

According to the 2025 survey, 17.9% of Italian women aged 16–75 have suffered psychological violence in a relationship. In particular, 3.5% of women currently in a couple experience psychological violence from their partner, while 27.9% have suffered it from an ex-partner (See Table 1).

Psychological violence from a current partner is more common in the South (5.0% of women in a couple, compared with an average of 3.5%), and less common in the North-West (2.6%).

It is also more frequent among women aged 35–54 (4.2% for those aged 35–44 and 4.0% for 45–54), among women looking for a job (5.5%) and housewives (4.3%), among those who do not consider themselves economically independent (4.6%), and among women with health problems (8.3%) or chronic illnesses or limitations in daily activities.

On the contrary, it is less common among women with a university degree. Psychological violence includes many situations and everyday dynamics that show an imbalance of power. These may lead to serious forms of isolation<sup>4</sup> (10.6%), control (12.6%)<sup>5</sup>, devaluation and verbal aggression (9.6%)<sup>6</sup>, and even threats and intimidation (8.8%)<sup>7</sup>.

Physical and sexual violence is very often combined with psychological violence: among women currently in a relationship, 1.3% have suffered both physical or sexual violence and psychological violence, while 2.2% have experienced only the latter.

This overlap is even stronger in cases involving ex-partners: 15.2% of women with an ex-partner report episodes of both psychological and physical or sexual violence, while 12.7% have suffered only psychological violence.

Among women with ex-partners and children, 5.5% report being threatened by the ex—during or after separation—that he would try to remove custody of the children, and 4.5% say he threatened to take the children away.

Among women who experience psychological violence from a current partner, 3.2% say they face restrictions in decisions about family planning, and 1.8% must ask for permission to access medical care—forms of psychological violence recorded for the first time in 2025.

These percentages increase when psychological violence comes from an ex-partner: 6.4% report restrictions on family planning, and a similar share must ask for permission to see a doctor.

Among victims of psychological violence from an ex, 21% say they were afraid to express their own opinions in his presence, confirming a climate of control and subordination.

Compared with the 2014 survey, considering only women aged 16–70, psychological violence has decreased from 21.6% to 18.7%, after already being much lower than in 2006 (the first edition of the survey).

<sup>4</sup> Forms of isolation include restrictions on contact with one's family of origin or friends, as well as preventing or attempting to prevent someone from studying.

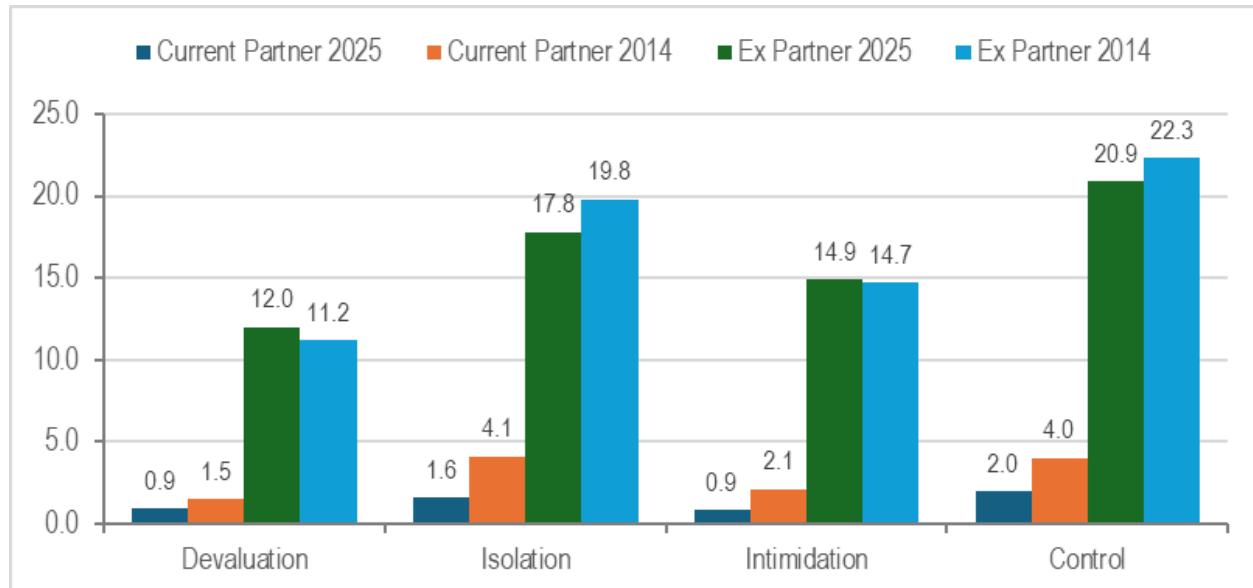
<sup>5</sup> Among the forms of control are the partner's imposition of how to dress or style one's hair, being followed and spied on, the inability to go out alone, and even actual confinement.

<sup>6</sup> Among the forms of devaluation and verbal violence are situations involving humiliation, insults, and denigration, even in public; criticism of physical appearance and of how the partner takes care of the home and children; and angry reactions if the woman talks to other men.

<sup>7</sup> Among the forms of intimidation are real acts of blackmail, such as taking the children away, threats to harm the children, loved ones, objects, or animals, as well as threats of suicide.

Among women aged 16–70 currently in a couple, the different forms of psychological violence are decreasing, especially isolation (–2.5 percentage points) and control (–2 points) from the current partner (Figure 4).

**FIGURE 4. WOMEN AGED 16 TO 70 WHO EXPERIENCED PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE BY THEIR CURRENT PARTNER OR EX-PARTNER, BY TYPE.** Years 2014 and 2025, values per 100 women with the same characteristics



Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety 2025

## Economic violence affects the ability to make decisions

Recent national and international debates have focused specifically on economic violence. Among women in a relationship in 2025, 1.1% (about 92,000 women) have experienced economic violence; the percentage rises to 1.3% among women who live with a husband or partner. Meanwhile, 10.2% of women experienced it from previous partners. Overall, considering both current and former partners, the rate is 6.6%.

“Economic violence” includes behaviours such as preventing women from knowing the family income (2.5%), from having a credit or debit card (1.9%), from using their own money (2.7%), from working (3.3%), and damaging their belongings or personal items (2.3%).

In addition to severe restrictions on financial autonomy, some women are excluded from decision-making processes on matters such as buying important household goods or planning home renovations.

Among couples (12,335,000 women aged 16–75 living with a partner—husbands or cohabiting partners), 79% decide always or almost always together. Another 6.4% of women say they make decisions alone, 2.4% say the partner mainly makes the economic decisions, and 12.9% report that it depends on the situation or type of expense.

These percentages are relatively small in absolute terms, but exclusion from decision-making increases significantly when economic violence is present: among women experiencing this type of violence, 18.4% do not participate in family economic decisions.

Among women who have suffered any kind of violence from an ex-partner, 27.1% say they cannot make economic decisions; this share rises to 57.5% when economic violence is also involved.

Economic independence is a key element of women's freedom and autonomy within the couple. However, 13.6% of women living with a partner say they do not consider themselves economically independent (Table 7).

Among them, vulnerability is particularly high: 24.3% do not take part in family economic decisions, and 42.4% report experiencing economic violence, confirming the close link between financial dependence and control or restrictions imposed by the partner.

Among women who suffer economic violence, more than half (53.6%) do not have their own income and rely on financial support from cohabiting family members — a condition that increases dependence and further reduces their chances of autonomy and of escaping violence.

**TABLE 7. SOME ECONOMIC-FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN LIVING WITH A PARTNER.** Year 2025, per 100 women living with a partner

	Has not experienced economic violence	Has experienced economic violence	Total
<b>Is supported by cohabiting family members / has no income</b>	28.7	53.6	29.0
<b>Does not consider herself economically independent</b>	13.2	42.4	13.6
<b>Does not decide on family economic/financial choices</b>	2.0	35.4	2.4

Source: Istat, Survey on Women's Safety 2025

## A high share of children still witness and suffer violence

There is also a link between pregnancy and violence<sup>8</sup>.

In Italy, among women who have repeatedly suffered physical or sexual violence from partners (current or former), 9.1% experienced it during pregnancy. For 65.8% of these women, the violence during pregnancy stayed at the same level as before; for 12.1% it decreased; for 6.9% it increased; and for 13.1% it began during pregnancy.

Among victims of partner violence (current or former), 35.4% have children, most of whom are minors (about 94%). In 62.1% of repeated episodes of violence, mothers report that their children witnessed the violence (17.8% rarely, 26.2% sometimes, 18.1% often), and that children directly suffered violence in 19.6% of the cases (8.2% rarely, 5.5% sometimes, 5.9% often).

Women were asked whether they noticed any changes in their children as a result of witnessing or experiencing violence: 36.2% report no changes, while 40% report excessive anxiety or fear, 28% notice increased restlessness, and 18.6% report difficulties falling asleep or frequent night awakenings.

Additionally, 12.5% report aggressive behaviours (at home, at school, etc.), and around 11% report eating disorders (poor appetite, excessive appetite, or refusal of many foods) as well as school problems (difficulty concentrating, trouble doing homework, or lower academic performance).

Finally, 6.2% of women report episodes of nighttime enuresis in their children.

<sup>8</sup> Brewer J. E., Paulsen D.J. (1999), "A comparison of US and Canadian findings on uxoricide risk for women with children sired by previous partners", *Homicide Studies*, 3, 317-332.

Campbell J.C. (2001), "Abuse during pregnancy: A quintessential threat to maternal and child health – so when do we start to act?", *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 164, 1578 - 1579

Campbell J.C., Webster D., Koziol McLain J., Block C., Campbell D., Curry M. A., Gary F., Glass N., McFarlane J., Sachs C., Sharps P., Ulrich Y., Wilt S.A., Manganello J., Xu X., Schollenberger J., Frye V., Laughton K., (2003), "Risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships: Results from a multisite case control study", *American Journal of Public Health*, 93, 1089-97.

## GLOSSARY

**Physical sexual harassment:** Among sexual violence, physical sexual harassment includes physical contact against the woman's will (kissing, hugging, touching the breasts or other intimate parts) by any man who is not a partner. Verbal sexual harassment and indecent exposure are not included because they are not physical.

**Stalking:** It has been a criminal offence in Italy since February 2009 (Criminal Code, Article 612-bis). It refers to stalking behaviours that include harassment, threats, or actions that cause a state of anxiety and fear, or create a justified fear for one's own safety or the safety of loved ones, or force the victim to change their daily habits. The survey considers a range of actions that share characteristics of monitoring and control, attempts to seek contact and/or communication, and that cause concern and fear. These actions are repeated over time and are carried out against women by any person, male or female, including a current partner or a former partner, following or during the end of an intimate relationship.

**Rape:** A completed sexual assault involving penetration, including forms of sexual intercourse other than vaginal penetration (such as oral or anal sex, or penetration with fingers or objects of any material). In addition to sexual acts carried out under coercion (through force, threats, or abuse of authority), it also includes sexual acts that the woman experienced when she was unable to refuse or resist because she was under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**Attempted rape:** Attempted rape is sexual violence that was not completed (no penetration happened).

**Economic violence:** In the survey, among the forms of economic violence, particular attention is given to preventing a woman from working, from knowing the household income, from having a credit card or a debit card, from using her own money, and to the damage of personal belongings and property. Under Italian legislation, this type of violence may be linked to a number of criminal offences, such as the violation of family support obligations, failure to pay court-ordered spousal maintenance, criminal damage, misappropriation, and extortion.

**Physical violence:** In Italian legislation, physical violence can be linked to a range of criminal offences, such as assault, bodily injury, domestic abuse, and up to manslaughter and intentional homicide. Within the survey, physical violence includes any act of physical force carried out against a woman without her consent by any man, including her current or former partners; for example, slapping, punching, kicking or throwing objects, pushing, pulling, choking, or beating with hands or objects.

**Psychological violence:** It consists of multiple situations and everyday dynamics in which a power imbalance is present, including: humiliation, behavioural control, segregation strategies, and intimidation. Under Italian legislation, this form of violence may relate to a number of criminal offences, such as threats, coercion, forced abortion without the woman's consent, causing a state of incapacity through violence, violation of domicile, unlawful detention, and the abandonment of a minor or a person who is unable to care for themselves.

**Sexual violence:** Under Italian law, sexual violence refers to anyone who, through force, threats, or abuse of authority, forces another person to perform or undergo sexual acts (Criminal Code, Article 609-bis) and therefore includes rape and sexual harassment. The survey refers to all situations in which women are forced to perform or undergo various types of sexual acts against their will, by any man, including current or former partners. The following are considered: rape, attempted rape, sexual harassment, being forced to have sexual relations with other people, unwanted sexual intercourse, and sexual activities carried out out of fear of the consequences, as well as degrading and humiliating acts.

## METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

### Purpose of the Survey

The "Safety of Women" Survey analyses broad and complex phenomena that are very difficult to study, but whose understanding is essential for the development, at the institutional level, of policies and services needed to address them. The United Nations World Conference (Vienna, 1993) defines violence against women as: "...any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, forms of coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of personal liberty, whether occurring in private or public life."

Until the early 1990s, statistical institutes studied violence mainly through victimisation surveys, which collected information on all types of crime at the same time, from theft and attempted theft to robbery and other offences. In Italy, Istat also addressed sexual harassment and sexual violence within this framework, through a specific module included in the Multipurpose Survey on Citizens' Safety (editions 1997–1998, 2002, 2008–2009, 2015–2016, and 2022–2023). These surveys, designed to shed light on unreported crimes and on important aspects such as victims' characteristics and the dynamics of incidents, are useful tools for studying and understanding part of hidden crime. However, they are not sufficient to capture violence experienced by women at the hands of someone very close to them, such as a partner or former partner.

Building on these considerations, since 2001 the Department for Equal Opportunities at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Istat have signed an Agreement to conduct a dedicated survey with the primary objective of understanding the phenomenon of violence against women in Italy in all its different forms, in terms of prevalence and incidence, the characteristics of those involved, and the consequences for the victim. The first agreement, which led to the 2006 survey, was renewed in 2012 for the second edition of the Survey on Violence Against Women. In 2017, a new ongoing agreement was established for the latest edition of the survey.

The survey aims to detect and describe:

- the extent and characteristics of both non-domestic and domestic violence, including the number, dynamics, and specific features of the different episodes of violence;
- the period in which the violence occurred, for example over a lifetime, in the five years prior to the interview, or in the past 12 months;
- the characteristics of the victims, their reactions to the violent incident, and the physical, psychological, and economic consequences of the violence they suffered;
- the characteristics of the perpetrators, with particular attention to those who commit violence within the family;
- the incidence of unreported cases, i.e., the "dark figure" of violence, and the reasons why incidents are reported or not;
- the everyday life contexts in which these acts of violence occur;
- the dynamics of the event and the history of the couple's relationship in cases where violence is perpetrated within the family or by the woman's partner;
- possible risk and protective factors at both the individual and social levels;
- the social costs of violence, directly or indirectly affecting the woman and any children, the perpetrator, and society, measured through negative consequences such as the victim's inability to carry out normal daily activities, to work, or to access social and health services, as well as costs directly incurred to deal with the consequences of violence (medical or psychological treatment, material damage, legal costs), including some information related to potential costs linked to the judicial process;
- violence experienced before the age of 16.

## **Data Quality**

The survey of Italian women was conducted from March to July 2025 using the CATI technique (Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing) and involved approximately 17,500 women aged 16 to 75.

The data are representative at both regional level and by type of municipality.

Because the topic is particularly sensitive, special attention was given to all stages of the process. Quality monitoring was carried out daily, both by listening to calls and by analyzing quantitative indicators of the interviewers' performance. Women's cooperation was high and fully in line with previous surveys. For 65% of interviewers, it was very good, and for 28.1% it was good. For 4.3% it was sufficient, and only 2.5% of interviewers reported poor cooperation throughout the interview. More than 90% of women had no difficulty discussing violence. The interview break-off rate was 2.4%, and the refusal rate was 7.8%, fully consistent with refusal rates in similar surveys, such as the Citizens' Safety Survey.

Interviews were conducted from morning until 9 p.m., giving women the opportunity to choose the most convenient time to participate. Unlike the first survey (2006), only some phone numbers were initially available. The remaining numbers were provided directly by women selected from registry lists through a toll-free number or a dedicated web portal, after receiving a letter informing them of their selection for a statistical survey. Most interviews were conducted via mobile phone, which ensured a high level of confidentiality when discussing such personal and sensitive topics.

Special attention was given to interviewer training, which included both lectures and practical exercises, including role-playing (where participants simulate conditions similar to real-life situations, in this case the interviewers and interviewees). The survey design drew on the strengths and weaknesses of previous experiences, as well as debates and updates from similar international surveys.

### **The questionnaire**

To correctly record the number of physical and sexual violences that a respondent has experienced during the reference period, the so-called “screening” technique is used. This technique involves asking the respondent a set of questions about the type and number of violent behaviours experienced during a specific period, without immediately requesting further details. The screening technique focuses on enumerating events, encouraging the respondent to concentrate on their frequency rather than their description. Detailed information about the events is collected only afterwards, in dedicated follow-up sections, and concerns only the most recent event in chronological order, in order to provide an in-depth understanding of the most frequent and recent acts of violence.

The questions are designed to describe episodes, examples, and incidents of victimization that the respondent can identify with if she has experienced them. The methodological choice, also adopted in international research, was therefore not to use the terms “physical violence” or “sexual violence”, but to describe concrete acts and behaviours, making it easier for women to report the different types of violence they have experienced.

The level of detail and thoroughness with which women are asked about violence, presenting them with different possible situations, locations, and perpetrators, is a strategic choice to help victims recall events that may have occurred a long time ago, thereby reducing possible underestimation of the phenomenon. This underestimation can also occur because women may sometimes fail to recognize themselves as victims and may not have fully acknowledged the violence they have experienced, whereas they are more likely to recognize individual acts and incidents that actually occurred. To make women feel more comfortable and allow them to speak more freely about the violence they experienced, questions about the current partner were asked after the section on violence by other men, such as relatives, colleagues, friends, acquaintances, and strangers.

Physical and sexual violence is recorded in relation to different possible perpetrators using three separate screenings:

- The “Screening of violence experienced from a non-partner man” section is administered first to all women interviewed. It includes two sets of questions about physical and sexual violence by strangers, men known only by sight, friends, work colleagues, or relatives.
- The “Screening of violence experienced from the current partner” section is administered to women who are married, cohabiting, or in a relationship at the time of the interview.
- Finally, the “Screening of violence experienced from a former partner” section is administered to women who have previously had one or more marriages, cohabitations, or relationships.

The choice to use three separate screenings was considered strategic, first because it allows the woman to focus more precisely and at different times on violent events and experiences related to different perpetrators. Second, it allows the topic of partner violence to be addressed more gradually, at a later stage of the interview, when a relationship of cooperation and trust with the interviewer has likely already been established. Physical violence experienced before the age of 16 was recorded through two questions, and sexual violence through four questions. One question focused on humiliation and devaluation experienced within the family of origin.

Psychological and economic violence were recorded only in relation to the woman's partners. They are collected for both the current partner, if present, and any former partners. At the end of the screening section dedicated to partners, violence expressed as *stalking* is investigated. This is recorded with reference to both the woman's former partners (ex-husband, ex-cohabiting partner, ex-boyfriend) and the current partner, as well as any other person, male or female, even if not linked by any emotional relationship.

If the respondent has experienced multiple episodes of violence, only one in-depth follow-up is conducted on the most recent episode.

The in-depth section on the last episode includes the following content.

**In the case of a perpetrator other than the partner:** Context of the episode: age of the victim at the time of the incident, time of year and time of day when it occurred, location and country where it happened. Characteristics of the perpetrator: age, educational level, employment status, professional position, and economic activity. Dynamics of the episode: what happened, presence of other people involved, victim's reactions, perpetrator under the influence of alcohol or drugs, use of weapons, presence of other uninvolved people, victim's subjective feeling of danger to her life. Consequences of the violence and the victim's behaviour: whether she spoke to someone about the incident, who and after how long, injuries sustained, need for medical care, need to refrain from normal daily activities and/or work, pregnancies resulting from sexual violence, use of specialized facilities or services, psychological/psychiatric help sought, expenses incurred for medical and/or psychological treatment, for medication, for property damage, legal costs, perceived severity of the episode, possible use of medication or alcohol following the episode, changes in behaviour and/or attitudes. Interaction with law enforcement: whether the victim reported the incident and to whom, or reasons for not reporting; actions taken by law enforcement; whether the report led to charges and a conviction; victim's satisfaction with law enforcement's actions.

The in-depth section on violence by non-partners focuses, for the reasons mentioned above, on the most recent incident in chronological order. To avoid losing information about possible rapes not included in the in-depth report on the last incident, a specific supplementary report was included on non-partner rapes that were not the most recent episodes chronologically. This supplementary report covers some of the topics in the general in-depth report, such as reporting, whom the woman talks to about the violence, the location and perpetrator of the rape, and the consequences experienced.

**In the case of a partner perpetrator:** Dynamics of the episode: what happened, presence of other people involved, location where it occurred, triggering events or circumstances, victim's reactions, perpetrator under the influence of alcohol or drugs, use of weapons, victim's subjective feeling of danger to her life. Consequences of the violence and the victim's behaviour: whether she spoke to someone about the incident, who and after how long, injuries sustained, need for medical care, need to refrain from normal daily activities and/or work, pregnancies resulting from sexual violence, use of specialized facilities or services, psychological/psychiatric help sought, expenses incurred for medical and/or psychological treatment, medication, property damage, legal costs, perceived severity of the episode, possible use of medication or alcohol following the episode. Interaction with law enforcement: whether the victim reported the incident and to whom, or reasons for not reporting; actions taken by law enforcement; whether the report led to charges and a conviction; victim's satisfaction with law enforcement's actions. History of violence (when multiple episodes were committed by the same partner): number of episodes experienced, starting point, violence during pregnancy, children witnessing violence, children victims of violence, previous episodes in which the victim sustained injuries, previous reports to law enforcement, periods of separation from the partner due to violence, reasons for any reunions of the couple.

## For technical and methodological clarifications

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