

OSCE-LED SURVEY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

# WELL-BEING AND SAFETY OF WOMEN

**SERBIA**  
RESULTS REPORT



## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia



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# Background

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security organization, deals with a broad range of security-related challenges, including the protection of human rights and promotion of gender equality. Among the Organization's main areas of focus are fostering regional security co-operation, as well as conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict management. The OSCE comprises 57 participating States, covering a region that spans across all of Europe and includes the United States, Canada and Central Asia, as well as Mongolia. Through the work of the Secretariat, three specialized institutions and 16 field operations, the OSCE works to address numerous security challenges and assists participating States with the implementation of their comprehensive political commitments.

The OSCE recognizes violence against women and girls (VAWG)<sup>1</sup> as both a threat to individuals and a broader security concern, and it therefore sees preventing and combating VAWG as one of its priorities. VAWG is a persistent human rights violation that threatens the security and safety of countless women and girls all around the world. It affects not only their lives, hindering their full and equal participation in society, but also the lives of those who are close to them; it ultimately has a lasting impact on their health and well-being as well as their children, communities and society at large as well.

Gender inequality lies at the root of gender-based violence against women and girls. The OSCE plays a key role in working with national stakeholders to build their capacity to prevent gender-based violence and to protect survivors<sup>2</sup>. Under the slogan "Bringing Security Home", the OSCE has stressed that women and girls need to be safe both in public and at home, so that they can reach their full potential and contribute to political, economic and social development.

Violence against women and girls also occurs in times of conflict, and the OSCE commissioned this qualitative and quantitative study in order to shed light on the prevalence of different forms of VAWG in non-conflict and conflict-affected settings in selected OSCE participating States: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine. Research was also conducted in Kosovo<sup>3</sup>.

This study, the first such representative survey conducted in South-Eastern Europe or Eastern Europe to provide comparable data across the region, encompasses gender attitudes and the experiences of women from minority groups<sup>4</sup>. Its aim 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 of this research is to provide evidence for informed decision-making and advocacy at different levels and thereby contribute achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and to a reduction of VAW in the target regions, improved services for survivors and greater security for women.

<sup>1</sup> The terms "violence against women" (VAW) and "violence against women and girls" (VAWG), which are used interchangeably in this report, include physical, sexual and psychological violence by intimate partners and non-partners, as well as stalking and sexual harassment.

<sup>2</sup> This report uses the terms "survivor" and "victim" interchangeably.

<sup>3</sup> 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

<sup>4</sup> The questionnaire used in this study was based on, and is comparable to, the questionnaire used by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in the 28 EU member states in 2012.



# Executive summary

## Introduction

This report presents the findings from the OSCE's qualitative and quantitative study in Serbia on violence against women. Implemented in spring/summer 2018, the study involved:

- **15 expert interviews**, which provided an overview of issues related to VAW and of conflict-related acts of violence;
- A survey of a **representative sample of 2,023 women aged 18–74 living in Serbia** to establish the prevalence and consequences of violence using a multistage, stratified, random probability sample design;
- **Eight focus groups with women from various backgrounds**, such as coming from rural or urban areas or from minorities (Bosniak, Hungarian, Roma) or having experienced an armed conflict, about their attitudes towards VAW;
- **Four in-depth interviews** with women to review, in more detail, the impact of the violence they have experienced.

**More than a quarter personally know someone among their family and friends who has been subjected to violence against women**

**Following the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence, only 3% contacted a women's shelter and 1% a victim support organisation**

### Key findings

Violence against women in Serbia is of significant concern. Five out of six of the women surveyed think that VAW is common, and over a third think that it is very common. More than a quarter personally know someone among their family and friends who has been subjected to VAW, and a similar proportion know someone in their neighbourhood who has been a victim of VAW. Many have heard of services to help affected women (73% had heard of at least one of the three organisations asked about); however, few women have accessed those services – following the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence, only 3% contacted a women’s shelter and 1% a victim support organisation.

- Two in five of the women surveyed indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment at some point since the age of 15, and 18 % indicated that they had had such an experience in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Twenty-two per cent of women surveyed said that they had experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner since the age of 15, and 18 % of women who had had a previous partner disclosed having experienced one or more forms of such violence at the hands of a previous partner.
- Ten per cent of women with current partners said they had experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of their current partner, and 9 % of all women surveyed said that they had such experiences at the hands of a non-partner. Stalking has affected one woman in ten.

The impact of this violence can be severe and long-lasting. Survivors are often left with feelings of fear, anger, annoyance or shock – each of these feelings was mentioned by at least two in five of the women surveyed; two in five of the women surveyed suffered from anxiety, and a quarter suffered from depression or difficulty sleeping.

Violence against women is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality that is perpetuated by existing norms and attitudes. The women who were interviewed for the qualitative research expressed the opinion that Serbia is still a patriarchal society where men are dominant at home, at work and in the public sphere. The qualitative research also showed that the majority of women who were interviewed expressed the belief that their risk of becoming a victim of violence is linked to the way they dress, to the places they go and to what they do. This is reinforced by cultural norms that place responsibility on women for violence, as opposed to the perpetrators.

However, such attitudes are changing. Indeed, on a range of attitudinal statements tested in this research, the young, the better-educated and those living in urban areas felt that their friends were distinctly less likely to go along with broad notions of women’s subservience to a male partner; however, it is important to recognize that VAW affects women of all ages, from every income group and from every region of the country, albeit with some variance. Younger women and those who find it difficult to cope on their current income are exposed to higher risks of violence than others.

**Violence against women affects women of all ages, from every income group and from every region of the country**

## Women whose partners had fought in an armed conflict were more likely to have experienced a range of different forms of physical or sexual violence at the hands of that partner

The same is also true for women living in urban areas, who are more likely to say they have experienced sexual harassment and stalking and violence at the hands of a previous partner than those in rural areas. The indicated prevalence of violence at the hands of a previous partner among women who identify as being from an ethnic minority in the region where they live is higher than on average.

Three in ten women surveyed said they had experienced some form of physical violence at the hands of an adult before they were 15 years old, usually slapping and beating and mainly by their parents. These women were more likely to experience further violence as adults.

Twenty-six percent of women surveyed said that they were affected by conflict <sup>5</sup> in some way, the great majority of whom experienced the NATO intervention in 1999. Around one in ten of the women surveyed who said that they had experienced physical violence and conflict connected the violence with the conflict, while women whose partners had fought in an armed conflict were more likely to have experienced a range of different forms of physical or sexual violence at the hands of that partner.

Police involvement in incidents of physical violence was reportedly low, which was substantiated by the third of women who said that they believe that domestic violence is “a private matter” that should be kept within the family. While the names of NGO organizations working in the field of violence against women are rather well known, they are not generally women’s first port of call.

Two in five victims reported talking to no one following their most serious incident of sexual harassment. For those who did speak to someone, they chose to talk to a friend or family member rather than a specialist service or organization.

There are a number of barriers preventing women from accessing services, including feelings of shame and fear or mistrust of the police, social workers and healthcare professionals due to perceived stereotypes among representatives of these professions. Particularly in rural areas, support services are simply not available, while other women face physical barriers to access or lack long-term and practical support with respect to housing and money.

<sup>5</sup> Women considered directly conflict-affected are those who have lived in a situation where there was an active and armed conflict for a period of at least one week and who answered “yes” to at least one of the questions listed in Chapter 5.

## Conclusions

The findings of the survey and the qualitative research point to the following conclusions:

- 1. Cultural norms and attitudes contribute to gender inequality and violence against women**  
Three out of ten women believe domestic violence is a private matter and nearly a quarter hold the victim responsible or believe that they exaggerate claims of abuse or rape. These beliefs contribute to gender inequality and an environment where violence against women is tolerated.
- 2. Violence against women is underreported**  
Very few women who have experienced violence have reported it to the police. Shame, economic dependence, fear of retaliation by the perpetrator and mistrust of services are the main barriers to reporting.
- 3. Provision of services needs to be improved, including multi-sectorial cooperation**  
There are insufficient services for women available and their consistency and quality need to be improved. The key experts, who were interviewed for this study shared that there is a need for pluralism in service provision and advocated for partnership between the state and civil society organizations.
- 4. There are gaps in the implementation of legislation and in data collection**  
The key experts furthermore identified gaps in the data collection and highlighted the importance of the planned development and implementation of one unique database. The victims are not sufficiently protected during court proceedings, and there is a need for improved training for professionals.

**Shame, economic dependence, fear of retaliation by the perpetrator and mistrust of services are the main barriers to reporting**

**There are insufficient services for women available and their consistency and quality need to be improved**



### Recommendations

The above findings and conclusions of the survey and the qualitative research point to specific recommendations to address violence against women (see Chapter 8 for the detailed list of recommendations):

#### Protection and confidentiality of victims

- **For the Ministry of Justice**  
Monitor and publish the rates of criminal charges, convictions and sentences, identify barriers in the legal system and develop strategies to overcome them, and ensure that the confidentiality of victims is protected in a future central database.

#### Co-operation and multi-sectorial approach

- **For the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour Employment, Veteran and Social Policy, the Ministry of Interior, the police and non-state actors**  
Provide continuous and sustainable training for service professionals, restore the multi-sectorial approach to combat VAW, institutionalize cooperation, increase the development of individual support and protection plans, provide prevention programmes for perpetrators, ensure partnership between the state and civil society, and target different parts of the population in different ways through awareness raising.

#### Specialized services for women who have experienced violence

- **For the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy**  
Improve the quality, reach-out and funding of SOS helplines and counselling centres, support the establishment of rape crisis and/or sexual violence referral centres, and set standards for service providers.

#### Monitoring of the implementation of new legislation and other measures as well as awareness raising

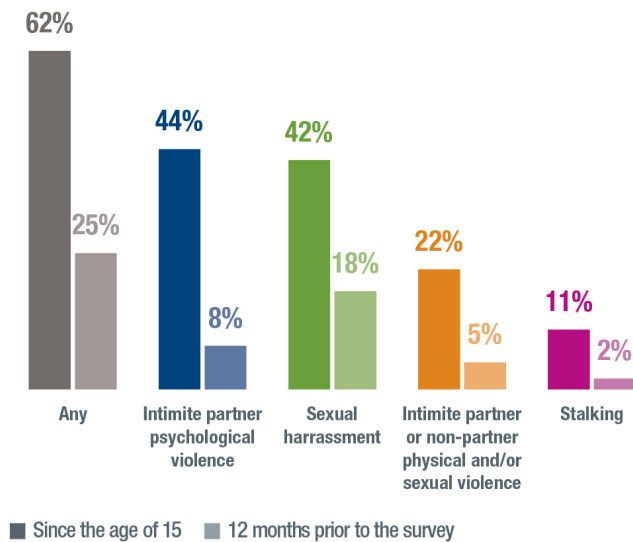
- **For the Coordination Body for Gender Equality**  
Conduct an annual independent evaluation of the implementation of new legislation and adherence to the Istanbul Convention.
- **For the Ministry of Education**  
Introduce subjects dealing with gender-based violence in pre-school and primary-school and university curricula.
- **For the OSCE and other donors**  
Enhance coordination and information sharing among donors regarding programmes and activities aimed at combating violence against women.



A quantitative survey was conducted among a representative sample of women aged 18 to 74 living in Serbia. A total of 2,023 interviews were conducted face-to-face between April and August 2018. Data have been weighted to the known population profile.

## HIGH PREVALENCE OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

### HIGH PREVALENCE OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



**1.7 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

**445,000\***

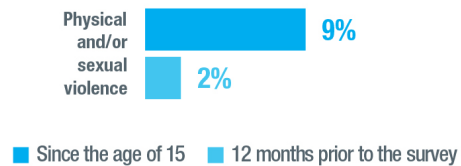
women have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence

**250,000\***

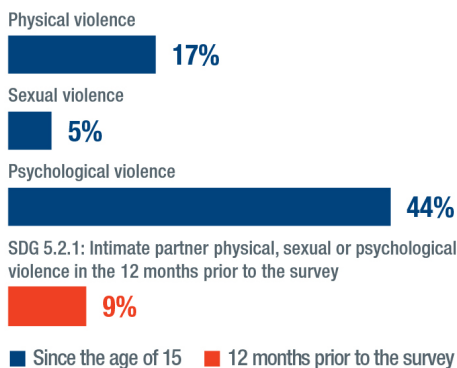
have experienced non-partner physical and/or sexual violence

\*Approximate figures

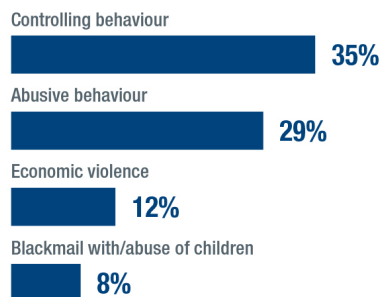
### ONE IN TEN WOMEN HAS EXPERIENCED NON-PARTNER PHYSICAL AND/OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE



### INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE



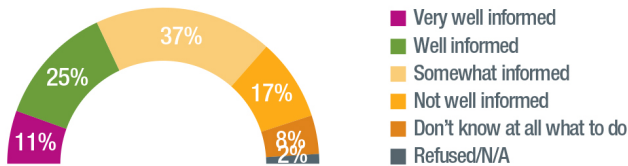
### INTIMATE PARTNER PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE IS THE MOST WIDESPREAD FORM



Base: Prevalence of sexual harassment, stalking, and non-partner violence are based on all women aged 18-74 (2,023); intimate partner violence is based on all ever-partnered women (1,973)

## LOW LEVELS OF REPORTING AND AWARENESS

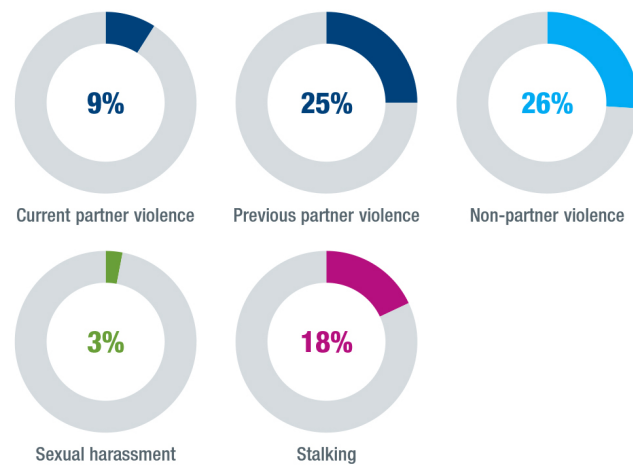
MANY WOMEN DO NOT FEEL INFORMED ABOUT WHAT TO DO IF THEY EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE



Base: All women aged 18-74 (2,023)

## LOW LEVELS OF REPORTING TO POLICE

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



Base: All women aged 18-74 who identify a most serious incident of each form of violence - current partner (109), previous partner (216), non-partner (181), sexual harassment (648), stalking (171)

## SILENCING AND VICTIM-BLAMING ATTITUDES

■ Totally/tend to agree ■ Totally/tend to disagree

Q: Would your friends generally agree or disagree with the following statements?

It is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn't feel like it



It is important for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss



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

Violence against women is often provoked by the victim



Domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family

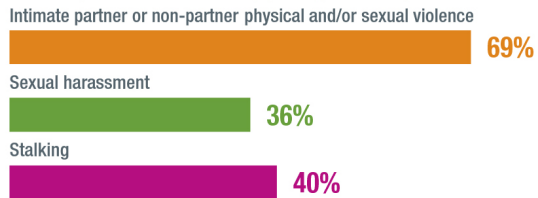


Base: All women aged 18-74 (2,023)

## IMPACT OF THE MOST SERIOUS INCIDENTS

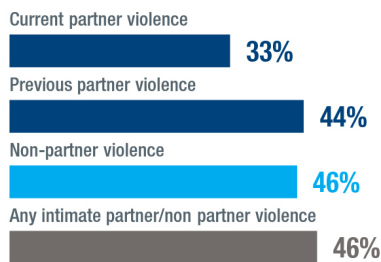
### VIOLENCE CAUSES PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING

% who experienced one or more psychological consequences due to...



### VIOLENCE CAUSES PHYSICAL SUFFERING

% who suffered one or more physical consequences due to...



This translates into 250,000 women\* who were left with an injury or physical consequence, considering only the most severe cases they identified during their adult lifetime.

\*Approximate figures

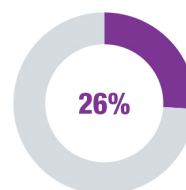
Base: All women aged 18-74 who identify a most serious incident of each form of violence - sexual harassment (648), stalking (171), current partner (109), previous partner (216) non-partner (181), any intimate partner/non partner violence (306)

## VIOLENCE AND ARMED CONFLICT

A QUARTER OF WOMEN WERE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY CONFLICT

WOMEN WHOSE PARTNER FOUGHT IN A CONFLICT ARE AT HIGHER RISK OF EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

Of those who currently have a partner, 11% say their partner has fought in an armed conflict.



Base: All women aged 18-74 (2,023) and those with a current partner (1,432)

The figures regarding physical consequences of violence have been updated - figures in earlier versions of this report should be disregarded.

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# 1. How to read the data

## Introduction and main research goals

The OSCE survey is the first survey ever conducted that captures the prevalence of violence against women in the Republic of Serbia based on a representative sample of the adult population of women (2,023 women aged 18–74). The key demographics used in the research 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 main goals of the study are to provide evidence of the prevalence of VAWG and its consequences for women's health and well-being for the purposes of policy-making. The main research questions were:

- What is the extent of violence experienced by women in Serbia?
- Which forms of violence do women experience in Serbia?
- 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 (see more in Chapter 5).

The OSCE-led survey asked women to distinguish between incidents that have occurred since the age of 15 and the twelve months before the survey interview. This provides data that are of direct policy relevance with respect to current practice, such as reporting and responses to victims.

## Comparability with EU data and with the area covered by the OSCE-led survey

This research is based on the methodology used by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) for its 2012 survey on violence against women in 28 European Union member states.<sup>6</sup> This OSCE-led survey is therefore comparable to the FRA's survey. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) uses the FRA's data in its current work and plans to use the findings of this study in the future. Finally, the OSCE study includes selected Eurobarometer<sup>7</sup> questions on attitudes towards VAW.

<sup>6</sup> Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results (Vienna: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2015), accessed 26 January 2019, <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>.

<sup>7</sup> "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](https://data.europa.eu/euodp/data/dataset/S2115_85_3_449_ENG).

### Reluctance to share

In order to better understand the prevalence of VAW, context is very important. The OSCE added to the survey several questions on norms, attitudes and behaviour of women and their family and friends, (including men) in relation to violence and experiences of reporting abuse. In comparing the OSCE's data with the EU's data on gender attitudes and norms (Eurobarometer No. 449) this study suggests that where more women feel that domestic violence is a private issue, there is a tendency that fewer women report experiences of violence to the police and other organizations than in countries where there is a longer tradition of raising awareness of violence against women. The qualitative research confirms the taboo and shame linked to sexual violence is particularly prevalent.

### Prior research

Prior to this research, several surveys were conducted that provided evidence of the prevalence and characteristics of violence, but they were not based on a representative sample of all adult women in Serbia, e.g., a survey conducted in 2003 by the World Health Organization was limited to Belgrade,<sup>8</sup> a survey conducted in 2010 by the Victimology Society of Serbia was limited to the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina,<sup>9</sup> and a survey conducted in the same year by SeConS was limited to central Serbia.<sup>10</sup> Although the findings are not comparable due to the differences in methodologies used (definitions, indicators, data collection methods),<sup>11</sup> there are a lot of similarities, and the findings indicate similar trends: lifetime prevalence of partner and domestic violence is high, with more than half of women reporting experiences of some form of violence at the hands of their partners or family members since the age of 15; among all forms of violence, lifetime psychological violence is the most prevalent; women rarely report violence and showed little confidence in the system for protection and support. The surveys also indicated increased risks of violence in case of poverty and material deprivation, patriarchal attitudes on the part of partners, the presence of problems such as alcohol and drug abuse in the family and the presence of individuals who participated in conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the above-mentioned surveys conducted on samples of women, a 2017 IMAGES survey about men and masculinities was conducted on a sample of 1,060 men and 540 women.<sup>13</sup> The data obtained through this survey revealed a picture of violence against women from the point of view of male perpetrators. According to the findings, around one-third of the men interviewed had perpetrated psychological violence against their partners in the form of insults and humiliation. A quarter of men admitted to intimidating their partners, while one-fifth of respondents admitted to slapping and throwing objects at their partners. About one in ten of the men surveyed reported having forced a woman to have sexual intercourse. The most common form of sexual violence is related to a situation where women or girls were under the influence of alcohol and were unable to give consent. The survey presented important findings on the roots of violence against women that are embedded in a specific culture marked by patriarchal values, misogynous and re-traditionalized public discourse, violence experienced during childhood in the family (around one-quarter of men witnessed violence against their mothers, while around 40% were themselves beaten) and in the community (school, social circles). Around 16% of interviewed men participated in an armed conflict during the dissolution of Yugoslavia, which has been recognized by various surveys as an important factor influencing violence against women.

8 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>.

9 V. Nikolić-Ristanović (ed.), "Nasilje u porodici u Vojvodini, Viktimološko društvo Srbije, Beograd", 2010, accessed 27 January 2019, <http://hocudaznas.org/hun/hocudaznas/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/nasilje-u-porodici-u-vojvodini.pdf>.

10 M. Babović, K. Ginić and O. Vuković, Mapiranje porodičnog nasilja prema ženama u Centralnoj Srbiji (Beograd: SeConS, 2010), accessed 27 January 2018, [http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/sr/home/library/womens\\_empowerment/mapiranje-porodicnog-nasilja-nad-zenama.html](http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/sr/home/library/womens_empowerment/mapiranje-porodicnog-nasilja-nad-zenama.html)

11 For example, the survey conducted in central Serbia was based on self-reporting, which resulted in a slightly higher prevalence of physical and psychological violence. The survey conducted in Vojvodina was based on a feminist action methodology through face-to-face interviews, which resulted in a very high prevalence.

12 Babović, Ginić and Vuković, Mapiranje porodičnog nasilja prema ženama u Centralnoj Srbiji.

13 See the Images website at <http://images.edu.rs/en/research-results>.



### 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.

### Privacy and anonymity

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

### 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 4 and 5 of this report.

- Regarding **physical** and **sexual violence**, a list of questions that were asked in the research can be found on page 25 of Chapter 4.
- Regarding **psychological violence**, a list of questions that were asked in the research can be found on page 30 of Chapter 4.
- In terms of **sexual harassment**, women in the survey were asked the questions listed on page 33 of Chapter 4.
- For **stalking**, women in the survey were asked the questions listed on page 32 of Chapter 4.

**In this research, childhood violence** refers to violence before the age of 15. A list of questions that were asked about experiences of childhood violence can be found on page 40 of Chapter 4. The questions, methodology and the age of the respondents used in the OSCE-led survey differs from those used in the Adverse Childhood Experiences<sup>14</sup> surveys as well as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys<sup>15</sup> and the prevalence rates of childhood violence are not comparable.

**Regarding the chapter on conflict and gender-based violence** (Chapter 5), **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 directly 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 43 of Chapter 5.

14 World Health Organization, Adverse Childhood Experiences International Questionnaire (ACE-IQ) accessed 26 March 2019, [https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/activities/adverse\\_childhood\\_experiences/en/](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/activities/adverse_childhood_experiences/en/)

15 UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) accessed 26 March, [https://www.unicef.org/statistics/index\\_24302.html](https://www.unicef.org/statistics/index_24302.html)

## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia

**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.

### **An overview of the qualitative research**

Fifteen key experts working in Serbia 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 and of governmental and non-governmental institutions.

Eight focus group discussions were conducted with women from different age groups, women living in urban and rural parts of Serbia, women from different minority groups (Bosniak, Hungarian and Roma) and 24 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.

Four 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. Legal, institutional and policy context

This chapter briefly reviews the context, key legislation related to violence against women,<sup>16</sup> and to preventing violence and protecting women against violence, data collection and the impact of conflict on women. It draws on a literature review and the views of the 15 key experts who were interviewed.

### Introduction

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) impacts the lives of millions of women and girls and hampers progress towards comprehensive security for all. The OSCE, as the world's largest regional security organization, recognizes that VAWG not only affects women's personal safety and security, but also prevents them from participating in society or from using their skills and knowledge to their full potential.

The OSCE-led survey focused on gender-based violence against women perpetrated by their partners, family members, friends, acquaintances and colleagues, as well as unknown perpetrators.

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.<sup>17</sup> 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 OSCE region in order to assess their safety and well-being.

In Serbia, like in many other countries in the region and around the world, these structural inequalities are visible in various areas: political and economic participation; access to assets, income and services; participation in the economy; living standards and quality of life.

Women in Serbia are underrepresented in positions of political power, and they do not have an influence equal to that of men on the policies, laws and reforms that shape socio-economic development. Due to the quota system in place, women must fill at least one-third of the seats in legislative bodies at all levels (which is still below equal representation), but their representation is low in the executive branch: despite the fact that the prime minister is a woman, women account for only 22% of the ministers in the national government and only 13% of the ministers in the government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Among mayors, the percentage of women is particularly low, at only 6%.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Trafficking in human beings and, more specifically, trafficking in women and girls for purposes of sexual exploitation is a form of gender-based violence against women. It is a serious human rights issue and a security issue. This study did not include questions on this type of violence, as researching trafficking in human beings includes a very high risk for its victims, and a household survey is not the appropriate research method. The FRA survey on which the OSCE-led survey is based did not investigate trafficking in women and girls either.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1994.

<sup>18</sup> Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia (Belgrade: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2017), accessed 29 January 2019, <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2017/PdfE/G20176008.pdf>.

Women do not participate in the economy on an equal basis with men. Women are less active in the labour market than men, with an inactivity rate of 40%, compared with 26% for men. The employment rate among working-age women (15–64) is 51%, which is significantly lower than the employment rate among men (64%).<sup>19</sup> There are numerous consequences of inequality in the labour market, including pension gaps (women receive an old-age pension less frequently than men do, and the average pension is lower among women than among men) and higher poverty rates among older women than among older men (22% compared to 15%).<sup>20</sup> Women from marginalized groups, such as Roma, displaced women and refugees, rural women, single mothers and women with disabilities, find themselves in a particularly unfavorable situation.

Quality of life<sup>21</sup> is lower among women than men, particularly if women are employed and have children. On average, women spend one hour more in paid and unpaid work each day than men and one hour less on leisure activities. This imbalance stems mainly from spending more hours on unpaid work and family care: women spend 2.31 hours more than men on these activities (4.36 versus 2.05) on average per day.<sup>22</sup>

Violence against women can only be fully understood and addressed within this context, as instruments that are available to eliminate it are limited or reinforced by actions in other areas in which women are not equal.

### 2.1: National legislative framework and implementation

Following the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991–1992, Serbia and Montenegro remained in the rump Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992–2002). Serbia became an independent country in 2006 when Montenegro voted to leave the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (2002–2006). Serbia has ratified or inherited a number of international commitments on gender equality, including:

- The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981) and its Optional Protocol. The Government of the Republic of Serbia submitted its Fourth Periodic Report to the CEDAW Committee in 2017, while civil society organizations (CSOs) had submitted six shadow reports by the end of 2018.
- In 2010, Serbia signed, but has yet to ratify, the European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes.
- Serbia ratified the Council of Europe's 2011 Istanbul Convention in 2013.<sup>23</sup>
- In 2015, Serbia adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to address global challenges, such as poverty, inequality and climate change, as well as to improve access to health and education and build strong institutions and partnerships. SDG 5 on gender equality includes a number of specific targets, such as 5.2: "Eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation".

<sup>19</sup> "Labour Force Survey", Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, accessed 31 January 2019, <http://www.stat.gov.rs/en-us/oblasti/trziste-rada/anketa-o-radnoj-snazi>.

<sup>20</sup> "Poverty and Social Inequality in Republic of Serbia in 2016", Survey on Income and Living Conditions 087 (3 April 2017), accessed 31 January 2019, <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2017/PdfE/G20171087.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> This is measured by the proportion of working hours and hours dedicated to leisure, personal development and well-being.

<sup>22</sup> Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, "Time Use in the Republic of Serbia, 2010 and 2015", news release, 29 November 2016, accessed 31 January 2019, <http://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2016/DocE/G201618082.docx>.

<sup>23</sup> In July 2018, the Government of Serbia submitted its first report on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention to the GREVIO Committee (prepared by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality). CSOs submitted three shadow reports.

Serbia's national legislation covers the prohibition of discrimination (including based on gender),<sup>24</sup> gender equality,<sup>25</sup> domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual and physical assault, rape within marriage, mandatory reporting and sex-disaggregated data collection. The 2017 Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence<sup>26</sup> aims "to enable effective prevention of domestic violence and [the] urgent, timely and effective protection [of] and support [for] victims of domestic violence".<sup>27</sup>

### Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence – new obligations

Urgent protection measures	Right to Notify	Obligation to report violence	Assessment of security risks
Special training for professionals <sup>28</sup>	Mandatory co-operation between services	Central data recording on domestic violence	Disciplinary measures for non-application or obstruction of the law

The Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence was introduced at the same time as amendments to the Criminal Code that introduced new criminal offences related to female genital mutilation, stalking, sexual harassment and forced marriage.<sup>29</sup> Serbia's Family Law guarantees women who are victims of violence the right to file a civil lawsuit for the issuance of protection orders against domestic violence.<sup>30</sup> Members of the victim's family, a legal representative, a public prosecutor and centres for social work are also entitled to file such a lawsuit on behalf of the victim.

The experts interviewed expressed concern about the enforcement of Serbia's legislation. They feel that cultural and institutional factors, in particular the persistence of traditional patriarchal values, have contributed to poor conviction rates. Judges and prosecutors are sometimes perceived as feeling sorry for the perpetrator or wanting to preserve the family unit. The interviewed experts reported cases of violence against women being romanticized by judges and prosecutors as acts of passion.

24 Serbia's Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination was published in the country's official gazette. See "Zakon o zabrani diskriminacije", Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, No. 22/2009. An English translation of the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination can be found on the OSCE's Legislationline website at: <<https://www.legislationline.org/documents/id/19332>>.

25 Serbia's Law on Gender Equality was published in the country's official gazette. See "Zakon o ravnopravnosti polova", Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, No. 104/2009. An English translation of the Law on Gender Equality can be found on the OSCE's Legislationline website at: <<https://www.legislationline.org/documents/id/16015>>. A new draft of the Law on Gender Equality is currently under revision.

26 Serbia's "Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence" was published in the country's official gazette. See "Zakon o sprečavanju nasilja u porodici", Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, No. 94/2016. The law entered into force on 1 June 2017.

27 The law applies to the protection of victims of crimes as specified in the Criminal Code (Article 4): stalking (Article 138a Criminal Code); rape (Article 178 Criminal Code); sexual assault of an infirm person (Article 179 Criminal Code); sexual assault of a child (Article 180 Criminal Code); sexual assault through the misuse of a position of power (Article 181 Criminal Code); unauthorized sexual activities (Article 182 Criminal Code); sexual harassment (Article 182a Criminal Code); pandering and facilitating the exercise of sexual relations (Article 183 Criminal Code); intervention to support prostitution (Article 184 Criminal Code); displaying, obtaining and possessing pornographic material and exploitation of minors for the purposes of pornography (Article 185 Criminal Code); forcing a minor to be present during sexual acts (Article 185a Criminal Code); abduction and abuse of a minor (Article 193 Criminal Code); failure to provide support (Article 195 Criminal Code); violation of family obligations (Article 196 Criminal Code); incest (Article 197 Criminal Code); trafficking in human beings (Article 388 Criminal Code); other criminal offences if the offence is a consequence of domestic violence.

28 Such measures include temporary removal of the perpetrator from the domicile or a temporary restraining order.

29 Serbia's Criminal Code is published in the country's official gazette. See "Krivični zakonik", Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, Nos. 85/2005, 88/2005, 107/2005, 72/2009, 111/2009, 121/2012, 104/2013, 108/2014, 97/2016.

30 Serbia's Family Law is published in the country's official gazette. See "Porodični zakon", Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, Nos. 18/2005, 72/2011, 6/2015.

On a positive note, the interviewed experts said that the changes introduced over the past decade have improved the legislative framework. The new Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence is a gender-neutral law<sup>31</sup> with a focus on domestic violence as opposed to targeting all forms of violence against women, and the experts generally trust that, in practice, it will specifically target domestic violence against women. While it is too early to evaluate the implementation of this law, the experts said that they have high expectations and feel that the law sends a clear political message that highlights the issue of violence against women, in line with the Istanbul Convention.

### 2.2: Institutional mechanisms and co-operation

A number of strategies that address human rights protection, the prevention of discrimination and promotion of gender equality have been put in place. The Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 and the Action Plan for 2016-2018 establish improved protections for women against gender-based violence, domestic and intimate partner violence as one of the country's priority objectives. In 2017, Serbia adopted its second national action plan on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for 2017-2020.<sup>32</sup> The National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence in the Family expired in 2015, and a new strategy in line with the Istanbul Convention has yet to be developed. The provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality of Vojvodina has been implementing strategies for protection from domestic violence since 2008.

The Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality (led by the deputy prime minister), which is responsible for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, was established in 2014. In addition, the gender-equality structure includes gender-equality focal points within ministries, committees in the national and provincial parliaments, as well as local mechanisms whose establishment is stipulated by the current Law on Gender Equality.<sup>33</sup> Despite the legal obligation, gender-equality mechanisms have not been established within all local self-governments, and where established, they lack power to influence decisions and often are not sufficiently active.<sup>34</sup> The Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence regulates the procedures used in response to violence and calls for the establishment of local units for co-ordination and co-operation (Article 25). Previously adopted general and specialized<sup>35</sup> protocols that specified procedures and called for co-operation in response to violence have been adjusted in the new legal framework.

31 According to EIGE, gender-neutral legislation is "legislation that is drafted in universal terms, ignoring gender-specific situations and power relations between women and men, that underpin sex and gender-based discrimination, including gender-based violence against women". See "Gender-neutral Legislation", EIGE, accessed 26 January 2019, <https://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1192>.

32 "National Action Plan: Serbia", PeaceWomen, 29 November 2017, accessed 26 January 2019, <https://www.peacewomen.org/nap-serbia>.

33 See Serbia's Law on Gender Equality.

34 V. Bacanovic, "Special Report of the Protector of Citizens Representation of Women in Decision-Making Positions, and the Position and Activities of Local Gender Equality Mechanisms in Local Self-Government Units in Serbia", 2018, accessed 26 January 2019, <https://www.ombudsman.rs/index.php/izvestaji/posebni-izvestaji/5902-special-report-of-the-protector-of-citizens-representation-of-women-in-decision-making-positions-and-the-position-and-activities-of-local-gender-equality-mechanisms-in-local-self-government-units-in-serbia>; "Rodna Ravnopravnost U Srbiji, Zbirni Podaci", SKGO - Rodna Ravnopravnost - Baza

35 Protocols were introduced by the previous Gender Equality Directorate, which ceased to exist in 2014. A general protocol specified roles and procedures for the overall system, while specialized protocols specified procedures within sectors (police, health, social protection, judiciary).

While these protocols have advanced state responsibilities for dealing with violence against women, UN Women<sup>36</sup> concludes that more work needs to be done to ensure that gender equality becomes a regular part of government institutions' work and financing: "Studies have found that one in two women in Serbia has experienced domestic violence, and that women and Roma are the groups that are considered most subject to discrimination. Discrimination and structural barriers lead to a gender pay gap and significantly lower labour force participation rates for women than men. At the same time, women spend double the time that men spend in unpaid care work in the household".<sup>37</sup>

### 2.3: Availability of administrative and other data

Administrative data disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, geographical location and socio-economic background is necessary for an accurate assessment of the situation of women, gender inequalities and the extent and nature of violence against women. Without data, it is not possible to take evidence-based corrective action.

An integrated system for collecting and monitoring cases of violence disaggregated by type of violence and by the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim does not exist at the national level even though there is evident progress, especially on the part of the police, in collecting and reporting data on urgent measures. In addition, most official data relates to domestic violence rather than all forms of violence against women.

The Statistical Office of Serbia maintains data that includes only judicial statistics and reflects the Criminal Code but is not yet in line with the new Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence. Specific information provided by certain institutions dealing with violence against women and data from NGO surveys can be found on their websites. The CEDAW Committee criticized Serbia's 2013 report<sup>38</sup> for lacking data disaggregated by sex and other relevant factors and for the fact that data was not maintained for all forms of violence against women. Serbia prepared and submitted its first state report on the Istanbul Convention to the GREVIO expert group (which is responsible for monitoring implementation of the Convention) in June 2018. The process included co-ordination of data collection and information gathering within 250 representative institutions.

Since the new Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence imposes a duty to maintain a central register of domestic violence cases under the jurisdiction of the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, the experts interviewed for this report expressed the hope that this might lead to proper record-keeping not only for cases of domestic violence but for all cases of violence against women.

Serbia was the first non-EU country to introduce the EU Gender Equality Index (supported by EIGE). VAW is one of two subdomains. Serbia started using the index in December 2018, and the survey data collected by the OSCE was used to calculate the index.

<sup>36</sup> UN Women is the United Nations organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women globally. See "Serbia", UN Women | Europe and Central Asia, accessed 26 January 2019, <http://eca.unwomen.org/en/where-we-are/serbia>

<sup>37</sup> "Izveštaj o istraživanju javnog mnjenja 'Odnos građana i građanki prema diskriminaciji u Srbiji'", Poverenik za zaštitu ravnopravnosti, December 2016, accessed 31 January 2019, <http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/rs/izvestaj-o-istrazivanju-javnog-mnjenja/>.

<sup>38</sup> "Concluding Observations on the Combined Second and Third Periodic Reports of Serbia", United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 2013, accessed 26 January 2019, [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/SRB/CO/2-3&Lang=En](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/SRB/CO/2-3&Lang=En).

### 2.4: Prevention, protection and support

Preventive interventions can help raise awareness, develop understanding and effectively address violence against women. In order to strengthen the co-ordinated response to VAW and GBV, UN agencies and line ministries have been implementing a joint project called "Integrated Response to Violence Against Women and Girls".<sup>39</sup> The project is in line with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention. Implemented in two cycles already, the project has contributed significantly to raising awareness of GBV and improving the system for protection.

#### A number of broad preventive activities are carried out in Serbia:

- Developing the criminal justice system to hold perpetrators accountable: recent developments are the 2017 changes to the Criminal Code and the new 2017 Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, which recognizes the first hints of violence and criminalizes all types of violence: physical, emotional, economic and threatening to abuse or abuse children.
- Implementing information and education campaigns that deal with violence and gender stereotypes. Examples include the "16 Days of Activism" campaign, directed at both professionals and the general public, on publicizing data about violence against women. The "Programme for the Protection of Women in Family, Partner Violence and Other Forms of Gender-based Violence of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina" (2014–2020), which places a particular focus on media reporting on gender, was singled out as a best practice.<sup>40</sup> There are specific campaigns that target different groups, one of the most successful of which uses digital technologies and focuses on adolescents ("I can choose not to... Love is not violence", implemented by the Autonomous Women's Centre).<sup>41</sup> There are also campaigns targeting young men with the aim of changing stereotypes of masculinity and of promoting non-violent behaviour and zero tolerance of violence (CARE, Centre E8 with support from the UNFPA).<sup>42</sup> The "School without Violence" programme in primary schools, supported and implemented by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF Serbia, aims to create a safe and stimulating environment for learning, work and development. These are just some examples of the many campaigns and preventive programmes implemented by CSOs with support from international organizations.

The most important form of prevention is challenging attitudes about gender roles, which perpetuate inequalities between men and women. The experts interviewed felt that there should be more preventive activities in Serbia and that those currently undertaken lack a systematic approach and are undermined by the absence of state involvement. They also said that the state should play a more active role in ensuring the effectiveness of preventive measures.

<sup>39</sup> The project is supported by the Government of Sweden (Swedish International Development Agency)

<sup>40</sup> "List of issues and questions with regard of the consideration of periodic reports: Serbia", United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 2013 (CEDAW/C/SRB/CO/2-3/Add.1).

<sup>41</sup> "Mogu Da Neću – Ljubav Nije Nasilje!", Mogu Da Neću, accessed 26 January 2019, <http://mogudanecu.rs>.

<sup>42</sup> "Centar E8", accessed 26 January 2019, <http://e8.org.rs/>.



## 2. Legal, institutional and policy context

A range of training has been put in place – for justice practitioners, law enforcement officers and professional staff in the areas of social protection, education and health – including training about special protocols for dealing with cases of violence against women. While the experts interviewed found this training useful, they said that there is little systematic evaluation of its effectiveness. Some experts expressed the belief that significant numbers of participants attend such training because they are required to do so, but that they lack intrinsic motivation to learn and improve their response to VAW. Women’s NGOs are especially worried about the practice of centres for social work, which often work with survivors and perpetrators simultaneously, and they mentioned that there is a general lack of quality preventive programmes for perpetrators of violence. The Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, adopted in 2017, is linked with training programmes about the implications of the new legislation. The Republic Institute for Social Protection has accredited a number of training programmes that address domestic violence, including training for working with survivors, holding case conferences and working with offenders.<sup>43</sup> Women survivors of violence and those at risk of violence also need access to protection and basic services. There are currently 15 safe houses, shelters and counselling centres in Serbia.<sup>44</sup> Twenty-two NGOs run helplines for women survivors of violence (two for victims of human trafficking, four for women with a disability, three of which are available in ethnic-minority languages). A network of women’s organizations called SOS Vojvodina has been running a free-of-charge helpline for the past six years that operates on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.<sup>45</sup> There is still no national helpline, and the experts interviewed shared their observation that some towns do not offer a local helpline, while others are not adequately staffed by trained people, and some lines are only available at certain times of the day. There is no publicly available data on the total number of calls made to helplines, but some women’s NGOs publish data for their helplines in their annual reports. The new Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence states that victims of domestic violence have the right to free legal aid.<sup>46</sup> In November 2018, the Serbian Government adopted a new Law on Free Legal Aid, which stipulates the right to free legal aid for anyone making use of legal protection against domestic violence (Article 4).<sup>47</sup> According to the Law on Free Legal Aid, legal aid is provided by lawyers and legal-aid services within local self-governing units, as well as by associations, but only on the basis of the provisions governing the right to asylum and prohibition of discrimination.

On behalf of associations, free legal aid is provided by lawyers.<sup>48</sup> Regardless, free legal aid has been provided by NGOs in some parts of Serbia.

43 United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), ‘Fourth periodic report submitted by Serbia under article 18 of the Convention, due in 2017’ (2017), accessed 21 February 2019, [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW%2fC%2fSRB%2f4&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW%2fC%2fSRB%2f4&Lang=en).

44 Data taken from Women Against Violence website. See “Spisak Sigurnih Kuća / Prihvatilišta Za žene Koje Su Preživele Nasilje Na Teritoriji Srbije”, *Žene protiv nasilja*, accessed 26 January 2019, <http://zeneprotivnasilja.net/usluge-u-zajednici/srbija/sigurne-kuce>.

45 Information taken from the SOS Vojvodina website. See “O Mreži”, SOS Vojvodina, accessed 26 January 2019, <http://sosvojudina.org/o-mrezi>.

46 Tanja Ignjatović et al., *Analiza usklađenosti zakonodavnog i strateskog okvira Republike Srbije sa Konvencijom Saveta Evrope o sprečavanju i borbi protiv nasilja nad ženama i nasilja u porodici – osnovna studija* (Beograd: Autonomni ženski centar, 2014), accessed 31 January 2019, <https://www.womenngo.org.rs/images/vesti-14/Studija.pdf>.

47 A problem may arise because of the fact that the Law on Free Legal Aid does not provide any guarantees for victims of other crimes referred to in Article 4(1) of the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence as potential beneficiaries of free legal aid, although Article 30 of the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence stipulates that victims of all of the criminal offences indicated in said article will be entitled to free legal aid in accordance with a special law.

48 See Serbia’s Law on Free Legal Aid, “Zakon o besplatnoj pravnoj pomoći”, Narodna skupština Republike Srbije, accessed 31 January 2019, <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/cir/pdf/zakoni/2018/2926-18.pdf>. Also see Gordana Stevanović (ed.), *Protection of women from domestic and intimate partner violence: Selected Recommendations of the Protector of Citizens* (Belgrade: Protector of Citizens, 2016).

Serbia's ombudsman publishes special reports concerning the protection of women against domestic violence and partner violence and has reported that the authorities do not always act in response to reported violence.<sup>49</sup> A recent study on the effectiveness of the institutional mechanisms for protection from VAW argues that the capacities of institutions and the functionality of the system are low and insufficient, and that the position of victims of violence is unfavourable due to the lack of adequate support services. Many services are provided by NGOs, which manage to provide helplines, shelters, counselling, emotional and legal support, as well as economic empowerment of survivors despite a lack of funds and staff. Some CSOs work together to overcome the scarce resources available, e.g., the SOS Network Vojvodina and the Women Against Violence network jointly provide a broad set of services. Still, there are areas of Serbia with no support services. There are no crisis centres for survivors of violence against women<sup>50</sup> or specific services for rape survivors established and run by the state.<sup>51</sup> This should change, however, under the new legislation. A pilot project has been launched called "Stop-Protect-Aid towards a Stronger Institutional Response to Gender-Based Violence in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina", which is being carried out in partnership between women's NGOs and the provincial government and which has opened seven centres for survivors of sexual violence at hospitals in Vojvodina.<sup>52</sup>

### 2.5: Consequences of conflicts for women

In 2001, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) estimated that as a consequence of the conflict in the 1990s, there were approximately 700,000 displaced people or refugees in the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.<sup>53</sup> No comprehensive data is available on the number of women who have received support, the current status and needs of female refugees and internally displaced persons from this period, or the number of women who experienced violence. This study will provide representative and qualitative data on how women currently living in Serbia were affected by the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.

Many people, particularly those who returned from the front lines (mainly men), still suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), potentially aggravating existing tendencies to perpetrate violence against women.<sup>54</sup> PTSD can be further exacerbated by economic and personal insecurity, exposure to poverty, unemployment, crime, violence and general intolerance<sup>55</sup>. There is no national organization responsible for supporting victims of the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, although there are some individual organizations that do so in different parts of Serbia. There is no official national strategy for dealing with these cases and no clear definition of the criminal act of rape as a war crime or another type of crime according to international law.<sup>56</sup> Serbia has not adopted a comprehensive reparations programme for the victims of armed conflicts.

49 See, for example, Gordana Stevanović (ed.), *Special Report of the Protector of Citizens on Training for Acquisition and Improvement of Knowledge and Competencies in the Prevention and Suppression of Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence and Protection of Women from Such Violence* (Belgrade: Protector of Citizens, 2016), accessed 31 January 2019, <http://www.ombudsman.rs/attachments/article/4613/Special%20Report%20of%20Protector%20of%20Citizens%20on%20Trainings%20ENG.pdf>.

50 Danijela Pešić, *Zaštita i podrška za žene sa iskustvom nasilja – analiza lokalnih politika u Republici Srbiji* (Beograd: Autonomni ženski centar, 2016).

51 Ignjatović et al., *Analiza usklađenosti zakonodavnog i strateškog okvira Republike Srbije sa Konvencijom Saveta Evrope o spreavanju i borbi protiv nasilja nad ženama i nasilja u porodici – osnovna studija*.

52 "O Projektu", *Zaustavi - Zaštiti - Pomozi*, accessed 26 January 2019, <http://projekti.zdravstvo.vojvodina.gov.rs/o-projektu>; "Pilot Centri", *Zaustavi - Zaštiti - Pomozi*, accessed 26 January 2019, <http://projekti.zdravstvo.vojvodina.gov.rs/pilot-centri>.

53 "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia", in UNHCR Global Report 2001 (Geneva: UNHCR, 2002), accessed 26 January 2019, <http://www.unhcr.org/publications/fundraising/3dafdd04d/unhcr-global-report-2001-federal-republic-yugoslavia.html>.

54 In the pilot programme implemented by the Ministry of Justice and the Autonomous Women's Centre, with the support of the UN Development Programme, a special list of risks was created for prosecutors as an important instrument in risk assessment in cases of VAW. The "battlefield" is included in the list of risks that was distributed by the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office to all the country's prosecutors in order to provide a uniform assessment of the risk of domestic violence.

55 M. Dokmanović, *Firearms Possession and Domestic Violence in the Western Balkans: A Comparative Study of Legislation and Implementation Mechanisms* (Belgrade: South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2007); D. Spasic and M. Tadic, "Firearms Misuse and Gender-Based Violence", *Public Policy Research Centre*, 2017.

56 M. Kostić, "The War Crimes Gender Dimension: Sexual Violence Against Women", *Belgrade Centre for Security Policy*, 2017.

## 2. Legal, institutional and policy context

The experts interviewed for this report expressed the opinion that possession of a firearm was one of the factors that contributed to violence against women and femicide in domestic relationships, and they suggested that the state has not made a sufficient effort to solve this problem. There are, however, some important initiatives in this area. SEESAC's study *Gender and SALW in South East Europe*<sup>57</sup> provides a comprehensive analysis of the gaps in the institutional response to the misuse of firearms in the context of domestic violence. Certain legal initiatives resulted in the adoption of a Law on Weapons and Ammunition, which provides more restrictive medical criteria for obtaining a licence to own a firearm.

A specialized protocol for police procedures in cases of VAW and the new Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence stipulate that police officers have to focus on the presence of weapons in reported cases of domestic violence.

<sup>57</sup> Dragan Božanić, *Gender and SALW in South East Europe: Main Concerns and Policy Response* (Belgrade: South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2016), accessed 27 January 2019, [http://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Armed-Violence/Gender\\_and\\_SALW\\_publication\\_eng-web.pdf](http://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Armed-Violence/Gender_and_SALW_publication_eng-web.pdf).

21%

One-fifth of women surveyed think their friends would agree that “it is important for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss”.

12%

More than 10% of women surveyed think 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”.

29%

Over a quarter of women surveyed agree that domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family.

85%

Five out of six women surveyed think that, in general, violence against women at the hands of partners, acquaintances or strangers is very or fairly common.

## 3. Attitudes towards gender roles and violence against women

The research conducted for this report shows that norms and attitudes in Serbia perpetuate gender inequality, creating clearly defined and segregated roles for men and women in both public and private spaces.

The women who took part in the qualitative research for this report expressed the belief that the role of women is primarily that of mother, wife and homemaker. Motherhood was valued most highly among the women who participated in the focus group discussions and was seen as the role that defined them as women. Roma women, in particular, emphasized that a woman's responsibility is to raise her children in order to shape their behaviour and character. Some women, especially women from minorities, expressed pride in the fact that they had more children than women from other countries.

**“The good side and the advantage of women in Serbia is that they have children, they are in a better position than women in Europe because they have more children...”**

**Female, aged 35–55, urban, minority group (Bosniak)**

Alongside this sense of value in being a mother was an acknowledgement of the impact of this role. The women interviewed said that they felt pressure to excel in every aspect of their lives: at work, as a wife and as a mother. They described being overwhelmed by the volume of tasks they were expected to perform, which were often invisible or undervalued within the family and by society and exceeded the duties expected of men.

**“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**

**“To be honest, more is always expected from women than from men. To be a mother of three or four children, to be well groomed, to be a good cook, to be good at work and to sit at home.”**

**Female, aged 35–55, urban, minority group (Bosniak)**

Furthermore, there was a perception among the women interviewed that women in Serbia are expected to be physically attractive and socially submissive and also to be polite, patient and friendly in interactions with other people. While some women with more traditional values expressed the view that this behaviour came naturally to women, others, especially younger women, said that this expectation burdened them.

Men also have to live according to strongly defined norms. They were seen as responsible for providing financially for their family and were expected to behave in certain ways: specifically, to be emotionally strong and not to cry. However, they were not expected to engage in housekeeping or childcare, which the women interviewed for this report said meant that they were generally under less pressure.

**There was a perception among the women interviewed that women in Serbia are expected to be physically attractive and socially submissive and also to be polite, patient and friendly in interactions with other people**

**“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 24 hours a day: children, household, husband. Everything.”**

**Female, aged 35–55, urban, minority group (Bosniak)**

**“For me, the biggest difference is related to our children. The fact that I gave birth to him or her doesn’t mean that he or she is only mine. The child is ours.”**

**Female, aged 18–34, rural**

Men were perceived as having more freedom, especially in sexual relationships, than women. The women interviewed expressed the belief that society was more willing to forgive men for having multiple sexual partners or for being unfaithful. They are also not expected to marry as young as women are.

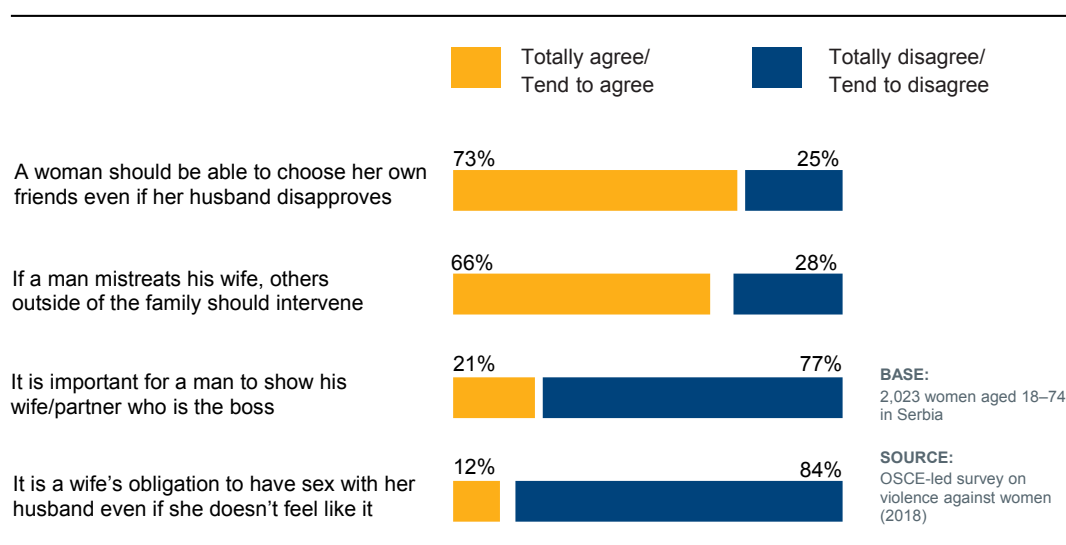
While the women interviewed for the qualitative research expressed the notion that traditional gender roles persisted in Serbia, they said that things were starting to change and that the country was moving towards a more equal distribution of household chores and more joint decision-making within a household. They said that this would provide women with more freedom to go to work and enjoy more leisure time.

Part of this shift in attitude is the increased freedom of self-expression within a relationship. As the quantitative data shows, three-quarters of women think their friends would agree, for example, that “a woman should be able to choose her own friends even if her husband disapproves” and that “if a man mistreats his wife, others outside the family should intervene” (Figure 3.1). Similarly, eight in ten women surveyed think their friends would disagree that it is a wife’s obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it.

### 3. Attitudes towards gender roles and violence against women

**Figure 3.1: Perceptions of social norms and acceptable behaviours**

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 general agree or disagree with the following statements.



Twenty-one per cent of women surveyed believe their friends would agree that “it is important for a man to show his wife or partner who is the boss”. This belief is more prevalent among women aged 60 and above (31%) than among those aged 18–29 (12%). This attitude is also more prevalent among those who have not completed tertiary education (25%) than among those who have completed at least some tertiary education (11%) and those who live in rural areas (30%) compared to urban areas (16%).

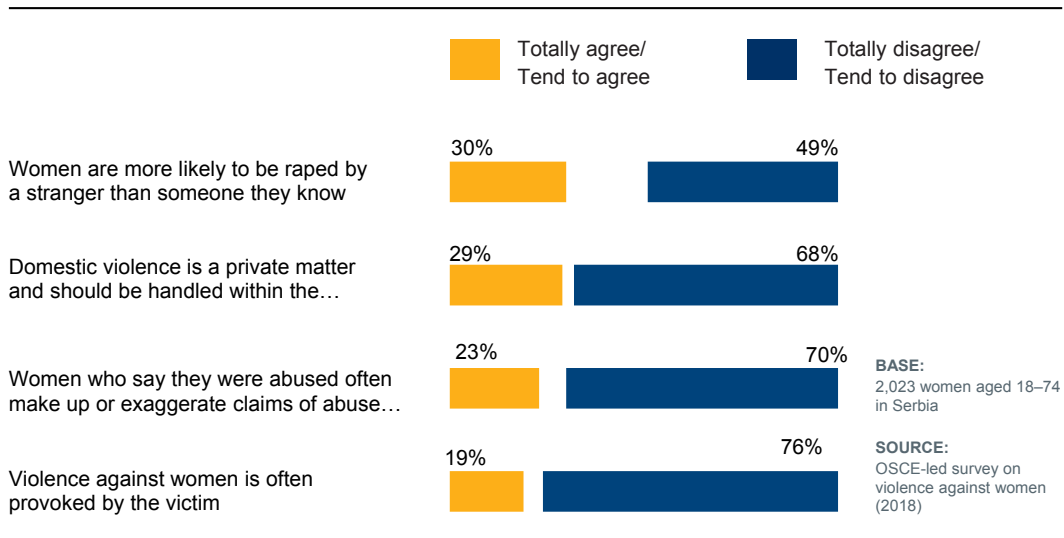
Respondents were given a range of scenarios and asked if sexual intercourse without consent could be justified in any of them, such as sex within a marriage or partnership if either the woman or assailant had been drinking or if the woman was wearing provocative clothing. More than three-quarters of the surveyed women *strongly* disagree that sexual intercourse is justified in any of the scenarios. Nevertheless, this is not a unanimous view. One in ten women, for example, feel that sexual intercourse without consent could be justified in a marriage or between partners who live together. The fact that fewer young, better-educated women agree with this may indicate that views are changing, a sentiment that is reflected in the qualitative research findings. In nearly all the scenarios presented, women living in rural areas are more likely to agree that sexual intercourse without consent is justified than those living in urban areas, in part reflecting the older age and less-educated profile of inhabitants of rural areas.

Attitudes towards violence are also not completely clear-cut. As Figure 3.2 illustrates, one in five of the women surveyed feel that violence against women is often provoked by the woman (19%) and that women who say they were abused often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape (23%). 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 Eurobarometer 449 on gender-based violence.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> "Special Eurobarometer 449: Gender-based Violence".

**Figure 3.2: Underlying attitudes to violence against women**

Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.



Over a quarter of women surveyed believe that domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family (29%). This is almost twice the percentage of those who say the same across the EU (14%).<sup>59</sup> It is, however, comparable to neighbouring Croatia, where one-quarter of women believe the same. Agreement on this issue across the EU ranges from 2% in Sweden to 31% in Romania, suggesting that the countries with a longer tradition of raising awareness of gender equality also have less tolerance for violence.

As with gender roles and attitudes towards sexual intercourse without consent, younger women, those with higher education and those living in urban areas tend to have less conservative views regarding violence against women than older women, women without higher education and women living in rural areas.

**Over a quarter of women surveyed believe that domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family. This is almost twice the percentage of those who say the same across the EU**

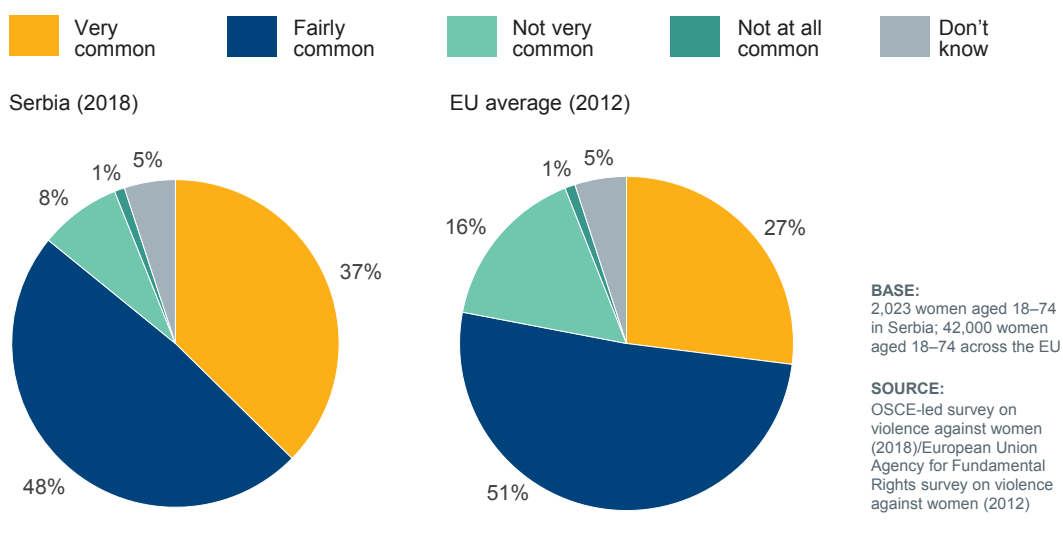
<sup>59</sup> "Special Eurobarometer 449: Gender-based Violence".



### 3. Attitudes towards gender roles and violence against women

**Figure 3.3: Perceptions of the pervasiveness of violence against women**

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



The women surveyed overwhelmingly express the belief that violence against women is common in Serbia (85 %). This is close to the EU average of 78% (ranging from 54% to 93%).<sup>60</sup> The Serbian results are similar to both Croatia and Sweden (both 81%). The women participating in the qualitative research for this report expressed the belief that the prevalence of violence against women and the tolerance of it in society are rooted in the country's traditional, patriarchal structures and outlook, which position men as dominant and women as submissive. They said that the persistence of these views was due to a lack of awareness and education about violence against women, including its causes and the impact it can have on women and families.

<sup>60</sup> Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results.



9%

Almost one in ten women surveyed say they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a non-partner since the age of 15.



17%

One in six women surveyed who has ever had a partner say they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner.



44%

Psychological violence perpetrated by a partner has affected more than two in five of the women surveyed who has ever had a partner.



42%

Two in five women surveyed say they have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15.

## 4. Violence against women in Serbia

### 4.1: Physical and sexual intimate partner violence

The women who took part in the qualitative research for this report said that, to some extent, intimate partner violence (IPV) is viewed as normal in Serbia and is regarded as a private matter between partners. Psychological violence was thought to be especially common within relationships. The women interviewed said that men were violent towards their partners because of alcohol use, jealousy, unemployment or financial worries and low self-esteem.

#### Differences in indicated prevalence rates across countries:

It is important to note that countries with longer traditions of gender-equality policies and awareness-raising campaigns (the Nordic countries and Western Europe) also have higher rates of women reporting experiences of violence.

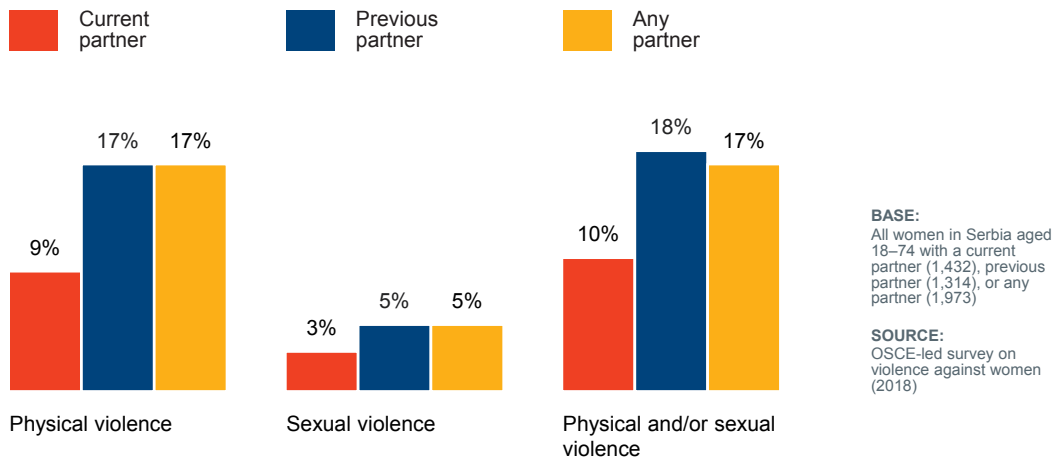
According to the FRA survey across the EU, for example, the three countries where women were most likely to say they had experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner or a non-partner since the age of 15 are Denmark (52%), Finland (47%) and Sweden (36%). The indicated prevalence rate is lowest in Croatia (21%), Austria (20%) and Poland (19%).

Forty-five per cent of women who were surveyed and who have, or have had, an intimate partner say they have experienced violence at the hands of a partner since the age of 15. For the most part, this violence has been psychological (indicated by 44% of women surveyed, compared to the EU average of 43%), but 17% of women also say they have experienced physical violence<sup>61</sup> and 5% say they have experienced sexual violence. This is similar to the EU, where an average of 20% of women indicated having experienced physical violence (ranging from 11% in Austria, Croatia and Spain to 31% in Latvia), and 7% indicated having experienced sexual violence<sup>62</sup> (ranging from 3% Croatia and Portugal to 11% in Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands). Women who say that their main activity is fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities are more likely to say they have experienced physical violence at the hands of their current partner (15%) than on average (9%) and more than women who are in paid employment (6%). Women who have children or who have had children are also more likely to say they have experienced violence (18% compared to 13% of those who have not had children) at the hands of an intimate partner.

<sup>61</sup> 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.

<sup>62</sup> 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.

**Figure 4.1: Prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual**



There is some indication that women who believe in female subservience, spousal obedience and silence surrounding VAWG are more likely to say that they have experienced violence at the hands of their current partner. For example, women who say 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 almost twice as likely to say they have experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of their current partner or at some point in their lifetime than those who do not agree with this statement (16% versus 9%). Similarly, twice as many women who agree that violence against women is often provoked by the victim admit to experiencing violence at the hands of their current partner more often than those who disagree (16% versus 8%). Those women who believe that sex without consent can be justified in various scenarios are again more likely to admit to having experienced violence at the hands of their current partner than those who believe that non-consensual sex is not justified.

The most common forms of physical violence indicated by women at the hands of both current and previous partners are: pushing, shoving and slapping (Table 4.1). This is comparable to the results for the entire EU, where, on average, these were the most prevalent types of physical violence indicated.

**Forty-five per cent of women who were surveyed and who have, or have had, an intimate partner say they have experienced violence at the hands of a partner since the age of 15**

**Table 4.1: Forms of intimate partner physical violence**

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

	Current partner % ever happened	Previous partner % ever happened
Pushed you or shoved you?	6	13
Slapped you?	6	13
Grabbed you or pulled your hair?	4	9
Threw a hard object at you?	1	3
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you?	1	6
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you?	1	3
Beat your head against something?	1	3
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you?	0.2	0.3
Burned you?	0.1	0.2

BASE: All women in Serbia aged 18–74 with current partner (1,432) or previous partner (1,314)  
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

The sexual violence indicated by 5% of the women who have ever had an intimate partner (3% at the hands of current partners and 5% at the hands of previous partners) took a number of forms (Table 4.2). The prevalence was slightly higher in the EU, where an average of 7% of women reported having experienced sexual violence at the hands of a partner.

**Table 4.2: Prevalence of intimate partner physical and/or sexual**

How often has something like this happened to you? Your current/previous has...

	Current partner % ever happened	Previous partner % ever happened
Made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse?	2	3
Have you consented to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused?	2	3
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way?	1	3
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way?	1	3

BASE: All women in Serbia aged 18–74 with current partner (1,432) or previous partner (1,314)  
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

The FRA survey showed similar data for the EU average in terms of forms of sexual violence, with a slightly higher percentage of women in the EU having experienced each of the four forms of sexual violence listed in Table 4.2.

### **Patterns in intimate partner violence<sup>63</sup>**

The data suggests that violence against women in intimate partner relationships takes place on a continuum. Rather than being an isolated incident, it tends to happen repeatedly over a long period of time. Of those women who say they experienced their first incident of current partner physical and/or sexual violence five or more years before the survey, 21% experienced their most recent incident in the 12 months prior to the survey, and a further 15% said their most recent incident had taken place between one and four years earlier. For 16% of survivors of current partner violence who say they experienced their first incident of violence between one and five years earlier, their most recent incident was in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Ninety per cent of current partners (compared to 82% in the EU) and 70% of previous partners (compared to 65% in the EU) were living with the women concerned at the time of the first incident of violence (or threat thereof).

Among those respondents who were pregnant during their relationship with their partner and who experienced violence (or threats thereof) during the relationship, 12% say they experienced physical or sexual violence (or threats thereof) at the hands of their current partner during their pregnancy compared to an EU average of 20%, while 33% say the same about a previous partner compared to 42% on average in the EU.

Whether the violence is committed by current or previous partners, the pattern is broadly similar (Table 4.3) The most common form of violence among the most serious incidents identified by women is being slapped (mentioned by at least 40% in both cases) and being pushed or shoved (mentioned by a quarter of women about their current partners and a third of women about their previous partners). The main distinction between the experiences of violence at the hands of current and previous partners is that, in the former case, 6% of women say that the most serious incident was being threatened with physical violence, while in the latter case this figure was 31%. The EU data is mostly similar to that of Serbia, except women in Serbia are much more likely to identify being slapped as the most serious incident of violence, which is mentioned by 47% of women who say they have experienced violence at the hands of a current partner and 40% at the hands of a previous partner, compared to 28% on average in the EU for the former and 25% for the latter.

<sup>63</sup> While the reporting rates/prevalence of physical and sexual violence discussed above do not include threats of such violence, other questions related to when such violence occurred and the details of the most serious incidents do include threats of violence.

## 4. Violence against women in Serbia

**Table 4.3: 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 %
Slapped you	47	40
Pushed you or shoved you	26	32
Grabbed you or pulled your hair	11	16
Beat you with a fist or a hard object, or kicked you	10	18
Made you take part in any form of sexual activity when you did not want to or you were unable to refuse	8	3
Threatened to hurt you physically	6	31
Have you consented to sexual activity because you were afraid of what might happen if you refused	5	3
Tried to suffocate you or strangle you	4	8
Threw a hard object at you	2	6
Cut or stabbed you, or shot at you	2	1
Forced you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	2	7
Attempted to force you into sexual intercourse by holding you down or hurting you in some way	2	6
Burned you	1	1
Beat your head against something	1	4
Threatened you with violent sexual acts (like rape, forced pregnancy, etc.) in a way that really frightened you	0	1

BASE: All women in Serbia aged 18–74 who have ever experienced violence from a current partner (134) or previous partner (260)  
SOURCE: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

### Physical and sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey

Overall, 3% of women who have ever had an intimate partner say they experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey. The types of violence that women encountered in the 12 months prior to the survey at the hands of intimate partners are similar to the violence experienced over their lifetime, with being pushed or shoved and being slapped mentioned most often.

### 4.1.1: Intimate partner psychological violence

In the qualitative research, psychological violence was considered to be very common in Serbia and was viewed as a precursor to other forms of violence, most notably physical violence. The women interviewed expressed the belief that psychological violence was most likely to be perpetrated by a partner, although family members were also viewed as likely perpetrators.

Indeed, the survey findings indicate that 44% of women who have ever had an intimate partner have experienced psychological violence perpetrated by their current or previous partner, which is similar to the EU average.<sup>64</sup> Eighteen per cent of women who have been in a relationship say they have experienced intimate partner psychological violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.<sup>65</sup>

The various forms of psychological violence asked about were categorized into four broad types 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)*.

**Blackmail a woman with her children 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 are 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.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup> The forms of psychological violence in italics were not asked about in the FRA survey.

<sup>65</sup> See Annex 3, SDG 5.2.1 for details on how the 12 month prevalence of psychological violence is calculated.

<sup>66</sup> 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.

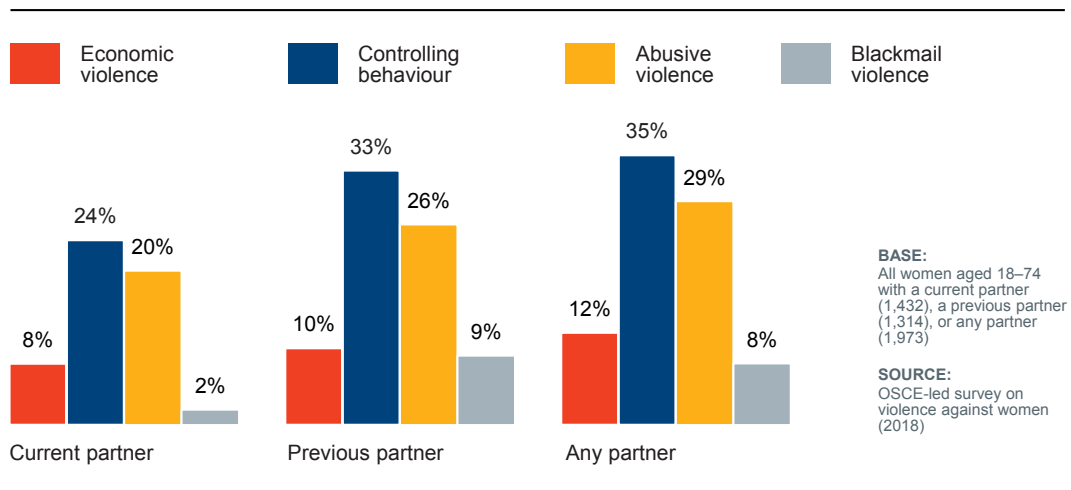


## In the qualitative research, psychological violence was considered to be very common in Serbia and was viewed as a precursor to other forms of violence, most notably physical violence.

Overall, 35% of women who have ever had a partner have experienced controlling behaviours and 29% abusive behaviours. Twelve percent say they have experienced economic violence, while 8% of ever-partnered women who have children say they have been blackmailed with her children or her children have been abused.

As seen in Figure 4.2, across most types of psychological violence, women are more likely to say they have experienced these types of behaviours in relation to a previous partner than they are a current partner.

**Figure 4.2: Prevalence of the different forms of intimate partner psychological violence**



The three most prevalent individual forms of psychological violence perpetrated by current partners are being belittled or humiliated in private, the partner getting angry if the woman speaks with another man and the partner insisting on knowing where the woman is going in a way that goes beyond general concern. These are also the most prevalent forms of psychological violence perpetrated by a previous partner, along with suspicion that the woman is being unfaithful and trying to keep her from seeing her friends.

Women in the qualitative research said that they felt that psychological violence is not easily recognized as violence by the women who experience it or by those who witness it. When perpetrated by a partner, the control exhibited by the perpetrator of violence is occasionally interpreted as care and love. Societal norms encourage women to accept controlling behaviour on the part of men and suggest that the men have a right to know a woman's whereabouts. Exhibiting jealous behaviour, such as getting angry at a woman for speaking with another man and being suspicious of her fidelity is romanticized as evidence of passion and love. The women interviewed for this report stated that they would be unlikely to take action in response to this form of violence if they experienced it or would be unlikely to intervene if they witnessed it. This may be due to their fear of not being taken seriously, as the following statement shows:

**“Psychological violence is considered normal. If you tell someone that your husband is abusing you psychologically, no one will take you seriously.**

**Female, aged 35–55, urban, minority group (Bosniak)**

Furthermore, possibly as a consequence of the patriarchal culture and upbringing, some older women stated that this form of violence was sometimes the fault of the women who experienced it, as they might have provoked their partner.

**“I think that it is about a woman's tongue, she is sometimes unable to stop talking.**

**Female, aged 56+, urban, conflict-affected**

Women who have been victims of psychological violence said that they did not report it until it was combined with other forms of violence, mainly physical. Some of the facets of psychological violence and coercive control are still deemed acceptable in society, their effects not as readily visible as in the case of physical violence. Consequently, these women reported incidents of psychological violence to organizations when other forms of violence appeared.

### 4.2: Stalking

Stalking<sup>67</sup> has been experienced by 11% of the women surveyed 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 Romania and Lithuania to 33% in Sweden) but close to the indicated prevalence in Croatia (13%). The most common forms of stalking are offensive, threatening or silent phone calls (6%) and sending e-mails, text messages or instant messages that are offensive or threatening (4%).

<sup>67</sup> 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.

# Societal norms encourage women to accept controlling behaviour on the part of men and suggest that the men have a right to know a woman's whereabouts.

While stalkers are often unknown (43% of victims say they did not know the perpetrator or that the perpetrator was unknown), previous partners are identified as the responsible party by 31% of those who report having been stalked. A friend, acquaintance or neighbour was the next most commonly mentioned party (17%). Thirty per cent of the most serious cases ended after a few days and 56 % in less than three months. Sometimes, however, stalking continues for a long time: in 18% of cases, it lasted over two years and in 6% of cases over five years, compared to the EU average, where stalking lasted two to five years in 10% of cases and over five years in 11% of cases.

The most serious experience generally annoyed the victim (62%) or made her angry (46%), but in 36% of cases it also frightened the victim. Long-term psychological consequences include anxiety (21%) and being left feeling vulnerable (19%). After most incidents, women talked it over with friends or relatives. In the EU, most women also talked with friends (77%), but in 44% of cases, the women surveyed in Serbia confronted the perpetrator, and in over a quarter of cases, they threatened them with police or court action, which was similar to the EU average.

While stalking was not viewed as a common type of violence by women in the qualitative research, some women with experience of violence described stalking as forming part of their wider experiences of intimate partner violence. In these cases, stalking was described as the final stage of a long-term experience of violence and the method that the perpetrator used in order to retain power over the woman and to intimidate her after the formal and definitive termination of their relationship.

### 4.3: Sexual harassment

Forty-two per cent of the women surveyed say they have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment<sup>68</sup> (as listed in table 4.3) since they were 15 years old. This is particularly prevalent among women under 30 (54%) and among women who do not have or have not had children (53%). Eighteen per cent of women surveyed say they experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey, with the highest prevalence among women under 30 (32%) and among those who do not have or have not had children (30%). It is less likely to be experienced by women whose main activity is fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities (25%), which could be due to the fact that they spend more time at home and are not in the workforce, where sexual harassment often happens.

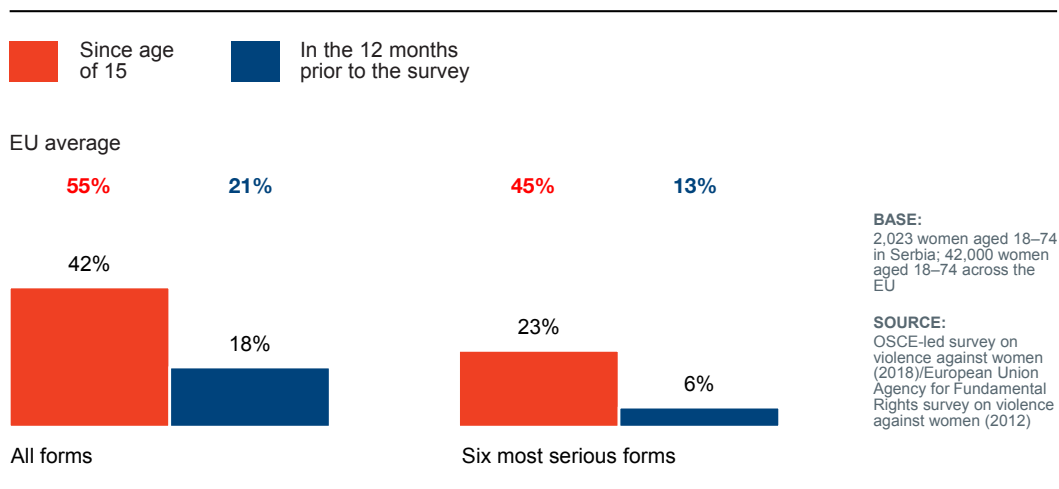
68 In terms of sexual harassment, women in the survey were asked: How often from the time you were 15 years old until now/in the past 12 months have you experienced any of the following: 1) unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing? 2) sexually suggestive comments or jokes that offended you? 3) inappropriate 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 made 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.

## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia

Twenty-three per cent of women report having experienced more serious sexual harassment, with 6% of surveyed women reporting having experienced it in the 12 months prior to the survey.<sup>69</sup>

The proportion of women who disclose that they have experienced sexual harassment in the EU is 55%, ranging from 24% in Bulgaria to 81% in Sweden. Serbia's average is slightly lower than the EU average and about the same as neighbouring Croatia (41%). Interestingly, 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 they have experienced sexual harassment.

**Figure 4.3: Prevalence of sexual harassment**



Women surveyed in the qualitative research for this report said that sexual harassment in Serbia was a common experience for women, usually starting during adolescence. Early experiences included unwanted touching by adolescent boys, which was considered normal behaviour by everyone around them and not taken seriously by adults who were aware of it.

In adult life, the women interviewed described experiencing sexual harassment at work, by colleagues, especially those in senior positions, as well as by strangers in public spaces such as parks.

The most common forms of sexual harassment women said they had experienced were intimidation by means of staring or leering or intrusive and offensive questions about their private life, each of which was reported by 20% of women as having happened since they were 15 years old (Table 4.4). Each of these types of sexual harassment was also experienced particularly by women under 30, who also encountered most of the forms of sexual harassment asked about in the research. In the EU, the most common type of sexual harassment experienced by women was also inappropriate staring or leering (30% versus 21% in Serbia)

<sup>69</sup> 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 made 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.

**Table 4.4: Prevalence 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, until now, have you experienced any of the following?

	Never %	Once %	2-5 times %	6+ times %
Unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing	86	5	5	2
Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated	75	6	10	4
Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended	82	4	7	4
Somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos or gifts that made you feel offended	96	2	1	1
Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates	85	5	4	2
Intrusive questions about your private life that made you feel offended	77	4	9	7
Intrusive comments about your physical appearance that made you feel offended	84	3	6	4
Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you (if applicable)	86	2	2	1
Inappropriate advances that offended you on social networking websites such as Facebook, or in internet chat rooms	65	3	5	2
Somebody indecently exposing themselves to you	96	3	1	1
Somebody made you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes	99	0.1	0.1	0.2

BASE: 2,023 women aged 18–74 in Serbia

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

Some 59% of women surveyed (compared with the EU average of 68%) who have experienced sexual harassment say the perpetrator was unknown. Almost half of cases were perpetrated by a friend, acquaintance or neighbour (45% compared with 31% in the EU)<sup>70</sup>, 28% by someone else known to the woman, but not specified from the available categories<sup>71</sup> (35% in the EU) and 20% by someone in an employment context (32% in the EU).

<sup>70</sup> The FRA survey included the category of “friend/acquaintance” but not “neighbour”.

<sup>71</sup> The categories were “current partner”, “previous partner”, “boss/supervisor”, “colleague/co-worker”, “client/customer/patient”, “teacher/trainer/coach”, “fellow student”, “doctor/healthcare worker”, “relative/family member (other than partner)”, “partner’s relative/family member”, “a date/someone you just met” – each of these was mentioned in smaller proportions.

## In 21% of the most serious incidents of sexual harassment, more than one person was reportedly involved

While perpetrators of sexual harassment tend to be men, this is not always the case. Men are identified as the perpetrators by 58% of women who say they have experienced sexual harassment. Women only are mentioned by 5% of victims, while 33% say that both men and women were involved. Women acting alone or with men are particularly common among the categories of family and friends, acquaintances and neighbours. In 21% of the most serious incidents of sexual harassment, more than one person was reportedly involved.

### 4.4: Physical and sexual violence at the hands of non-partners

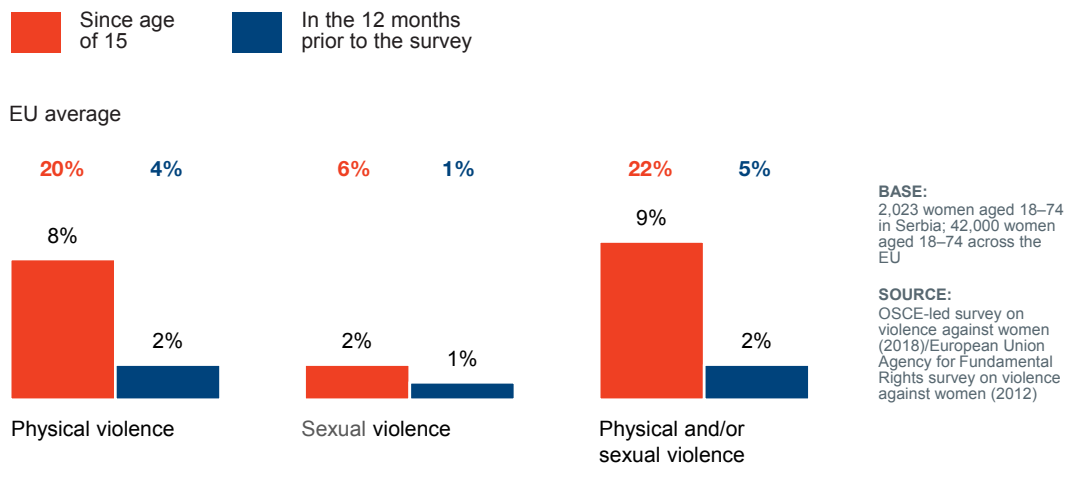
Women who took part in the qualitative research who had experienced violence said that psychological violence, sexual harassment and sexual violence were the most common forms of non-partner violence. They described how, in small towns and villages, women are often exposed to repeated unavoidable contact with perpetrators. In particular, it was hard for women to distance themselves from family members who had committed violence against them.

According to the survey results 8% of women overall say that they have experienced physical violence<sup>72</sup> at the hands of a non-partner since they were 15 years old (2% in the 12 months prior to the survey), while 2% say they have experienced sexual violence<sup>73</sup> (1% in the 12 months prior to the survey) (Figure 4.4). These results are much lower than the EU average of 20% of women ever experiencing physical violence at the hands of a non-partner (ranging from 10% in Austria, Greece, Poland and Portugal to 36% in Denmark). Six per cent of women in the EU indicated that they had experienced sexual violence at the hands of non-partners, ranging from 1% in Greece and Portugal to 12% in Sweden.

<sup>72</sup> The prevalence of physical violence is calculated on the basis of the number of women who say they have experienced at least one of the following forms of violence since the age of 15 or in the 12 months prior to the survey: being pushed or shoved, being slapped having a hard object thrown at them, being grabbed or pulled by the hair, being punched or beaten with a hard object or being kicked, being burned, being suffocated or strangled, being cut or stabbed or shot at, having their head beaten against something.

<sup>73</sup> The prevalence of sexual violence is calculated on the basis of the number of women who say they have experienced at least one of the following forms of violence since the age of 15 or in the 12 months prior to the survey: being forced to have sexual intercourse by being held down or injured in some way, an attempt to force them to have sexual intercourse by holding them down or hurting them in some way, being forced to take part in any form of sexual activity when they did not want to or were unable to refuse, consenting to sexual activity because they were afraid of what might happen if they refused.

Figure 4.4: Prevalence of non-partner physical and/or sexual violence

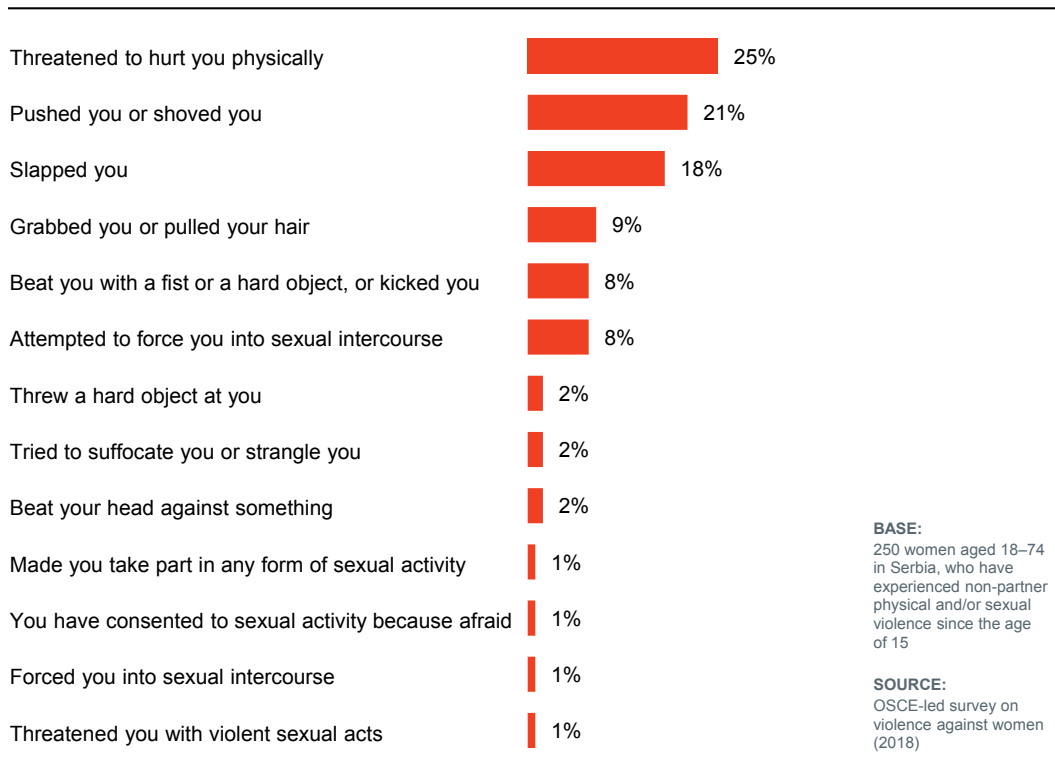


The most prevalent form of physical violence committed by a non-partner is pushing or shoving the victim, which was experienced by 6% of women. This was also the most prevalent form of physical violence by non-partners in the EU, which was indicated by 13% of women.

The most serious incidents (the incidents that had the most impact on the victim, including threats of physical or sexual violence) involving non-partners tend to be physical rather than sexual (Figure 3.9) About a quarter of women surveyed identified “being threatened with physical violence” or “being pushed or shoved” as the most serious forms of violence ever experienced at the hands of a non-partner. Women over 60 (37%) are much more likely than women under 30 (7%) to say the most serious incident they have experienced involved being threatened with physical violence, while they are much less likely to say it was being pushed or shoved around (7% compared with 43%).

**Figure 4.5: 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.

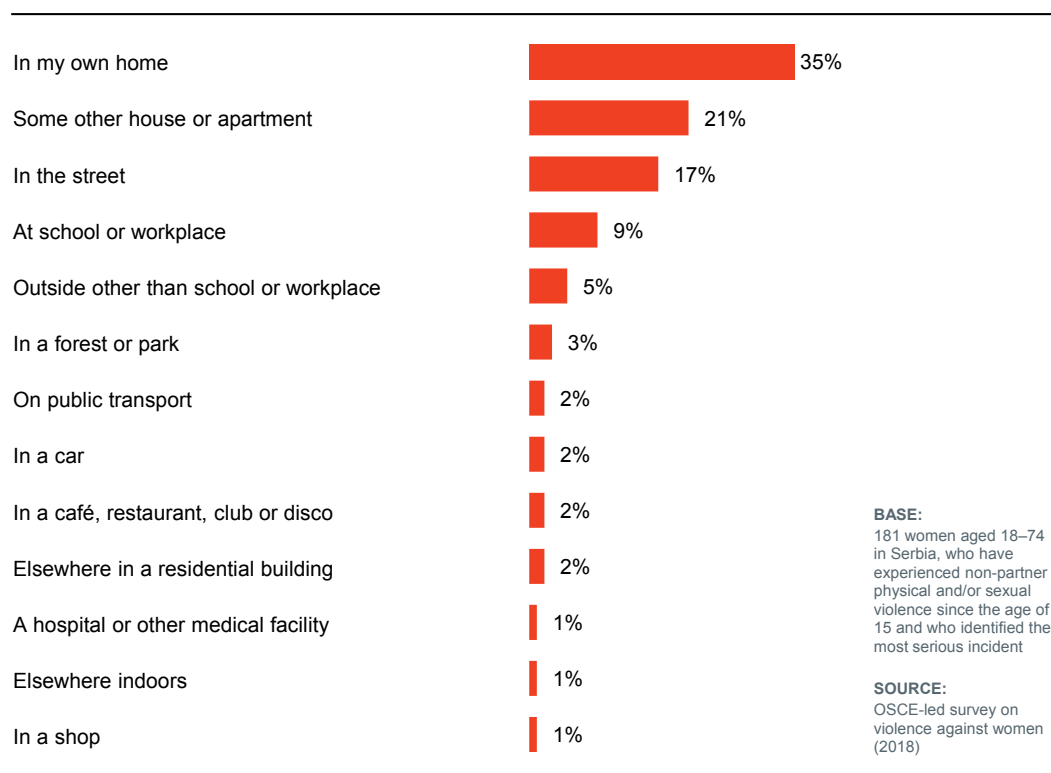


Over half of the most serious incidents reported (55%) took place in a house or apartment, in most cases in the woman’s own home (Figure 4.6). This is similar to the EU, where the most serious incident is also said to have happened most often in the woman’s own home (27% on average compared with 35% in Serbia).



**Figure 4.6: 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?



#### 4.4.1: Perpetrators

Thirty per cent of the women surveyed agree that women are more likely to be raped by a stranger than by somebody they know, but the data on the actual experiences by women in Serbia suggests otherwise. Most women survivors of non-partner sexual violence identify their perpetrators as someone they knew, such as a friend, acquaintance or neighbour (36%), while in 26% of cases, women say that they did not know the perpetrator. The percentage of unknown perpetrators in Serbia is higher than the EU average of 23%.

Friends, acquaintances or neighbours are also identified as the perpetrators of non-partner physical violence most often (29%), followed by the survivors' own relative (22%) or someone else the victim knew but did not specify any further from the list of available categories (14%).<sup>74</sup> In 17% of cases, the victim did not know the perpetrator, which is lower than the EU average (31%).

Men are identified as the perpetrators of non-partner physical violence by 72% of those women who have experienced non-partner violence, with 61% of survivors mentioning a man only and 11% that both men and women were involved. Women are identified by 26% (with 15% mentioning women only). The remainder (13%) do not know the gender of the perpetrator or prefer not to say. Three-quarters of survivors of sexual violence say the perpetrator was a man (73%), while the remainder did not know or preferred not to say.<sup>75</sup>

In four out of five of the most serious incidents identified, perpetrators acted alone. Twenty-three per cent of the most serious incidents were perpetrated by someone who was drunk or under the influence of drugs.

<sup>74</sup> The categories were: "boss/supervisor", "colleague/co-worker", "client/customer/patient", "teacher/trainer/coach", "fellow student", "doctor/healthcare worker", "relative/family member (other than partner)", "partner's relative/family member", "a date/someone you just met" – each of these was mentioned in smaller proportions.

<sup>75</sup> CAUTION: Small base (n=44)

The women who took part in the qualitative research identified various types of non-partner perpetrators of violence, including family members (fathers, brothers and parents-in-law), colleagues (especially in senior positions) and strangers. They said that they believed that violence perpetrated by co-workers was most likely to be verbal or sexual harassment. They also said that perpetrators of psychological violence were sometimes other women, as well as strangers who might be likely to verbally insult women on the street.

**“Yes, it is becoming normal to be shouted at, to be addressed in an aggressive manner.”**

**Female, aged 18–29, rural**

The women interviewed also identified men in positions of authority as perpetrators of violence. For example, they said that those who knew that they would be protected, like police officers, committed violence against women, though very few cases are indicated as being perpetrated by such individuals in the survey data.

Roma women said that they thought that women in their community were at particular risk of experiencing violence at the hands of their parents-in-law and that psychological violence was prevalent. It is common in the Roma community for married couples to live in the husband’s home along with his family, which means that a woman would have to obey her parents-in-law as well as her husband.

### **4.5: Experience of violence during childhood**

Thirty per cent of the women surveyed indicate that they experienced a form of physical violence<sup>76</sup> (as listed in Figure 4.7) at the hands of an adult before they were 15 years old, compared to 27% in the EU.

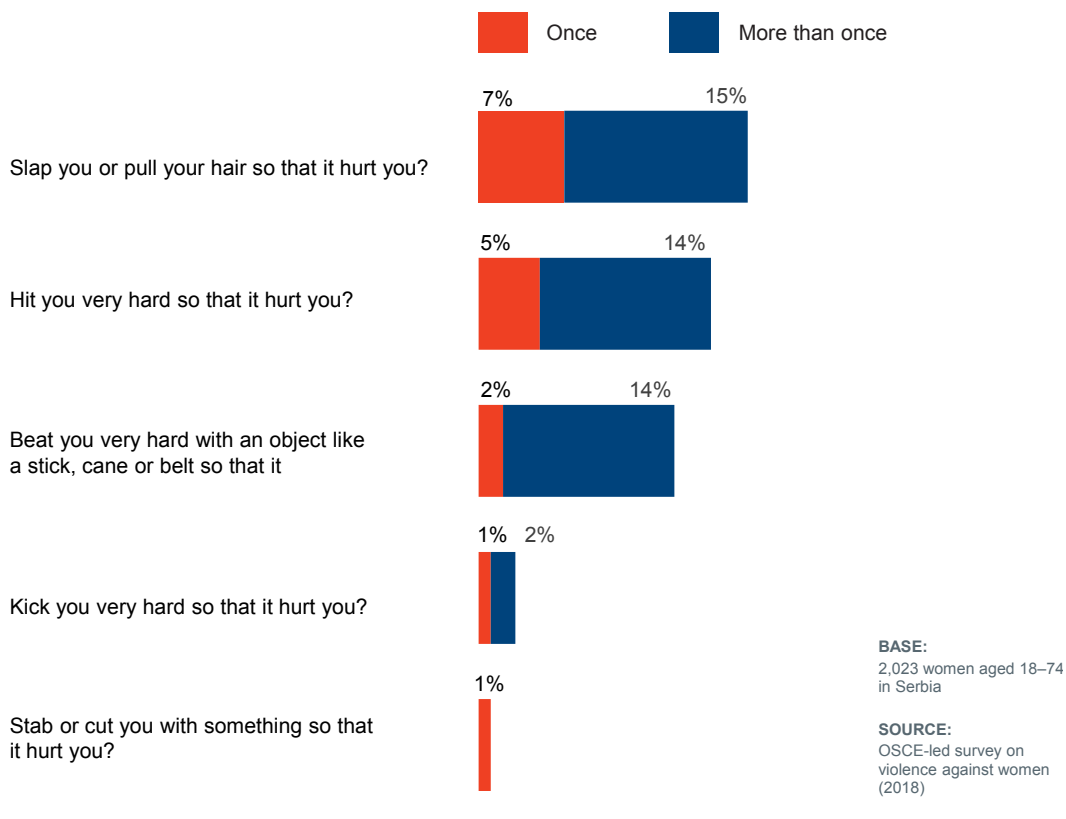
About one in five women surveyed were, as children, slapped or had their hair pulled to the extent that it hurt (22%, the same as the EU average) or were hit very hard (19%), and 15% were beaten very hard with a stick or cane. The primary perpetrators of this violence were their parents.

Aside from being stabbed or cut with something, all other forms of childhood physical violence were indicated as having been experienced more than once by at least half of those women who had experienced each form.

<sup>76</sup> 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.

**Figure 4.7: Experiences of physical violence before the age of 15**

Before you were 15 years old, how often did any adult, do any of the following to you



Women who report having experienced sexual violence in childhood were abused by people that they knew, e.g., someone in their extended family or friends of their family network. Women who experienced this often describe feeling an intense sense of guilt that they had caused the violence in some way, and very few of them ever told anyone about it. This is reflected in the statistics, which show that only 1% of the women surveyed disclose incidents of sexual violence in their childhood. This compares to the EU average of 12%, ranging from 1% in Romania to 20% in France and the Netherlands. In neighbouring Croatia, 2% of women aged 18–74 at the time of the EU survey said they had experienced childhood sexual violence. Again, countries where women feel that domestic violence is a private issue and where there is a culture of silence tend to have lower rates of women sharing these experiences than in countries with a longer tradition of raising awareness about violence against women.

Women who experienced some form of childhood violence are more likely to say they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of both non-partners and partners: 17% of women who experienced childhood violence say they have experienced non-partner violence, compared with 6% of those who did not experience childhood violence. For current partner violence, the respective figures are 17% and 6%; for previous partner violence, they are 24% and 15%, respectively.



26%

**A quarter of women could be defined  
as directly conflict-affected in Serbia**

## 5. Conflict and violence

### 5.1: Conflict-related experiences

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.

Over a quarter of Serbian women indicated that they have lived in a situation where there was an active armed conflict for a period of at least one week. For most, their personal experience of conflict is related to the 1999 NATO intervention in Serbia.

Of these, nine out of ten actually heard gunshots or the sound of bombing or shelling in the area where they were living, and a quarter of them lived for at least a week where armed personnel were stationed or moved in larger numbers. One in ten indicated seeing fighting where they were living. One in seven indicated having lost their accommodations or property; in some cases, it was taken by armed groups. One in five were in a family where a man was away from home, and one in seven had a spouse or family member who took part in the fighting. For almost one in three, it was not possible to find work. Another third indicated that they had to flee or temporarily evacuate, with the majority later being able to return home.

In conclusion, 26% of women can be considered to be directly conflict-affected,<sup>77</sup> which is defined as having lived through a period of conflict and having at least one of the conflict-related experiences discussed above.

<sup>77</sup> 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?”

## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia

Those considered directly 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 four in ten had at least one of the experiences listed in Table 5.1. This rises to 64% in the southern and eastern parts of Serbia.

**Table 5.1: Experiences of directly conflict-affected women**

Please tell me whether 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)	21
Health services (including women's health services) that you previously used were unavailable or inaccessible for a longer period of time	18
No law enforcement (police or other organization to keep law and order) present in your local area, for a prolonged time	14
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.)	13
An immediate family member or your spouse or partner was injured or died due to fighting/violence?	6
Members of armed groups harassed local women in the area where you lived	5
Armed groups deliberately used threats, rumours or actual violence against women to terrify the local population in the area where you lived	4
Members of armed groups employed deeply humiliating practices against local women in the area where you lived	2
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	1

**BASE:** 539 women aged 18–74 in Serbia who have been affected by armed conflict  
**SOURCE:** OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

### 5.2: Conflict and violence against women

While the list of perpetrators of sexual harassment and non-partner violence includes armed individuals, guards at checkpoints and international peacekeepers, observers or aid workers, very few women who say they have experienced sexual harassment or non-partner violence identify these as the perpetrators of the harassment or violence they experienced.

Women identified as directly conflict-affected were asked if their experiences of sexual harassment or physical and sexual violence at the hands of partners or non-partners were connected with an armed conflict or not.

Of those directly conflict-affected women who have experienced non-partner physical violence (including threats of it), 17% connect this with the conflict they lived through, and the same is true for 11% who experienced physical violence at the hands of a current or previous partner.<sup>78</sup>

When comparing the prevalence of various forms of physical and sexual violence between those whose partners fought in an armed conflict and those who did not, a number of differences are noted, which suggests that women are more vulnerable to violence if their partner has been involved in a conflict. For example, women whose current partners have fought in an armed conflict are two to four times more likely to have been threatened with physical violence (9% versus 3%), to have been pushed or shoved (11% versus 5%), to have been slapped (12% versus 6%) or to have been grabbed (9% versus 3%) and forced by their current partner to perform sexual acts against their will (4% versus 1%). Similarly, where the previous partner who perpetrated the violence had fought in an armed conflict, the prevalence of most forms of physical and sexual violence is higher.<sup>79</sup>

Women's psychological reactions to violence are more pronounced among those who are directly conflict-affected. Among women who experienced non-partner violence,<sup>80</sup> for example, they are more likely to experience difficulty sleeping (37%) and panic attacks (22%) than women who did not experience armed conflict (23% and 12%, respectively) in relation to the most serious incident reported.

Today, out of all women who indicated in the quantitative research that they were directly conflict-affected and suffer from an illness or disability, one in six attribute this to that conflict.

In the qualitative research, there was widespread agreement that the Yugoslav conflicts exacerbated violence in general, including violence against women. Women felt that rising tensions, which were due to poverty, unemployment, political turmoil and economic crisis, made men more aggressive and prone to violence. They also placed emphasis on the psychological trauma of war, explaining that many of the people who were involved developed mental illnesses such as post-traumatic stress disorder as a consequence of the conflict, which also contributed to higher rates of gender-based violence. Some also felt that difficult conditions led to alcohol and substance abuse, which in turn also increased violence.

<sup>78</sup> The base size for sexual violence was too low to report on.

<sup>79</sup> Given the low base size of previous partners who had fought in an armed conflict (52), caution should be applied when interpreting these findings

<sup>80</sup> These differences are between women who are conflict-affected and those who are not conflict-affected.

## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia

One of the effects of conflict that came up regularly was the breakdown of multi-ethnic communities that had lived together previously, with rising hatred and violence along ethnic lines.

**“Concretely, the wars of the nineties had a great impact: in Croatia and Bosnia, marriages were breaking down. Before that, we had brotherhood and unity, no one paid attention to these ethnic differences, people fell in love and got married regardless of nationality. When the war broke out, families started to break down”**

**Female, aged 18–34, rural**

Several participants gave first-hand accounts of the psychological violence they experienced during the conflict, in particular bullying and harassment because of their ethnicity. Rape was seen as a common form of intimidation used to bring shame on families of minority groups.

**“They kept criticizing [my boyfriend] because he was with me, a Hungarian. They were telling him to leave me, that he didn’t need a Hungarian girlfriend.”**

**Female, in-depth interview, aged 35–55 (Hungarian)**

In addition to this, the women discussed the psychological impact that fighting had on men involved in the conflicts and the long-term impact this has had on their mental health. They believed that these men were more likely to commit acts of violence, including against their partners and other members of their family.

### Case study: A’s story

- A is 46 years old. When she was 17, she missed the bus and decided to walk to school. On the way, she was assaulted by a teenage boy but was able to defend herself. She thinks that he attacked her because of her ethnicity.
- Because of the ongoing armed conflict at that time, A decided to leave her home, along with her young daughter and her husband. She and her husband had both lost their jobs. Her neighbourhood was unsafe, and bombing raids were ongoing.
- A is now a widow. She does not have access to social benefits because she is not recognized as a single mother, despite being a widow.
- A does not have refugee status, and she has had many issues getting documentation. The apartment she and her husband bought is not recognized as being hers. Her ID card is registered at a friend’s address because, in order to register her address at the apartment she is living in, she would need to stay home every day for two or three months so that the authorities could confirm that she lives there.



Among those who have experienced violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner, 5% say they were assaulted or threatened with a firearm (a total of 19 respondents).

When discussing the factors that might have contributed to an increase in cases of violence against women in Serbia, women in the qualitative research mentioned the extensive availability of firearms during and after the armed conflicts as a key factor. They said a considerable portion of army-issued firearms were retained by soldiers after they returned, which they either kept at home or passed on to others, and that these firearms have been used against women ever since

**“People have a lot of firearms in their possession. If you have it at home, you can easily use it”**

**Female, aged 56+, urban, conflict-affected**



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

**Seven in ten women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner had a longer-term psychological response to the most serious incident.**

**The police were contacted about the most serious incident in less than 10% of cases of current partner violence.**

## 6. Impact of violence on women's lives and barriers to seeking support

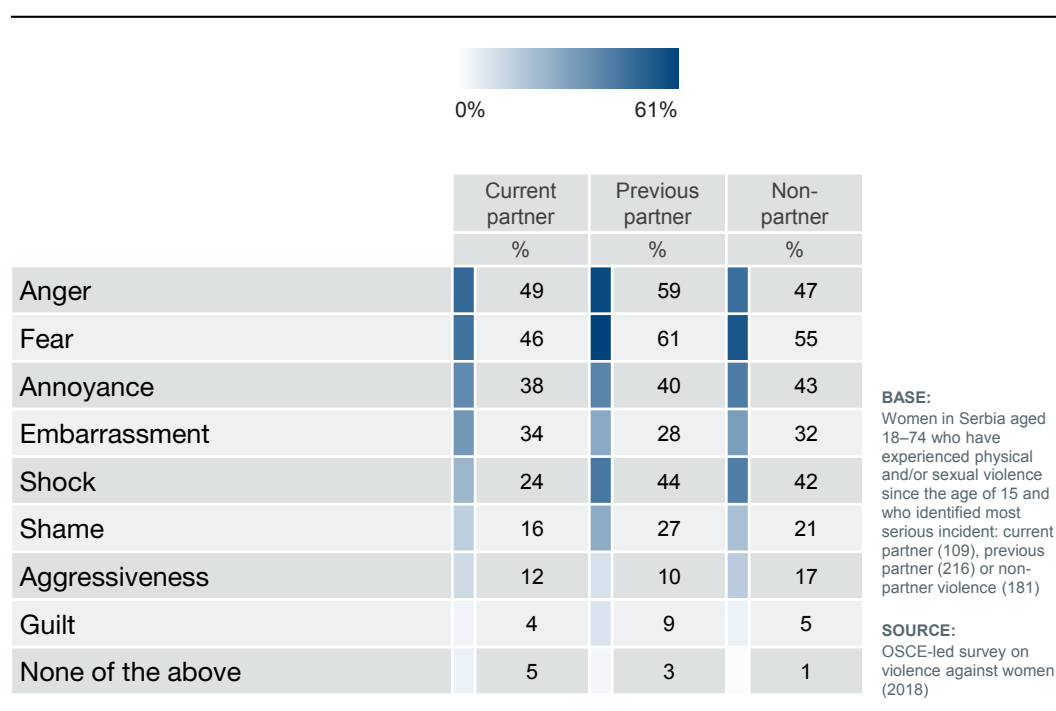
This chapter provides an overview of the impact of violence on women's well-being, whether they reported their experiences to anyone, and if they did, how satisfied they were with the response. Throughout these questions, women were asked about the impact of the most serious incident of physical or sexual violence, which included threats of both. The most serious incident was defined as the one that had the most impact on the woman, either psychologically or physically.

### Psychological effects and physical injuries

Almost all of the women who shared experiences of physical or sexual violence experienced at least one of the emotions set out in Table 6.1. Regardless of their relationship with the perpetrator, the most common emotional responses were fear, anger or both, reactions typically felt by half of those affected, both in Serbia and in the EU. Survivors of previous partner violence were particularly likely to report having had these reactions (three out of five women).

**Table 6.1: Thinking about the most serious incident, did you feel any of the following as a result?**

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



**BASE:** Women in Serbia aged 18–74 who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 and who identified most serious incident: current partner (109), previous partner (216) or non-partner violence (181)

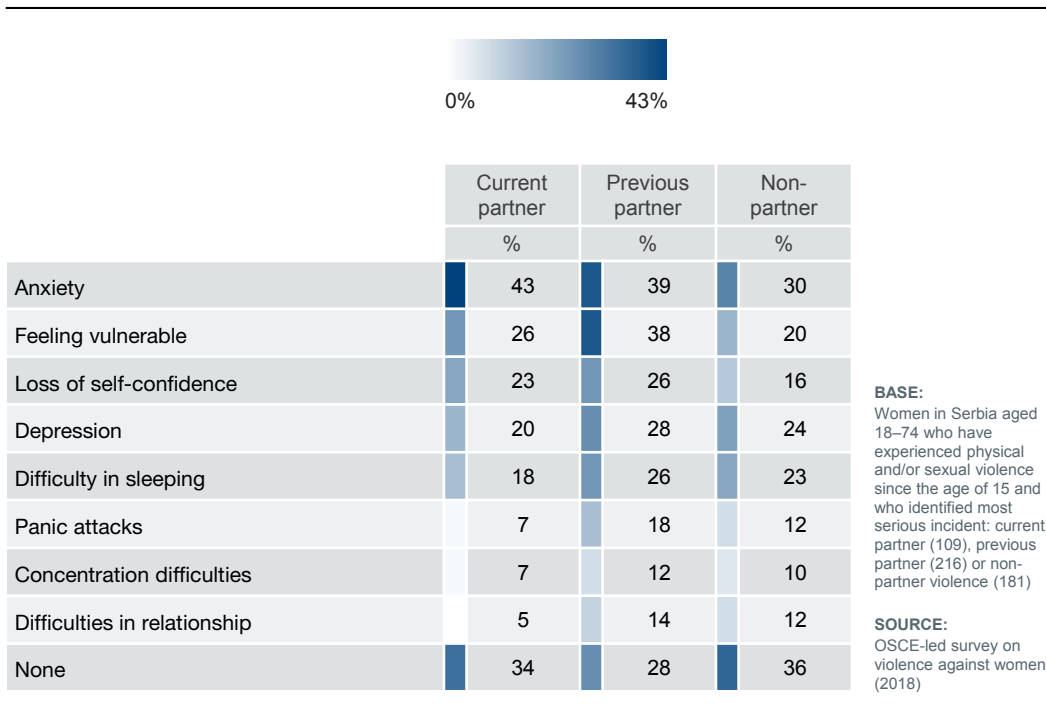
**SOURCE:** OSCE-led survey on violence against women (2018)

Similar emotions resulted from sexual harassment. While fear was less often evoked in response to the most serious incident of harassment, 47% felt embarrassed and 43% felt angry. This illustrates the fact that the responsibility for sexual harassment is often placed on the victim and her actions rather than on the perpetrator.

Sixty-four per cent of survivors of physical and/or sexual violence also felt the impact of at least one of the longer-term psychological reactions listed in Table 6.2 as a result of the most serious incident. The most common reactions include anxiety, feeling vulnerable, depression and difficulty sleeping. Anxiety and vulnerability were also the most common reactions in the EU. As with the emotional impacts discussed above, the impact of violence perpetrated by a previous partner is generally more pronounced than that 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 may cause. As mentioned in Chapter 5, some reactions were more pronounced among women who had experienced armed conflict.

**Table 6.2: Psychological consequences of physical and/or sexual violence (most serious incident)**

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



**BASE:** Women in Serbia aged 18–74 who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 and who identified most serious incident: current partner (109), previous partner (216) or non-partner violence (181)

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

Two-thirds of those who experienced sexual harassment say that there was no longer-term psychological impact from the most serious incident. However, 21% suffered anxiety, and 10% felt vulnerable. In the EU, 14% suffered anxiety, and 20% felt vulnerable. Cultural context is important here, specifically the acceptance of sexual harassment in society as illustrated by the qualitative research on sexual harassment above.

For those who experienced armed conflict, 36% suffered anxiety, and 18% felt vulnerable following the most serious incident identified. In fact, the data shows that this particular group of women were more susceptible to all the psychological effects listed in Table 6.2.

## 6. Impact of violence on women's lives and barriers to seeking support

Women who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) discussed experiences of both psychological and physical violence in the qualitative research. They described the severe psychological pain IPV caused them and said that, even during instances of physical violence, they were more hurt by the fact that someone who they loved would hurt them in this way. The women said these experiences and feelings were difficult for them to process, and this caused some women to question whether the violence happened in response to their behaviour, and so the only action they took was to try to change the way they behaved in the hope that the violence would stop.

The emotional connection to their partner meant that women struggled to immediately recognize IPV for what it was, as this violence was sometimes interpreted as an expression of care and love, e.g., controlling behaviours could be interpreted as care or concern and jealousy as sincere affection or desire. These interpretations of violence as acts of love acted as a barrier to women reporting the violence they experienced. Some women also indicated that they would continue with a relationship because of the other, more positive aspects of it, despite the violence.

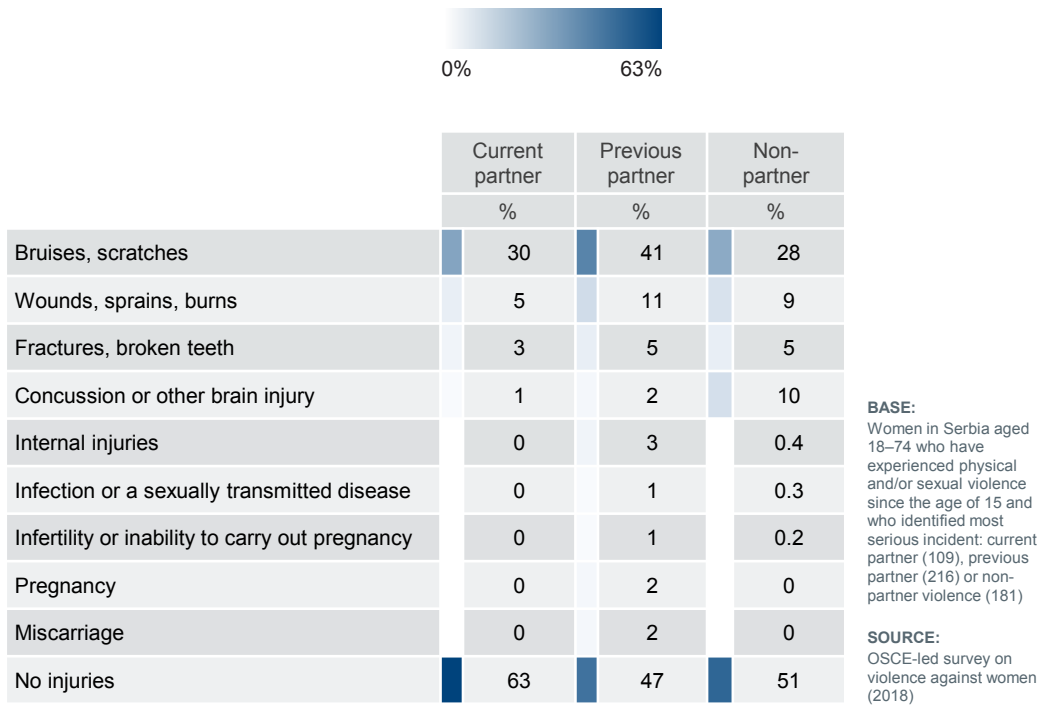
Women in the qualitative research who had experienced IPV over a long period of time described how they became distanced from the violence and felt like it was happening to someone else. It seems that, as they were experiencing violence, they did not have anyone to share it with and they did not process these experiences. Distancing themselves from the experience was used as a coping mechanism. Women who shared experiences of sexual violence, including rape by a stranger, described experiencing long-term psychological problems.

Indeed, the survey shows that fewer women suffered from a physical injury than from emotional or psychological impacts in relation to the most serious incident of violence, although many are still affected physically. Thirty-three per cent of the women surveyed indicate having suffered from a physical injury following the most serious incident of current partner violence, but this increases to 44% among women who experienced violence at the hands of their previous partner.

Across all perpetrator types, bruises or scratches were the most common type of injury.

**Table 6.3: Physical injuries arising from physical and/or sexual violence (most serious incident)**

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



**The most-mentioned source of information, advice or support women say they wanted after the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by their partner, both in Serbia and the EU, was just someone to talk to who could provide moral support**

## 6. Impact of violence on women's lives and barriers to seeking support

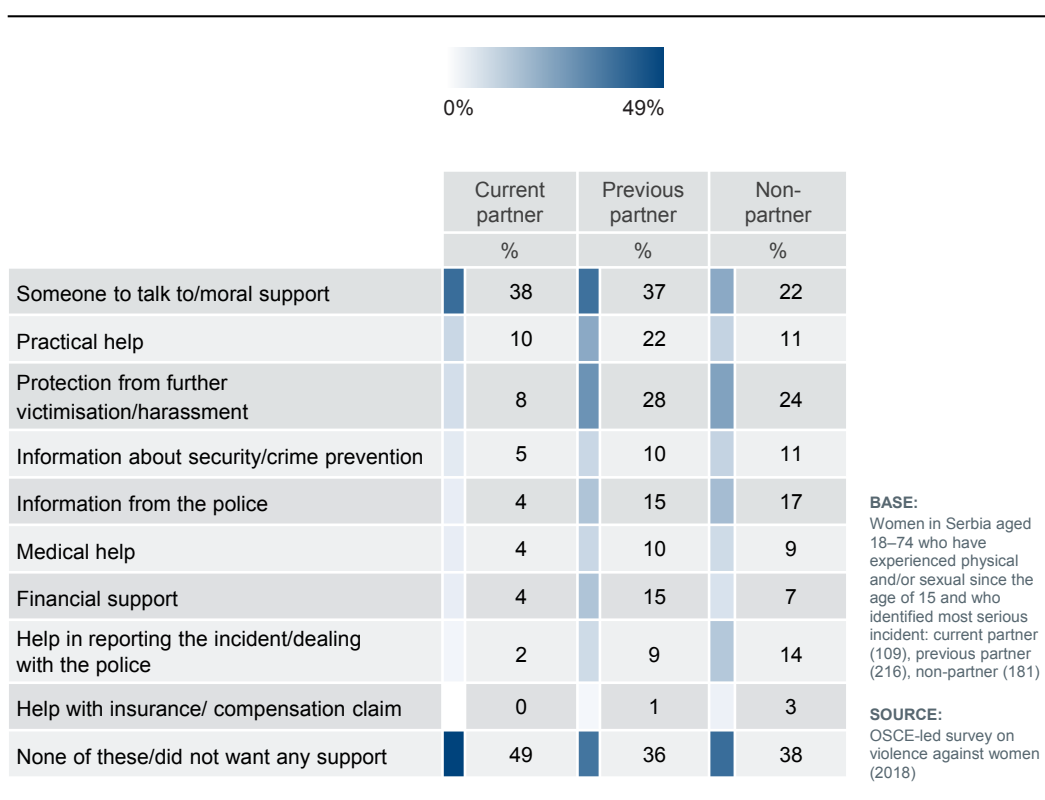
### 6.2: Support that survivors of violence want

All respondents who had experienced physical or sexual violence were asked if they needed some type of assistance following the most serious incident that they had experienced.

The most-mentioned source of information, advice or support women say they wanted after the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by their partner, both in Serbia and the EU, was just someone to talk to who could provide moral support. Protection from further violence and harassment was particularly important for those whose previous partner had perpetrated the violence (28%), especially for women who were pregnant during the incident (62%) or whose children had witnessed incidents of violence (43%) involving their previous partner.

**Table 6.4: Types of information, advice and support wanted following an incident**

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



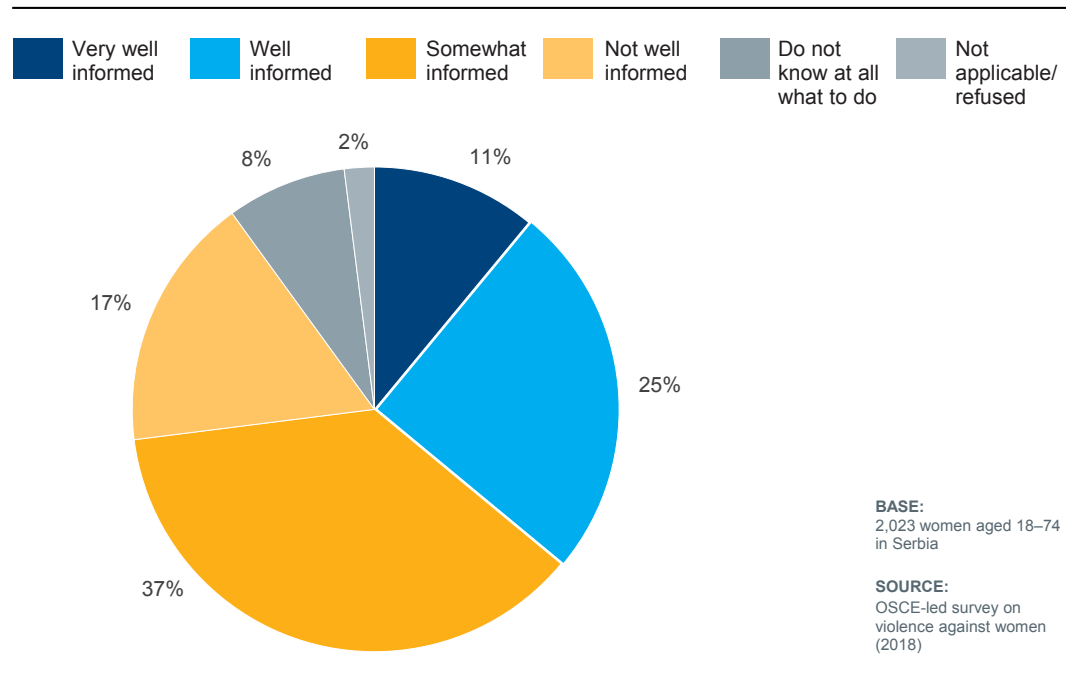
The type of support women want following experiences of violence was discussed in more detail during the in-depth interviews. Here, women who had experienced violence stated that psychological help, namely a conversation with a professional, was vital for them but not always available. Some of these women had visited medical institutions, but they were referred to psychiatrists, who would only provide medication. Women felt 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.

In addition, the qualitative research illustrates that confidence in institutions was very low, particularly in smaller towns and villages. This was because women had heard of many cases where professionals had not acted objectively and independently but rather based on their social connections and their personal beliefs.

Around a third of women they feel very well or well informed about what to do if they experienced violence (36%), while 25% say they do not feel well informed or do not know what to do at all.

**Figure 6.1: Awareness of what to do after experiencing violence**

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



Women over 60 are more likely to say that do not feel well informed or do not know what to do at all (31%) as are those who have no formal education or only primary education (55%).

Of the three special support organizations that the women surveyed were asked about for this report, the one that was most recognized was Savetovaliste za borbu protiv nasilja u porodici, Beograd (Domestic Violence Counselling Centre, Belgrade), by 70% of women overall. Awareness of the Centre was generally consistent across demographics and areas, though its name was recognized by fewer women in Vojvodina (60%). The Autonomni zenski centar, Beograd (Autonomous Women’s Centre, Belgrade) was recognized by 35% of women overall, particularly among the better-educated (46%) and those living in Belgrade (45%), and once again less so in Vojvodina (25%). The regional SOS helpline for women victims of violence in Vojvodina was recognized by 23% of women across Serbia, again particularly by the better-educated (30%) and by those living in the Vojvodina region (33%).

Overall, three quarters of women have heard of at least one of the organizations asked about (73%). However, these organizations are not generally women’s first port of call after experiencing incidents of violence or sexual harassment, regardless of the perpetrator.



## 6. Impact of violence on women's lives and barriers to seeking support

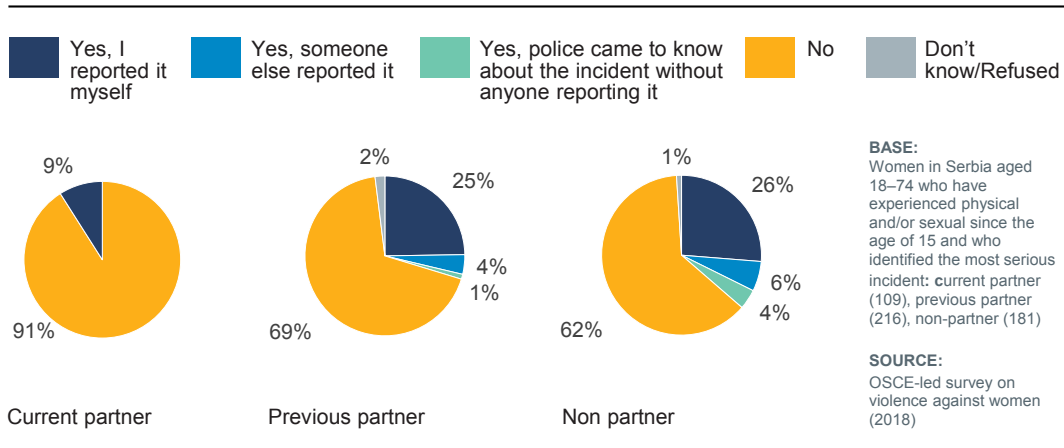
### 6.3: Reporting experiences of violence and harassment

In the survey, women were asked whether the police or other organizations were informed about the most serious incident of physical or sexual violence they had experienced, including threats of physical and sexual violence.

Even following the most serious incidents of physical and/or sexual violence, the police were not informed about it in the majority of cases, as seen in Figure 6.2 below

**Figure 6.2: Contact with the police following the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence**

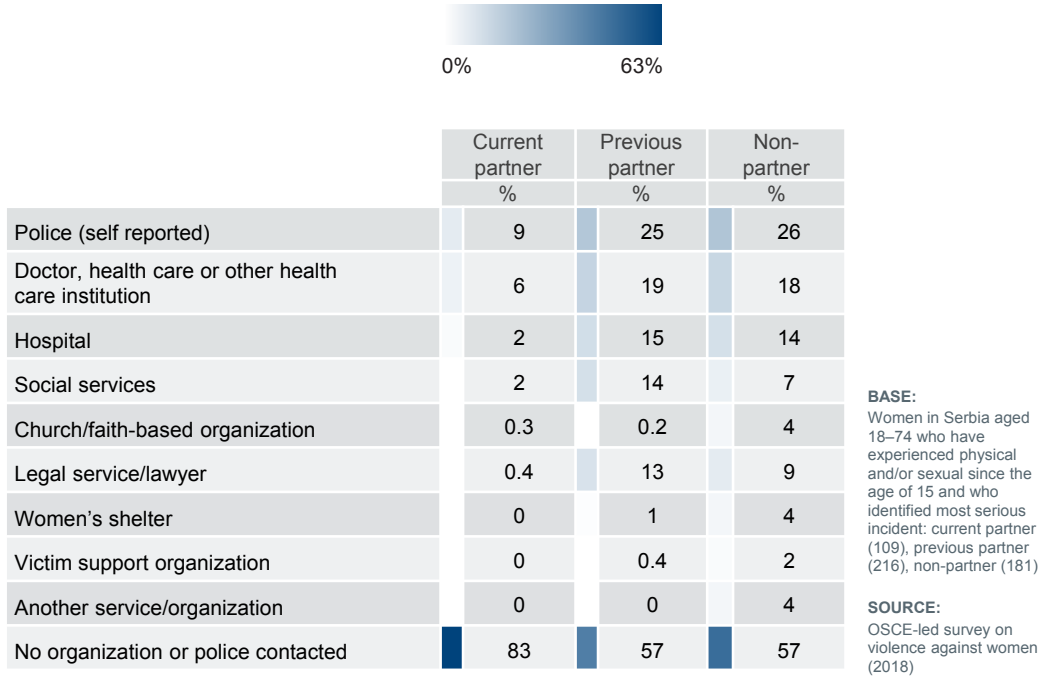
Did the police come to know about the [most serious] incident?



Women tended not to contact other services either. Overall, 59% of women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence did not contact the police or another organization following the most serious incident of violence although this varies, depending on the perpetrator. In relation to current partner violence, 83% of the women who identified a most serious incident did not contact the police or another organization, and the same is true for 57% of the most serious incidents of previous partner and non-partner violence.

**Table 6.5: Contacts after the most serious incident of physical and/or sexual violence**

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




## 6. Impact of violence on women's lives and barriers to seeking support

The main reason for not reporting the most serious incident of violence to the police is that the survivors preferred to deal with it by themselves, perhaps involving only friends and family. Other reasons include fear of the perpetrator, wanting to keep it private, considering it too minor or shameful and embarrassing, as detailed in Table 6.6 below.

**Table 6.6: Reasons victims did not contact the police**

Why did you not contact the police?



	Current partner	Previous partner	Non-partner
	%	%	%
Dealt with it myself/involved a friend/family member	57	50	44
Too minor/not serious enough/never occurred to me	23	15	17
Fear of partner/offender	16	14	15
Did not want anyone to know/kept it private	13	14	10
Shame/ embarrassment	12	11	12
Did not want the relationship to end	9	2	-
Did not think they could do anything	8	3	2
My partner did not let me	5	3	0
Did not want the offender arrested or to get in trouble with police	4	4	3
Afraid I would lose the children	4	4	-
Went someplace else for help	3	2	1
Did not think they would do anything	3	9	13
Too emotionally upset	2	6	5
Fear of reprisal from someone other than partner	2	2	1
Would not be believed	1	3	3
Thought it was my fault	1	4	1
Could not report to police because of conflict	1	1	2
Somebody else had reported it, or police came to know about it on their own	0	0	2
Somebody stopped me or discouraged me	0	1	1
Services were too far away or difficult to get to	0	0	0

**BASE:**  
Women aged 18–74 in Serbia who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence but who did not contact the police following the most serious incident: current partner (98), previous partner (156), non-partner (144)

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

Fear of the perpetrator applied particularly to women with a partner and children. While 16% of those who indicate that they have experienced violence at the hands of their partner did not call the police because of fear of the partner following the most serious incident, this rises to 40% among women who have or who have had children.

The reasons given for not contacting other services are similar to those given for not contacting the police.

Dealing with the incident themselves is the most common reason given for not contacting the police or other services (as in the EU). The barriers below, identified in the qualitative research, may contribute to women's decision to deal with incidents of violence themselves.

### Box 6.1: Barriers to reporting identified in the qualitative research included:

1. **Shame**, including shame associated with certain types of violence and shame associated with divorce.
2. **Economic dependency**, including concerns among victims that they would not be able to support themselves financially and would not receive support from their family.
3. **Mistrust of services**: fear that they would not be believed, especially in smaller towns where their partner might know people who could influence how a report is dealt with.
4. **Fear** that the perpetrator would find out if they told someone and that this could make the violence worse.

One of the key barriers to reporting violence identified in the qualitative research was shame. It was seen as shameful for a woman to not be able to make a marriage work. This shame would be felt both by the woman and by her family. Some women described feeling a huge sense of responsibility towards their parents because they wanted to spare their parents the shame of the relationship breaking down.

Being a survivor of non-partner sexual violence was viewed as being particularly shameful, and some women thought this was a barrier to women reporting this violence. Sexual violence within a relationship was also unlikely to be reported, as women did not think society accepted the notion that rape could occur within a marriage. This is possibly because sexual relations in a marriage are still considered a marital duty.

Women's financial dependence on their partners was considered one of the most significant barriers to reporting. This was compounded if the woman could also not rely on her birth family for support in leaving her partner. Lack of financial independence or support would mean that a woman would not have a place to live if she left the perpetrator. Three in ten women currently do not have a bank account of their own, according to the survey results.

## 6. Impact of violence on women's lives and barriers to seeking support

**“She is willing to suffer because of her economic situation or something. If she has no flat of her own or help from her parents, she doesn't have a choice.”**

**Female, aged 56+, urban, conflict-affected**

If a woman and the perpetrator have children, some of the women interviewed thought that the woman was even more likely to stay with her partner. Women were concerned about how they would be able to financially support their children without a partner. They were also concerned about the emotional impact on their children of being raised without a father.

**“They have no support. They have no place to go, no job, they need to watch over their children, school. They have no money. They could move on if they had all this. It's better to suffer than leave my children in the street.”**

**Female, aged 18–29, urban/rural, minority group (Roma)**

**“They don't want their children to grow up without one parent.”**

**Female, aged 18–29, urban/rural, minority group (Roma)**

Participants also thought that women would be unlikely to report violence because they did not think that they would be believed. Women who experienced violence thought they would be held responsible for the violence they experienced. Some also believed that women might not be aware of the available services and organizations.

In smaller towns and villages, women said that men had more social connections that helped them evade any consequences that might stem from being reported. As men had more leisure and social time than women, they had a greater number of social contacts and were more likely to know someone working within an institution that would deal with a report.

Some of the women who experienced violence stated that, even when they decided to report the violence to the authorities, their partner was able to evade prosecution because he knew some of the employees at the institutions involved. Women also feared revenge by the perpetrator upon finding out that they had reported the violence.

**“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)**

Another key barrier to accessing services was the lack of awareness about what was available and where women could go.

**“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**

On a positive note, 72% of women mention that they recently saw or heard campaigns addressing violence against women, and three-quarters of women say that they felt that they were at least somewhat informed about what to do if they experience violence themselves.

### Reporting sexual harassment

Thirty-nine per cent of women talked to no one about the sexual harassment they experienced. They say that they were able to deal with it themselves (66%) or that it was too minor an occurrence and that it might never have occurred to them to report it (32%). For a minority of respondents, however, other factors come into play: some say they wanted to keep it private (8%), some cite embarrassment or shame (6%), and others say they did not think it would help (6%).

For those who did talk about sexual harassment, the most common people to talk to were a friend (31%), a relative or family member (29%) or a boyfriend or partner (11%). Women's first thoughts were not to reach out to specialized services, the police or special support organizations.

### 6.4: Satisfaction with services

Women in the qualitative research had limited personal experiences with relevant services. Those who had experienced violence did not trust institutions and so had not approached them for support. The general perception of relevant institutions was poor. For one survivor of violence, turning to a social welfare centre for assistance 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 to keep me away, to declare me an unfit mother and that's what they did.”**

**Female, in-depth interview, aged 35–55**

In part, these perceptions were also influenced by a recent incident of violence against women which happened in front of a social welfare centre and was extensively covered by the media.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> In July 2017, a man killed his wife and son in front of a social welfare center in Belgrade. This case was reported by different media outlets in Serbia for a longer period of time as an example of a case of violence against women, which was not properly addressed by responsible institutions (and resulted in wider critique by the general public). See also <http://rs.n1info.com/Vesti/a282855/Ubio-zenu-u-Centru-za-socijalni-rad-u-Rakovici.html>, accessed 10.03.2019

## 6. Impact of violence on women's lives and barriers to seeking support

**“This shooting happened in front of a social welfare centre, so I don't really have confidence in them”**

**Female, aged 35–55, rural**

Roma women seemed to have even lower expectations of services, saying that many representatives of formal institutions believe that violence is a common thing among the Roma community, so they do not react to it.

**“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)**

While small numbers of women indicate in the survey that they contacted organizations aged 18–29, urban/rural, minority group (Roma) and institutions other than the police in relation to the most serious incident of violence they had experienced at the hands of non-partners, current partners (in particular) and previous partners, on the whole those women say that they were satisfied with the help or advice that they received.

Feedback concerning contact with the police is more divided. For example, 44% of those who reported the most serious incident of non-partner violence to the police were satisfied with the contact they had, but 46% were dissatisfied, including 32% who were very dissatisfied. In relation to the most serious incident of previous partner violence, 56% of those who contacted the police were satisfied, but 40% were dissatisfied, including 30% who were very dissatisfied. The number of women reporting current partner violence to the police is too low (10 respondents) to comment on the degree of satisfaction with the contact they had.





# 7. Experiences of violence among specific groups of women

The survey collected a range of details from respondents in order to provide a more in-depth analysis of the extent to which violence is experienced by different groups of women. The purpose of this is to identify the prevalence and risk of experiencing violence among specific groups. This chapter focuses on significant differences in the reported experiences of all forms of violence, including sexual harassment among different groups of women.

### **Age**

Overall, age is the most significant factor accounting for differences in experiences and attitudes among women. The prevalence of sexual harassment, stalking and non-partner physical violence is highest among the youngest age group (18–29 years old). For example, over half of women under 30 disclose that they have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15 (54% compared with 42% overall). Experiences of non-partner physical violence since the age of 15 are indicated by 11% of this age group compared with 8% overall, and the prevalence in the 12 months prior to the survey is also higher (5% versus 2%). It is possible that older women have not been disclosing all instances of physical and/or sexual violence that they have experienced over the years, or perhaps behaviour among men is changing.

No differences were observed in relation to partner violence by age group, but it was the oldest group of women, those 60 or older, who were most likely to mention having experienced violence in childhood (38%). The youngest group, women under 30, were least likely to have experienced such violence (23%), which is possibly an indication of changing attitudes when it comes to corporal punishment of children.

### **Relationship status**

The data was analysed in terms of whether the respondent has a current partner (married, living together without being married or involved in a relationship without living together), has had a previous partner (same definition as for current partners) or has never had a partner. Sexual harassment is higher among those who have had a previous partner in their lifetime (50% compared with 42% overall) and in the 12 months prior to the survey (23% compared with 18%). This pattern also applies to the most severe forms of sexual harassment.

Women with previous partners are also more likely to mention non-partner physical violence or sexual violence than those who have not had a previous partner (11% compared with 3%) and to have experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of their current partner (11% versus 8%).

### **Employment status and occupation**

The main employment category where clear differences could be seen is “women who fulfil domestic duties and care responsibilities”. These women are less likely to have experienced sexual harassment in their lives compared to women who work outside the home (25% compared with 42%) and less likely to have experienced it in the preceding 12 months (9% compared with 18%).

Conversely, this group is more likely than women overall to say they have experienced physical violence at the hands of their current partner during their lifetime (15% compared with 9%).

## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia

The one main category of occupations whose members have had a significantly different experience of violence compared with women in general are “elementary occupations”.<sup>82</sup> Women in such occupations are more likely to say they have experienced certain types of violence at some time in their lives compared with women overall: current partner physical or sexual violence (14% compared with 10%), previous partner physical or sexual violence (37% compared with 18%) and stalking (21% compared with 11%).

### Education

The survey asked women about the highest level of education – primary, secondary or tertiary – they had attained. There is a pattern across some of the data, whereby women who have completed only primary education are more likely to say they have experienced violence than women overall, while those who have attained some level of tertiary education are less likely to say they have experienced violence. This could be seen in terms of physical, sexual and psychological violence. For example, while 20% of women overall disclose that they have experienced partner or non-partner physical or sexual violence, this rises to 39% among those who have only completed primary education and falls to 17% among those who have completed at least some tertiary education.

### Income

The responses provided by the women who took part in the survey were analysed according to four descriptive income groups: “living comfortably on their present income”, “coping”, “finding it difficult” and “finding it very difficult”. In general, women in the last two income categories – “finding it difficult” and “finding it very difficult” – indicate that they have experienced violence more often than the women in the other two groups. For example, 25% of those finding things very difficult and 14% of those finding things difficult disclose that they have experienced non-partner physical or sexual violence (since the age of 15), compared with 9% of women overall. Fifty-six per cent of those finding things very difficult and 48% of those finding things difficult admit to having experienced psychological violence at the hands of their current partner in their lifetime, compared with 34% overall. And 30% and 21%, respectively, indicate having experienced current partner physical or sexual violence, compared with 10% overall and 4% of those living comfortably.

### Minority groups and refugees/displaced women

Within the total sample of 2,023 women, there were 169 who considered themselves to be from one or more of seven minority groups in relation to the place where they were living. These include: an ethnic minority (84), an immigrant minority (two), a religious minority (15), a sexual minority (one), a minority in terms of disability (23) a refugee/displaced person (57) and a returnee/former IDP/refugee (two). In view of the small bases, analysis should be cautious. That said, there is a greater prevalence overall of some forms of violence among those who say they are from an ethnic minority. For example, women who consider themselves part of an ethnic minority are more likely to say they have experienced one or more of the more serious forms of sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey compared to the overall figure (14% versus 6%), to have experienced non-partner physical violence (16% versus 8% overall), to have experienced previous partner physical violence in their lifetime (29% versus 17% overall) or to have experienced stalking since the age of 15 (25% versus 11% overall). Women who consider themselves to be a refugee/displaced person are more likely to have disclosed experiences of childhood physical violence (64% versus 30% overall).

<sup>82</sup> Elementary occupations consist of simple and routine tasks that mainly require the use of handheld tools and often some physical effort. See “Major Group 9: Elementary Occupations”, International Labour Organization, accessed 27 January 2019, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/9.htm>.

## 7. Experiences of violence among specific groups of women

### **Women with or without children**

Women without children or who have never had children reveal a significantly different experience of sexual harassment compared with women overall: 53% say they have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15 (42% among women overall), and 30% say they experienced it in the 12 months prior to the survey (18% overall). Stalking is also more prevalent among those who do not have children (18% from the age of 15 compared to 10% of those with children).

In contrast, physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of a partner is more prevalent among those who have children. Nineteen per cent of those who have had a previous partner and have or have had children say they have experienced physical or sexual violence compared with 14% of those who do not have children.

### **Location**

Women who live in urban areas are more likely to indicate experiences of sexual harassment than those living in rural areas both since the age of 15 (46% versus 36%) and in the 12 months prior to the survey (20% versus 14%). The same pattern is seen in relation to the most serious forms of sexual harassment.

Non-partner and current partner violence does not differ by locality, but women who live in urban areas are consistently more likely to say they have experienced previous partner violence. Previous partner psychological violence is indicated by 41% of women living in urban areas compared with 35% in rural areas; physical violence is indicated by 18% of women living in urban areas compared with 14% in rural areas, and sexual violence is indicated by 6% and 3%, respectively. Stalking is also more common in urban areas, with 13% of women living in urban areas saying they have had such experiences since the age of 15, compared with 9% of those living in rural areas. The reverse is seen in relation to childhood violence, with 34% of those living in rural areas stating they experienced physical violence at the hands of an adult in their childhood, compared with 27% of those living in urban areas.

**Table 7.1: Prevalence of violence, by urbanity**

	Average %	Urban %	Rural %
<i>Base size (n)</i>	<i>2,023</i>	<i>1,305</i>	<i>718</i>
Experience of sexual harassment since the age of 15	42	46	36
Experience of sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey	18	20	14
Experience of stalking since the age of 15	11	13	9
Experience of stalking in the 12 months prior to the survey	2	2	3
Experience of non-partner physical or sexual violence since the age of 15	9	10	8
Experience of non-partner physical or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	2	2	3
Experience of current partner physical or sexual violence since the age of 15	10	9	10
Experience of current partner physical or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	3	4	3
Experience of previous partner physical or sexual violence since the age of 15	18	19	14
Experience of previous partner physical or sexual violence in the 12 months prior to the survey	2	2	2

BASE: All women aged 18–74 in Serbia (n in italics)

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

**Where women's current partners have fought in an armed conflict, they are twice as likely to say they have experienced physical violence at the hands of their partner, compared with those whose partners have not been involved in any fighting**

**Current-partner characteristics**

As previously noted, where women's current partners have fought in an armed conflict, they are twice as likely to say they have experienced physical violence at the hands of their partner, compared with those whose partners have not been involved in any fighting (16% versus 8%). Physical and/or sexual violence is also more likely to be disclosed by women whose partners have only completed primary education (17%). This drops to 5% among those whose partners have at least some tertiary education. While the bases are small, there is also evidence to suggest that violence is more common when a current partner drinks or gets drunk regularly.



# 8. Key conclusions and recommendations

The survey and the qualitative research point to four key conclusions<sup>83</sup> regarding violence against women in Serbia:

### **1) Cultural norms and attitudes contribute to gender inequality and violence against women**

Women are concerned about the issue of violence in Serbia. Eighty-five per cent of the women surveyed think that violence against women is common. Over a quarter personally know someone among their family and friends who has been subjected to violence, and a similar proportion know someone in their neighbourhood who has been subjected to violence. This is clearly an issue for them. Two in five women disclose having experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15, and 18% indicate that they were sexually harassed in the 12 months prior to the survey. One in five women say they have experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of 15 at the hands of a partner or non-partner, and stalking has affected one in ten.

Twenty-nine per cent of women think that domestic violence is a private matter, while 23% think that women often exaggerate claims of abuse or rape, and 19% think that violence is often provoked by the victim. Women in the qualitative research revealed that they did not report psychological violence until it turned into physical violence because it was difficult for them to identify the abusive behaviours as such. Controlling behaviour was sometimes interpreted as caring or showing concern. Attitudes around these norms are changing, which has been linked to factors such as age, education and increasing urbanization. Despite the positive trends in changing attitudes in the younger population of women, more needs to be done to expedite the process of changing these norms and achieving gender equality. Both experts and women with experience of violence highlighted the role that the education of children could play in tackling the norms and behaviours that could lead to violence in future. They expressed the belief that children should learn about healthy relationships and respect in order to enable earlier identification and awareness of violence.

*In its concluding observations from 2013, the CEDAW Committee recommended that Serbia strengthen its efforts to overcome stereotypical attitudes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society and that it continue implementing measures to eliminate gender stereotypes by promoting positive images and substantive equality of women.*

<sup>83</sup> These conclusions are in line with the recommendations published by CEDAW in 2013 and with the topics that will be included in the upcoming recommendations from GREVIO. They are also in line with the recent report by Serbia's ombudsman.

**2) Violence against women is underreported**

The survey findings indicated that 17% of women in Serbia survived physical/sexual intimate partner violence. Forty-four per cent of the women surveyed disclose that they have experienced psychological violence, and nearly the same number (42 %) have experienced sexual harassment. The consequences of this violence are serious. Women who have experienced violence are often left with feelings of fear, anger, annoyance or shock (each of which was indicated by at least two in five victims); two fifths suffered from anxiety, and a quarter from depression or difficulty sleeping as a result of their experience. Many also suffered physical injuries (33% at the hands of their current partner and 44% at the hands of a previous partner). Despite all this, only 9% of women survivors of current partner violence reported this to the police. Shame, economic dependence, fear of retaliation by the perpetrators and mistrust of services are the main barriers to reporting identified by women in the qualitative research. They were afraid that they would not be believed, that they would be held responsible and, in smaller towns, that the perpetrator had connections at the relevant institutions and would not be held accountable. Women's expectations of services are low, especially concerning social welfare centres. Even though three-quarters of women say they felt informed about what to do in cases of violence and many were familiar with specialized services, few women actually accessed any services, preferring to deal with violence in private, perhaps with the help of family and friends. This resistance to talking about the experience of violence is true regardless of age. So, although societal norms may be changing, this may take more time to have an impact on practical action.

The CEDAW Committee recommended that women be encouraged to report incidents of domestic and sexual violence by raising awareness of the criminal nature of such acts, as well as to ensure effective investigation of cases of violence against women and to prosecute and punish perpetrators of such crimes with sanctions commensurate with the gravity of the crime.

**3) Provision of services needs to be improved, including multisectoral co-operation**

In the qualitative research, women indicated that their greatest need after experiencing violence was just someone to talk to. For them, psychological help was vital but not always available. The experts interviewed expressed the belief that the consistency and quality of services provided for women who experience violence needed to be improved. They said that there were insufficient services available across all administrative areas. They also expressed the belief that the quality of services was varied; although a normative framework that should ensure uniformity of quality and content of services exists, there are still many challenges in practice. Experts advocated for transparency of reports that would contain information on how many services were provided and how many women were supported. Some experts also shared their concern that the current system of licensing support services leaves out peer-to-peer support in the Roma community because of educational requirements. They said that there is a need for pluralism among providers of social protection services. They also said that it is only through partnerships between the state and CSOs that the desired social change can be achieved and the quality of services improved, e.g., through multisectoral co-operation.

The experts interviewed suggested there were gaps in service provision, including a lack of programmes for children who have witnessed family violence, as well as a lack of organizations working with perpetrators. They said that programmes for perpetrators would only be created or improved if doing so were required by legislation, including determining specific standards and sources of funding.

The experts interviewed expressed the belief that a number of groups, including older women, women with a physical or mental disability, women who are migrants or asylum seekers and women from rural areas, both experienced greater risk of violence and were under-served by services. They also identified Roma women as being at high risk due to their lack of visibility in society, and the belief that violence against women is an intrinsic part of their culture.



## 8. Key conclusions and recommendations

The CEDAW Committee recommended that the state ensure that all women victims of violence have adequate assistance and unhampered access to effective protection from violence, including by ensuring a sufficient number of shelters funded by the state and improving co-operation with relevant non-governmental organizations in this respect. Also, the CEDAW Committee recommended that the state implement the Strategy for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, in particular regarding minority women, Roma women, women with disabilities, women living with HIV and lesbian women, and work with civil society, the media and other stakeholders to improve tolerance and combat social exclusion of those groups of women. Finally, the Committee recommended that the state ensure formal and informal dialogue and consultations between the national machinery and relevant non-governmental organizations, in particular women's organizations, and put in place a system of co-operation that respects the autonomy of women's organizations.

### **4) There are gaps in the implementation of legislation and in data collection**

The experts interviewed advocated for the implementation of **one unique database** under the Ministry of Justice as foreseen by the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, which would include all data about violence against women and allow for a complete overview of each case. They also called for the collection of additional data, such as information on the presence and use of firearms in a case, which they said was vital for understanding how the legislative framework might need to change. The experts also said that data collection on minority groups was necessary to identify specific issues for these groups. This would require developing clear data collection procedures for all relevant institutions.

When discussing **improvements to the judicial system**, experts focused on two key areas related to improving the efficiency of how cases are processed: that convictions require the testimony of the victim and that victims are not adequately protected during court proceedings. They believed that changes in these areas would lead to increases in reporting and convictions and improve women's trust in institutions.

The experts interviewed highlighted the need for **improved training** for professionals, particularly the need to provide continuous, specialized and gender-sensitive training for the staff of social welfare centres, as is currently happening as part of several major projects supported by the United Nations. Both experts and women who had experienced violence discussed the need for greater awareness of the nature and impact of psychological violence, as this is sometimes overlooked or misinterpreted by those who should be providing support to the women who experience it.

*The CEDAW Committee recommended that the state ensure that the relevant authorities are aware of the importance of issuing emergency protection orders for women at risk and of maintaining such orders until the women are no longer at risk, and that the system of data collection be enhanced by ensuring that the data are disaggregated by type of violence and by relationship between perpetrator and victim, supporting research in this field and ensuring that such information and data are available to the public.*

### **Recommendations**

The above survey findings point to further specific recommendations to address violence against women:

#### ***Protection and confidentiality of victims***

##### **For the Ministry of Justice**

1. Monitor and publish the rates of criminal charges filed by victims and the number of convictions and sentenced individuals.
2. Identify barriers in the legal system that impact women's ability to access and achieve justice in cases of violence against women, and develop strategies to overcome those barriers (e.g., review the need for survivor testimony, consider whether the protection provided during court proceedings is adequate, determine how many victims receive free legal aid).
3. Ensure that the confidentiality of victims is protected in a future central database. State authorities responsible for the establishment of a central database should ensure the security and future confidentiality of the data in line with international and national data protection commitments and the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and act as an independent mechanism that would bring together institutions and support their co-ordination.

#### ***Co-operation and multisectoral approach***

##### **For the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy, Ministry of Interior, the police and non-state actors**

4. Provide ongoing and more in-depth training for relevant service professionals, specifically on the implementation of the new Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and on gender-sensitive treatment in relation to VAW with a particular focus on the staff of social welfare centres.
5. Restore the full multi-agency and multisectoral approach to combating VAW, e.g., recognize and utilize existing resources in the non-governmental sector, particularly specialized women's organizations for GBV.
6. Co-operation should be institutionalized and not depend on individuals. Identify and learn from existing good practices of co-operation in the OSCE region.
7. Increase the production of individual support and protection plans as part of new legislation and ensure the adequate involvement of violence survivors in the individual protection planning process.
8. Increase efforts to provide prevention programmes for perpetrators.
9. Ensure partnership between the state and civil society through enabling active and continuous participation in relevant bodies responsible for the implementation and monitoring of policies and practices related to combating violence against women.
10. Violence, and in particular psychological violence, has different forms. Thus, different parts of the population should be targeted in different ways through awareness raising (urban and rural women, younger and older women, etc.).

### ***Specialized services for women who have experienced violence***

#### **For the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy**

11. Improve the quality, reach and funding of SOS helplines and counselling centres, particularly in rural areas, including for groups of women who face discrimination on multiple grounds.
12. Support the establishment of rape crisis and/or sexual violence referral centres.
13. Set standards (in co-operation with CSOs) for service providers, provide conditions in terms of how services should be delivered (highest-possible quality) that are in line with good practices in Serbia and the OSCE region and monitor whether service providers conform to set standards.

### ***Monitoring of the implementation of new legislation and other measures and awareness raising***

#### **The Coordination Body for Gender Equality**

14. Conduct an annual independent evaluation of the implementation of new legislation and adherence to the Istanbul Convention.
15. For the Ministry of Education
16. Introduce subjects dealing with gender-based violence in the pre-school and primary-school curriculum.
17. Special consideration should be given to Roma women who already provide services in their own language. Make it easier for Roma women to obtain the certificates from the relevant authority that they need in order to be able to provide services in their own language.

#### **For the OSCE and other donors**

18. OSCE: include in the existing witness-protection project a component on VAW victims and their needs.
19. OSCE: support and replicate existing good practices on co-operation with regard to prevention of violence against women, prosecution of perpetrators and protection of victims.
20. OSCE and other donors: enhance coordination and information sharing among donors regarding programmes and activities aimed at combating violence against women.



# ANNEXES

## **Annex 1: Survey and qualitative fieldwork**

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) commissioned Ipsos to undertake a qualitative and quantitative study of violence against women in seven OSCE participating States. The study was also conducted in Kosovo. This is the first comparative study of its kind in this region, and it is intended to be used to improve policy-making in future by both national and international stakeholders working on policy and programme implementation in the region. This report presents the findings for Serbia.

The study comprises the following elements:

- A quantitative survey among a nationally representative sample of 2,023 women aged 18 to 74 was conducted between 3 April and 30 July 2018.
- A multistage, stratified, random probability sample was used. The sample framework, a list of census enumeration areas (CEAs) with an address register, was obtained from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. This provided 98% coverage. Areas in south Serbia with an Albanian majority who boycotted the latest census were not covered. This population represents 1% of the total population. Additionally, all settlements with fewer than 30 households were excluded, as these are considered to be remote and secluded. They represent 1% of the population. Primary sampling units (PSUs) were created by combining several neighbouring CEAs.
- The sample framework was stratified by region and size of residential area. PSUs were then selected within each stratum with probability proportional to size. A total of 175 PSUs were selected, and a set number of addresses was selected within each sampled PSU with the aim of conducting 10 interviews within each PSU. In areas where the available address details enabled unique identification of addresses, these were selected randomly from the register prior to the start of fieldwork. In areas where this was not possible, the addresses were not preselected prior to the fieldwork, but the selection was done at the same time as the interviews via a random walk approach. When more than one household was identified at a selected address, one household was randomly selected by the electronic contact sheet. In each sampled household, one woman was selected for the interview. The respondent was selected randomly from the list of all eligible women in a selected household, i.e., all women aged 18–74 within the household were listed by age in descending order on the electronic contact sheet. Then the contact sheet randomly selected one of them using a random-number generator.

## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia

- Interviews were conducted face to face by specifically trained female field workers (see Annex 2 for more details on training and protocols).
- The response rate achieved was 41%,<sup>84</sup> and the average eligibility was 73%. The weights were calculated in two stages: a) sampling design weights; and b) post-stratification weights. The design weights reflected probabilities of selection of respondents, while post-stratification weights were calculated to compensate for the non-response. Region, size of residential area and age categories were used for post-stratification in Serbia.
- Due to differences in methodology, sampling and questionnaire design, the results from this survey will not be directly comparable with other national surveys conducted in Serbia.
- Eight focus group discussions, including groups with women from minority ethnic groups and women with experience of conflict, which took place 6–22 June 2018.

**Table A1.1: Composition of focus groups**

FGD	Location	Number of participants	Age group	Ethnicity	Number conflict -affected	Number with children	Number in work
1	Urban/ Suburban	8	35–55	Serbian	8	5	5
2	Urban/ Rural	8	18–34	Roma	0	6	1
3	Rural	8	18–34	Serbian	0	3	5
4	Urban	8	56+	Serbian	5	7	3
5	Urban/ Rural	8	35–55	Roma	0	7	4
6	Rural	8	35–55	Serbian	8	5	6
7	Urban	7	35–55	Hungarian	0	4	5
8	Urban	8	35–55	Bosniak	2	5	4

<sup>84</sup> The response rate is calculated as follows and in accordance with the RR3 definition of response rates by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (p. 46 in 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).

- Four in-depth interviews with survivors of violence in July 2018

**Table A1.2: Profile of in-depth interviews**

IDI	Location	Age group	Ethnicity	Work status	Children
1	Urban	35–55	Serbian	Working	Yes
2	Urban	35–55	Roma	Working	Yes
3	Urban	35–55	Hungarian	Working	Yes
4	Urban	35–55	Serbian	Working	Yes

- Five key expert interviews that were designed to provide an overview of issues related to VAW and of conflict-related acts of violence that took place in June–July 2017 and a further round of 10 key expert interviews that took place in July–August 2018 to explore changes since the first round and to gather recommendations for the OSCE.

## OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Serbia

The survey was designed to be nationally representative of women in Serbia aged 18–74. A breakdown by demographics is shown Table A1.3.

**Table A1.3: Weighted and unweighted sample profile**

Age	Weighted %	Unweighted %	Unweighted <i>n</i>
18–29	17	10	209
30–39	18	16	320
40–49	18	19	376
50–59	19	20	404
60+	28	35	714
<b>Economic activity</b>			
In paid work	37	35	707
Self-employed	3	3	65
Helping in a family business (unpaid)	1	1	17
Unemployed	21	19	386
Pupil, student, in training	6	3	68
Not working due to illness or disability	0.3	0.3	7
Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	8	8	166
Retired	23	30	607
Compulsory military/community service/other	0	0	0
<b>Education</b>			
No formal education	1	1	16
Primary education	3	5	77
Secondary education	72	74	1,491
Tertiary education	24	22	439
<b>Location</b>			
Urban	62	65	1,305
Rural	38	35	718
<b>Directly conflict-affected</b>			
Yes	26	27	539
No	74	73	1,484



### 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 a formula based on the following ratio was used:

Design effect = (unweighted sample size) \* (sum of the squared weights) / (square of the sum of weights).<sup>85</sup>

This approach to 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 table 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 A1.4: Effective sample sizes and confidence intervals**

	<i>N</i>	Design effect	Effective sample size	95% confidence interval for a survey estimates of 50% based on a weighted sample	
				Lower	Upper
<b>All women aged 18–74</b>	2,023	1.398	1,447	47.4%	52.6%
<b>Directly conflict-affected women</b>	539	1.372	393	45.1%	54.9%

<sup>85</sup> Leslie Kish, "Weighting for unequal PI", Journal of Official Statistics, 8 (1992): 183–200

### 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<sup>86</sup> and the United Nations Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence against Women<sup>87</sup> were taken into account.

### Annex 3: Sustainable Development Goal indicators

#### SDG Indicator 5.2.2: Proportion of women and girls aged 18–74 subjected to sexual violence by individuals other than an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey, by age, area and education.

All women 18–74 years old (2,023)	0.5%
18–29 years old (209)	1.4%
30–39 years old (320)	0.3%
40–49 years old (376)	0%
50–59 years old (404)	0.8%
60+ years old (710)	0.3%
Residents of urban areas (1,305)	0.2%
Residents of rural areas (718)	1.0%
No/primary education (93)	0%
Secondary education (1,491)	0.7%
Tertiary education (439)	0.1%

<sup>86</sup> 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>

<sup>87</sup> 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](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/docs/guidelines_statistics_vaw.pdf)

**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.**

All women 18–74 years old (1,973)	9%
18–29 years old (189)	7%
30–39 years old (312)	8%
40–49 years old (372)	11%
50–59 years old (378)	10%
60+ years old (698)	7%
Residents of urban areas (1,265)	8%
Residents of rural areas (708)	9%
No/primary education (91)	11%
Secondary education (1,461)	9%
Tertiary education (421)	6%

Women were asked how often they had experienced different forms of psychological violence at the hands of their current partner: 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, as part of psychological violence, are the only forms of psychological violence recorded in the 12 months prior to the survey.

As such, a proxy has to be used to calculate SDG indicator 5.2.1, as follows:

- women who experienced threats of physical or sexual violence at the hands of their current or 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 4: Overview of key figures

Prevalence of violence

Any psychological/physical/sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner	Since the age of 15	46%
Any physical/sexual violence at the hands of a partner or non-partner	Since the age of 15	22%
	In the 12 months prior to the survey	5%
Non-partner violence	Since the age of 15	Physical: 8% Sexual: 2%
	In the 12 months prior to the survey	Physical: 2% Sexual: 1%
Intimate partner violence – any partner	Since the age of 15	Physical: 17% Sexual: 5% Psychological: 44%
	In the 12 months prior to the survey	Physical: 3% Sexual: 1% Psychological :7%
Sexual harassment	Since the age of 15	Any: 42% Most severe forms: 23%
	In the 12 months prior to the survey	Any: 18% Most severe forms: 6%
Stalking	Since the age of 15	11%
	In the 12 months prior to the survey	2%
Violence during childhood (physical, sexual, psychological)	Up to the age of 15	31%

### Consequences of the most serious incident

Non-partner violence	Emotional: 98% Psychological: 64% Physical: 43%
Intimate partner violence	Emotional: 96% Psychological: 70% Physical: 40%
Sexual harassment	Emotional: 95% Psychological: 36%
Stalking	Emotional: 97% Psychological: 40%

Reporting of the most serious incident	% of women who reported it themselves to the police	% of women who did not contact the police or another organization
Non-partner violence	26%	57%
Current partner	9%	83%
Previous partner	25%	57%
Sexual harassment	3%	N/A
Stalking	18%	N/A

### Attitudes and norms

% who agree that it is a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not feel like it	12%
% who agree that violence against women at the hands of partners, acquaintances or strangers is common in Serbia	85%
% who agree that domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family	29%
% who agree that women are more likely to be raped by a stranger than by someone they know	30%

#### Conflict-affected women

Proportion of directly conflict-affected women in Serbia:	26%
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## Annex 5: More detailed tables

## Respondent characteristics (weighted)

		All women		Women who have ever had a partner	
		%	Number	%	Number
<b>Residential area</b>	Urban	62	1262	62	1200
	Rural	38	761	38	746
<b>Age category</b>	18–19	2	40	2	36
	20–24	8	151	7	128
	25–29	8	152	7	138
	30–34	9	177	9	166
	35–39	9	187	10	187
	40–49	18	371	19	364
	50–59	19	382	19	378
	60–69	20	393	20	383
	70–74	8	158	8	156
	75–79	1	10	1	9
<b>Education</b>	None	1	13	1	13
	Primary	3	65	3	62
	Secondary	72	1462	73	1412
	Tertiary	24	483	24	459
<b>Do you have any children?</b>	Yes, own children	77	1562	79	1543
	Yes, took care of step- or foster children	0.3	6	0.3	6
	Yes, both	0.6	12	1	12
	No	22	440	20	384
	Refused to say	0.1	2	0	1
<b>Employment</b>	In paid work	37	742	37	711
	Self-employed	3	64	3	62
	Helping in a family business (unpaid)	1	23	1	23
	Unemployed	21	430	22	420
	A pupil, student, in training	7	131	5	105
	Not working due to illness or disability	0.3	7	0.4	7
	Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	8	152	8	152
	Retired	23	474	24	465

		All women		Women who have ever had a partner	
		%	Number	%	Number
<b>Current job/ occupation</b>	Elementary occupations	19	153	19	150
	Plant and machine operator and assembler	4	35	4	32
	Building, crafts or a related tradesperson	4	34	4	31
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	5	44	6	44
	Sales, customer or personal service worker	17	140	17	137
	Clerical support	18	150	19	147
	Technician or associate professional	14	114	14	109
	Professional	17	141	16	128
	Manager	1	7	1	7
	Employed in a military capacity by the Armed Forces	0.1	1	0.1	1
	Refused to say	1	5	1	5

## Attitudes

		Women who say they were abused often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape		Violence against women is often provoked by the victim		Domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family			
		Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree		
<b>Total</b>	%	23	70	19	76	29	68		
	Number	460	1413	386	1536	590	1375		
<b>Residential area</b>	Urban	%	19	74	15	80	23	74	
		Number	234	934	190	1010	284	936	
	Rural	%	30	63	26	69	40	58	
		Number	226	478	196	526	307	438	
<b>Age category</b>	18–29	%	15	79	15	80	16	83	
		Number	53	270	50	275	55	283	
	30–39	%	15	79	9	88	28	68	
		Number	56	288	33	319	103	248	
	40–49	%	17	74	16	77	26	71	
		Number	64	275	61	287	96	264	
	50–59	%	25	68	19	76	29	69	
		Number	95	259	73	288	110	262	
	60+	%	34	57	30	65	40	56	
		Number	191	320	167	366	225	316	
	<b>Education</b>	None	%	43	49	42	47	40	48
			Number	6	7	6	6	5	6
Primary		%	41	45	41	55	51	39	
		Number	26	29	27	35	33	25	
Secondary		%	25	67	21	74	32	66	
		Number	370	985	307	1082	470	959	
Tertiary		%	12	81	10	86	17	80	
		Number	59	392	47	413	82	385	
<b>Ever had a partner</b>		%	23	70	19	76	29	68	
		Number	441	1365	373	1479	570	1322	
<b>Children</b>	Yes	%	25	68	21	74	33	64	
		Number	397	1068	330	1168	516	1018	
	No	%	14	78	13	83	17	81	
		Number	63	342	57	366	73	356	



Employment			Women who say they were abused often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape		Violence against women is often provoked by the victim		Domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family	
			Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
In paid work	%	17	77	11	85	21	76	
	Number	123	574	85	630	159	561	
Self-employed	%	16	78	16	75	25	71	
	Number	10	50	10	47	16	46	
Helping in a family business (unpaid)	%	11	85	22	75	25	73	
	Number	3	19	5	17	6	17	
Unemployed	%	22	73	18	76	30	68	
	Number	96	314	78	328	127	294	
A pupil, student, in training	%	9	79	10	82	12	85	
	Number	12	104	14	108	16	111	
Not working due to illness or disability	%	11	66	0	100	11	89	
	Number	1	5	0	7	1	6	
Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	%	32	51	32	60	48	50	
	Number	49	78	49	91	73	75	
Retired	%	35	57	31	65	41	56	
	Number	167	269	146	308	193	265	

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Occupation			Women who say they were abused often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape		Violence against women is often provoked by the victim		Domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family	
			Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
			%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Elementary occupations	%	30	63	20	75	27	69	
	Number	46	96	31	114	42	106	
Plant and machine operator and assembler	%	18	73	24	77	26	74	
	Number	6	25	8	27	9	26	
Building, crafts or a related tradesperson	%	14	85	14	82	17	83	
	Number	5	29	5	28	6	28	
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	%	23	74	8	87	31	69	
	Number	10	32	3	38	13	30	
Sales, customer or personal service worker	%	14	82	10	88	22	75	
	Number	19	115	14	123	30	104	
Clerical support	%	11	81	10	83	21	74	
	Number	16	122	16	125	31	111	
Technician or associate professional	%	17	76	11	86	25	74	
	Number	20	86	12	98	28	84	
Professional	%	9	87	6	90	12	86	
	Number	13	122	9	127	17	121	
Manager	%	0	100	0	100	14	75	
	Number	0	7	0	7	1	5	
Military	%	0	0	100	0	0	100	

			Women who say they were abused often make up or exaggerate claims of abuse or rape		Violence against women is often provoked by the victim		Domestic violence is a private matter and should be handled within the family	
			Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
<b>Household income</b>	Living comfortably on present income	%	16	78	14	82	23	74
		Number	70	340	62	360	101	324
	Coping on present income	%	24	68	19	76	29	69
		Number	275	801	216	889	338	803
	Finding it difficult on present income	%	26	68	28	68	34	62
		Number	70	180	73	181	90	165
Finding it very difficult on present income	%	35	56	29	65	49	49	
	Number	35	57	29	66	50	50	
<b>Conflict-affected</b>	Yes	%	20	73	18	79	29	69
	No	Number	106	375	94	406	151	357
	Yes	%	24	69	19	75	29	68
	No	Number	355	1038	292	1130	439	1018
<b>Bank account owner</b>	Yes	%	22	72	17	79	26	71
	No	Number	306	1001	234	1103	364	994
	Yes	%	25	66	25	70	37	61
	No	Number	151	400	149	422	223	370

Prevalence of intimate partner violence

		Partner or previous partner psychological violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical or sexual violence - Ever		
		No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	
Total	%	56	44	83	17	95	5	55	45	83	17	
	Number	1093	853	1621	325	1849	97	1075	871	1607	339	
Residential area	Urban	%	54	46	82	18	94	6	53	47	81	19
		Number	647	553	982	218	1130	70	639	561	976	224
	Rural	%	60	40	86	14	96	4	58	42	85	15
		Number	445	301	639	107	719	27	436	310	631	115
Age category	18–29	%	56	44	87	13	97	3	56	44	87	13
		Number	168	133	262	39	292	9	168	133	262	39
	30–39	%	52	48	82	18	96	4	51	49	81	19
		Number	183	169	288	64	339	14	181	172	287	66
	40–49	%	57	43	81	19	94	6	56	44	80	20
		Number	208	156	295	68	341	23	202	161	292	71
	50–59	%	54	46	84	16	96	4	54	46	83	17
		Number	204	173	317	60	362	15	202	175	314	64
60+	%	60	40	83	17	94	7	58	42	82	18	
	Number	328	221	456	93	513	36	320	229	451	98	
Education	None	%	47	54	79	21	95	5	47	54	79	21
		Number	6	7	10	3	13	1	6	7	10	3
	Primary	%	53	47	68	32	87	13	51	49	68	32
		Number	33	29	42	20	54	8	32	30	42	20
	Secondary	%	55	45	83	17	95	5	54	46	82	18
		Number	779	633	1166	246	1338	74	768	644	1155	257
	Tertiary	%	60	40	88	12	97	3	59	41	87	13
		Number	275	184	402	57	445	15	269	190	400	59

			Partner or previous partner psychological violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical or sexual violence - Ever	
			No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Children</b>	Yes	%	56	44	83	18	95	5	55	45	82	18
		Number	877	684	1287	274	1476	85	860	701	1274	287
	No	%	56	44	87	13	97	3	56	44	87	13
		Number	215	169	333	51	371	12	214	170	333	51
<b>Employment</b>	In paid work	%	55	46	84	16	96	4	54	47	84	16
		Number	388	323	601	111	683	28	381	331	596	115
	Self-employed	%	58	42	76	24	99	2	57	43	76	24
		Number	36	26	48	15	61	1	35	27	48	15
	Helping in a family business (unpaid)	%	38	62	74	26	91	9	38	62	74	26
		Number	9	14	17	6	21	2	9	14	17	6
	Unemployed	%	58	42	83	17	94	7	58	42	82	18
		Number	243	177	348	72	392	27	243	177	346	74
	A pupil, student, in training	%	53	47	92	8	98	2	53	47	92	8
		Number	56	49	96	9	103	3	56	49	96	9
	Not working due to illness or disability	%	42	58	61	39	76	24	42	58	61	39
		Number	3	4	4	3	5	2	3	4	4	3
	Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	%	53	47	80	20	96	4	51	49	78	22
		Number	81	72	122	30	147	6	78	74	119	33
	Retired	%	60	40	83	17	94	6	58	42	82	18
		Number	278	187	385	80	437	28	270	195	382	84

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Occupation			Partner or previous partner psychological violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical or sexual violence - Ever	
			No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
			%		%		%		%		%	
Elementary occupations	%		46	54	71	29	93	7	46	54	71	29
	Number		69	81	107	43	139	10	69	81	107	43
Plant and machine operator and assembler	%		59	41	82	18	97	3	55	45	82	18
	Number		19	13	26	6	31	1	18	14	26	6
Building, crafts or a related Tradesperson	%		61	39	87	13	97	3	59	41	87	13
	Number		19	12	27	4	30	1	19	13	27	4
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	%		46	54	76	24	95	5	43	57	72	28
	Number		20	23	33	11	42	2	19	25	31	12
Sales, customer or personal service worker	%		55	45	85	16	94	6	55	45	85	16
	Number		76	61	116	21	130	8	75	62	116	21
Clerical support	%		61	39	92	8	99	2	60	40	92	8
	Number		90	58	136	12	145	2	88	59	136	12
Technician or associate professional	%		56	44	84	16	96	4	54	46	83	17
	Number		61	48	92	17	105	4	59	50	91	18
Professional	%		51	49	87	13	98	2	51	49	85	15
	Number		65	62	111	17	125	2	65	63	109	19
Manager	%		86	14	100	0	100	0	86	14	100	0
	Number		6	1	7	0	7	0	6	1	7	0
Military	%		100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
	Number		1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0

			Partner or previous partner psychological violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever		Partner or previous partner physical or sexual violence - Ever	
			No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Household income</b>	Living comfortably on present income	%	65	35	92	8	98	3	65	35	92	8
		Number	257	139	364	31	386	10	257	139	362	33
	Coping on present income	%	57	44	84	16	96	4	55	45	84	16
		Number	646	498	964	180	1101	43	632	512	957	188
	Finding it difficult on present income	%	45	55	73	27	90	11	43	57	72	28
		Number	117	144	190	71	233	28	113	148	187	74
Finding it very difficult on present income	%	45	55	65	35	85	15	45	55	64	36	
	Number	46	55	65	35	85	15	45	55	64	36	
<b>Conflict- affected</b>	Yes	%	58	42	86	14	96	4	57	43	86	14
		Number	290	208	429	69	479	19	283	215	428	70
	No	%	55	45	82	18	95	5	55	45	82	19
		Number	803	645	1191	257	1369	79	791	657	1180	269
<b>Bank account owner</b>	Yes	%	56	44	84	16	95	5	55	45	83	17
		Number	767	598	1143	222	1297	67	751	613	1134	231
	No	%	56	44	82	18	95	5	56	45	82	18
		Number	316	252	468	100	538	30	315	253	463	105

## Current partner violence by current partner characteristics

			Partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever	
			No	Yes
<b>Current partner's age category</b>	15–29	%	62	38
		Number	93	58
	30–39	%	68	32
		Number	166	79
	40–49	%	69	31
		Number	225	99
	50–59	%	62	38
		Number	159	97
60+	%	63	37	
	Number	274	161	
<b>Current partner's employment</b>	In paid work	%	68	33
		Number	561	270
	Self-employed	%	72	28
		Number	64	25
	Helping in a family business (unpaid)	%	95	6
		Number	9	1
	Unemployed	%	55	45
		Number	68	55
	A pupil, student, in training	%	63	37
		Number	27	16
	Not working due to illness or disability	%	19	81
		Number	1	3
	Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	%	33	67
		Number	1	2
	Retired	%	61	39
Number		193	122	



			Partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever	
			No	Yes
<b>Current partner's occupation</b>	Elementary occupations	%	64	36
		Number	103	59
	Plant and machine operator and assembler	%	72	28
		Number	48	19
	Building, crafts or a related tradesperson	%	68	33
		Number	84	40
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	%	63	37
		Number	64	37
	Sales, customer or personal service worker	%	64	36
		Number	67	38
	Clerical support	%	70	30
		Number	50	22
	Technician or associate professional	%	76	25
		Number	114	37
	Professional	%	73	28
		Number	66	25
	Manager	%	67	33
		Number	23	11
Military	%	58	43	
	Number	6	4	
<b>Current partner's education</b>	None	%	33	67
		Number	3	7
	Primary	%	56	44
		Number	98	76
	Secondary	%	67	33
		Number	590	290
Tertiary	%	66	34	
	Number	232	121	
<b>Earnings</b>	Partner earns less	%	61	39
		Number	16	10
	Both earn roughly the same amount	%	67	33
		Number	137	68
	Partner earns more	%	69	31
		Number	217	97

			Partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever	
			No	Yes
<b>Current partner's occupation</b>	Elementary occupations	%	64	36
		Number	103	59
	Plant and machine operator and assembler	%	72	28
		Number	48	19
	Building, rafts or a related tradesperson	%	68	33
		Number	84	40
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	%	63	37
		Number	64	37
	Sales, customer or personal service worker	%	64	36
		Number	67	38
	Clerical support	%	70	30
		Number	50	22
	Technician or associate professional	%	76	25
		Number	114	37
	Professional	%	73	28
		Number	66	25
Manager	%	67	33	
	Number	23	11	
Military	%	58	43	
	Number	6	4	
<b>Current partner's education</b>	None	%	33	67
		Number	3	7
	Primary	%	56	44
		Number	98	76
	Secondary	%	67	33
		Number	590	290
Tertiary	%	66	34	
	Number	232	121	
<b>Earnings</b>	Partner earns less	%	61	39
		Number	16	10
	Both earn roughly the same amount	%	67	33
		Number	137	68
	Partner earns more	%	69	31
		Number	217	97

		Partner psychological, physical or sexual violence - Ever		
			No	Yes
<b>Current partner's alcohol consumption</b>	Never	%	74	27
		Number	657	237
	Less than once a month	%	54	46
		Number	248	210
	Weekly	%	29	71
		Number	14	34
Most days/every day	%	13	87	
	Number	1	9	
<b>Current partner's drug use</b>	Never	%	66	34
		Number	924	479
	Less than once a month	%	8	92
		Number	0	5
	Weekly	%	-	100
		Number	-	2
Most days/every day	%	100	-	
	Number	0	-	
<b>Partner ever fought in an armed conflict</b>	Yes	%	56	44
		Number	91	70
	No	%	66	34
		Number	819	422

## Prevalence of non-partner violence since age of 15

		Non-partner physical violence - since the age of 15		Non-partner sexual violence - since the age of 15		Non-partner physical or sexual violence - since the age of 15		
		No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	
<b>Total</b>	%	92	8	98	2	91	9	
	Number	1859	164	1981	42	1836	187	
<b>Residential area</b>	Urban	%	91	9	98	2	90	10
		Number	1149	113	1238	24	1135	126
	Rural	%	93	7	98	2	92	8
		Number	710	51	743	18	700	61
<b>Age category</b>	18–29	%	89	11	99	1	89	11
		Number	305	38	338	5	305	38
	30–39	%	92	8	97	3	90	10
		Number	333	31	354	10	329	35
	40–49	%	93	7	98	2	92	8
		Number	346	25	365	6	342	28
	50–59	%	91	9	98	2	89	11
		Number	349	34	373	9	342	41
60+	%	93	7	98	2	92	8	
	Number	524	37	549	11	516	45	
<b>Education</b>	None	%	74	26	100	0	74	26
		Number	10	3	13	0	10	3
	Primary	%	88	12	99	1	88	12
		Number	57	8	64	1	57	8
	Secondary	%	92	8	98	2	91	9
		Number	1345	118	1429	33	1326	136
	Tertiary	%	93	7	99	2	92	8
		Number	447	35	475	7	443	40
<b>Ever had a partner</b>	Yes	%	92	8	98	2	91	9
	Number	1787	159	1904	42	1764	182	
<b>Children</b>	Yes	%	92	8	98	2	91	9
		Number	1461	120	1550	30	1443	138
	No	%	90	10	97	3	89	11
		Number	396	44	429	11	391	49

			Non-partner physical violence – since the age of 15		Non-partner sexual violence - since the age of 15		Non-partner physical or sexual violence - since the age of 15	
			No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Employment	In paid work	%	92	8	98	2	91	9
		Number	684	58	727	15	677	66
	Self-employed	%	83	17	93	7	81	19
		Number	53	11	60	4	52	12
	Helping in a family business (unpaid)	%	83	17	100	0	83	17
		Number	19	4	23	0	19	4
	Unemployed	%	91	9	98	3	90	10
		Number	393	37	419	11	387	43
	A pupil, student, in training	%	89	11	100	0	89	11
		Number	117	15	131	0	117	15
	Not working due to illness or disability	%	100	0	100	0	100	0
		Number	7	0	7	0	7	0
	Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	%	95	5	98	2	94	7
		Number	144	8	150	3	143	10
Retired	%	93	7	98	2	92	8	
	Number	442	32	465	9	436	38	
Occupation	Elementary occupations	%	86	14	95	5	85	15
		Number	132	21	146	7	130	23
	Plant and machine operator and assembler	%	100	0	99	2	99	2
		Number	35	0	34	1	34	1
	Building, crafts or a related tradesperson	%	91	9	95	5	87	13
		Number	31	3	32	2	29	5
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	%	85	15	100	0	85	15
		Number	37	7	44	0	37	7
	Sales, customer or personal service worker	%	92	8	98	2	92	9
		Number	129	11	137	3	128	12
	Clerical support	%	96	4	98	2	94	6
		Number	144	7	148	3	141	9
	Technician or associate professional	%	88	12	99	1	88	12
		Number	100	13	112	2	99	14

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			Non-partner physical violence – since the age of 15		Non-partner sexual violence - since the age of 15		Non-partner physical or sexual violence - since the age of 15		
			No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	
<b>Occupation</b>	Professional	%	94	7	99	2	93	7	
		Number	132	9	139	2	131	10	
	Manager	%	80	21	100	0	80	21	
		Number	5	1	7	0	5	1	
	Military	%	100	0	100	0	100	0	
		Number	1	0	1	0	1	0	
<b>Household income</b>	Living comfortably on present income	%	92	8	99	1	91	9	
		Number	402	35	435	3	400	38	
	Coping on present income	%	94	6	98	2	93	7	
		Number	1096	75	1152	19	1087	84	
	Finding it difficult on present income	%	90	11	95	5	86	14	
		Number	238	28	252	14	229	37	
	Finding it very difficult on present income	%	78	22	95	5	75	25	
		Number	79	23	96	5	76	25	
	<b>Conflict-affected</b>	Yes	%	90	10	98	2	89	11
			Number	465	51	506	10	461	56
No		%	93	8	98	2	91	9	
		Number	1393	113	1475	32	1375	132	
<b>Bank account owner</b>	Yes	%	92	8	98	2	91	9	
		Number	1293	108	1377	24	1278	123	
	No	%	91	9	97	3	90	10	
		Number	555	53	591	17	546	61	

## Prevalence of sexual harassment and stalking

			Sexual harassment - since the age of 15		The most severe forms of sexual harassment - since the age of 15		Stalking - since the age of 15	
			No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Total</b>		%	58	42	77	23	89	11
		Number	1178	845	1558	465	1793	230
<b>Residential area</b>	Urban	%	54	46	74	26	87	13
		Number	687	575	935	327	1102	160
	Rural	%	65	36	82	18	91	9
		Number	491	270	623	138	691	70
<b>Age category</b>	18–29	%	46	54	70	30	85	15
		Number	159	184	241	102	293	50
	30–39	%	57	43	76	25	87	13
		Number	209	155	275	89	317	47
	40–49	%	57	43	78	22	90	11
		Number	212	159	288	83	332	39
	50–59	%	62	38	78	22	89	11
		Number	237	145	297	85	341	41
	60+	%	64	36	81	19	91	9
		Number	359	201	456	105	510	51
<b>Education</b>	None	%	59	41	59	41	94	6
		Number	8	5	8	5	12	1
	Primary	%	68	32	83	17	87	13
		Number	44	21	54	11	56	8
	Secondary	%	59	41	79	21	89	11
		Number	860	603	1151	311	1298	165
	Tertiary	%	55	45	72	28	89	12
		Number	267	216	345	137	427	55
<b>Ever had a partner</b>		%	58	42	77	24	89	11
		Number	1127	819	1489	457	1727	219
<b>Children</b>	Yes	%	61	39	79	21	91	10
		Number	971	610	1253	327	1430	151
	No	%	47	53	69	31	82	18
		Number	206	235	303	137	362	79

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			Sexual harassment - since the age of 15		The most severe forms of sexual harassment - since the age of 15		Stalking - since the age of 15	
			No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Employment</b>	In paid work	%	55	45	76	24	89	11
		Number	411	331	561	181	658	84
	Self-employed	%	42	58	63	38	88	12
		Number	27	37	40	24	56	8
	Helping in a family business (unpaid)	%	39	61	65	35	73	27
		Number	9	14	15	8	17	6
	Unemployed	%	59	41	77	23	86	14
		Number	253	177	332	98	371	59
	A pupil, student, in training	%	46	54	72	28	89	11
		Number	60	71	95	37	117	14
	Not working due to illness or disability	%	74	26	89	11	100	
		Number	5	2	6	1	7	
Fulfilling domestic duties and care responsibilities	%	75	25	88	12	91	9	
	Number	114	39	135	18	139	14	
Retired	%	63	37	79	21	91	9	
	Number	298	175	376	98	429	45	
<b>Occupation</b>	Elementary occupations	%	49	52	78	22	79	21
		Number	74	79	119	34	121	32
	Plant and machine operator and assembler	%	55	45	66	34	92	8
		Number	19	16	23	12	32	3
	Building, crafts or a related tradesperson	%	41	59	60	41	90	10
		Number	14	20	20	14	31	3
	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	%	61	39	75	25	94	6
		Number	27	17	33	11	41	2
	Sales, customer or personal service worker	%	55	46	77	23	90	10
		Number	76	64	108	32	127	13
	Clerical support	%	63	37	79	21	92	8
		Number	95	55	118	32	138	13
	Technician or associate professional	%	51	49	70	31	86	14
		Number	58	56	79	35	97	16
	Professional	%	52	48	72	28	90	10
		Number	73	68	102	40	127	15
	Manager	%	32	68	60	40	100	
		Number	2	5	4	3	7	



		Sexual harassment - since the age of 15		The most severe forms of sexual harassment - since the age of 15		Stalking - since the age of 15		
		No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	
		%		%		%		
	Number	1		1		1		
<b>Household income</b>	Living comfortably on present income	%	59	41	76	24	93	8
		Number	258	180	331	107	405	33
	Coping on present income	%	58	42	78	22	89	11
		Number	678	494	911	260	1039	132
	Finding it difficult on present income	%	60	40	77	23	85	15
		Number	160	106	206	61	226	40
Finding it very difficult on present income	%	53	47	69	31	79	21	
	Number	54	48	70	32	80	21	
<b>Conflict-affected</b>	Yes	%	64	37	78	22	89	11
		Number	328	189	404	113	458	59
	No	%	56	44	77	23	89	11
		Number	850	657	1154	352	1336	171
<b>Bank account owner</b>	Yes	%	57	43	76	24	89	11
		Number	801	600	1064	337	1247	153
	No	%	61	40	80	21	88	12
		Number	368	240	483	125	533	75

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