

Forms of violence

Gender-based violence is enacted under many different manifestations, from its most widespread form, [intimate partner violence](#), to acts of violence carried out in online spaces. These different forms are not mutually exclusive and multiple incidences of violence can be happening at once and reinforcing each other. Inequalities experienced by a person related to their race, (dis)ability, age, social class, religion, sexuality can also drive acts of violence. This means that while women face violence and discrimination based on gender, some women experience multiple and interlocking forms of violence.

The Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence), defines violence against women as falling under four key forms: physical, sexual, psychological and economic.

EIGE has produced and uses uniform definitions of these forms of violence, which encourage comprehensive understanding of what falls under the scope of gender-based violence. For current statistical data on these forms of gender-based violence please check [EIGE's Gender-Statistics Database](#).

Physical violence

Any act which causes physical harm as a result of unlawful physical force. Physical violence can take the form of, among others, serious and minor assault, deprivation of liberty and manslaughter.

Sexual violence

Any sexual act performed on an individual without their consent. Sexual violence can take the form of rape or sexual assault.

Psychological violence

Any act which causes psychological harm to an individual. Psychological violence can take the form of, for example, coercion, defamation, verbal insult or harassment.

Economic violence

Any act or behaviour which causes economic harm to an individual. Economic violence can take the form of, for example, property damage, restricting access to financial resources, education or the labour market, or not complying with economic responsibilities, such as alimony.

It is also important to recognise that gender-based violence may be normalised and reproduced due to structural inequalities, such as societal norms, attitudes and stereotypes around gender generally and violence against women specifically. Therefore it is important to acknowledge **structural or institutional violence**, which can be defined as the subordination of women in economic, social and political life, when attempting to explain the prevalence of violence against women within our societies.

Learn more about gender-based violence

[EIGE's Gender Statistics Database](#)



[EIGE's Gender Equality Index](#)



[Publications by EIGE](#)

