

Risk assessment and risk management by police

Principle 4: Adopting an intersectional approach

Expected result: Police officers trained in intersectional approach will have a better understanding of how to develop tailor-made risk management strategies in a non-discriminatory manner, in compliance with Article 4 on fundamental rights, equality and non-discrimination of the Istanbul Convention.

Key elements for applying an intersectional approach to risk assessment

In applying an intersectional approach to risk assessment, police leadership should ensure the following.

- The characteristics of each individual case are considered when identifying victims' individual safety needs, including the victim's gender and gender identity or expression, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, residence status, communication difficulties, relationship to or dependence on the perpetrator and previous experience of crime.
- All possible barriers to accessing support and protection are identified and police facilitate victims' access to specialist support services as appropriate (on embedding police risk assessment in a multiagency framework, see [Step 5](#)).
- The most appropriate and effective risk management strategies are developed according to the risk level identified and respond to the individual characteristics and safety needs of the victim.

Risk assessment must incorporate information about women’s race, disability, age, religion, immigration status, ethnicity and sexual orientation (93).

Risk assessment tools and practices should enable an effective response that includes consideration of the circumstances and life experiences of each individual. The personal characteristics of a victim (94) are crucial in identifying victims’ individual safety needs and possible barriers to accessing support and protection. For example, women migrants and asylum seekers may face increased risk of violence and negative impacts of abuse, not because their ethnicity causes an increase in the risk in itself but because they have uncertain status, language difficulties or limited knowledge of their rights, or because they suffer prejudice and stereotyping.

The value of adopting an intersectional approach to risk assessment is the ability to develop tailor-made risk management and prevention strategies that will address those factors that render some women disproportionately more vulnerable to intimate partner violence. Furthermore, some women will experience additional barriers to accessing certain types of interventions, reducing the likelihood that their individual safety needs will be effectively addressed. Understanding intersectionality helps to ensure that responses to intimate partner violence are appropriate and effective for all women.