

Gender-based violence



If you, or someone you know, is in immediate danger, call 112 and ask for the police. If you are not in immediate danger and need help or assistance, you are encouraged to contact one of the helplines for victims of violence in your country [here](#).

In times of crisis and natural disasters, there is a documented rise in domestic abuse^[1]. As normal life shuts down, victims – who are usually women – can be exposed to abusers for long periods of time and cut off from social and institutional support.

We do not yet have comparable EU-wide data but some countries have already provided initial figures showing a spike in domestic violence during lockdown. For example, France saw a 32 % jump in domestic violence reports in just over a week. Lithuania observed 20 % more domestic violence reports over a three-week lockdown period than over the same period in 2019.

Even outside times of crisis, women face the greatest danger from people they know. Globally, 64 % of women who are killed die at the hands of an intimate partner or family member^[2]. In the EU, more than a fifth of women have been physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner^[3].

The financial instability that often prevents domestic violence victims from leaving abusers can also worsen in view of job and income losses and a looming recession.

See EIGE commenting on this issue in [Euractiv](#) and [The Washington Post](#).

What policymakers need to know

- EU member state policies to address the impact of Covid-19 must keep the issue of gender-based violence as a priority as lockdown measures increase vulnerability.
- EU member states must implement risk management measures involving the police, justice and health sectors to ensure a coordinated response to the increased risk of gender-based violence.
- Data collection on violence against women should be harmonised between EU member states to ensure the phenomenon can be adequately measured and addressed. This would help identify changing patterns of violence in times of crisis.

For more information

[Risk assessment and management of intimate partner violence in the EU - report](#)

[A guide to risk assessment and risk management of intimate partner violence against women for police - report](#)

[Understanding intimate partner violence in the EU: the role of data - report](#)

Browse our [Gender Statistics Database](#) for more statistics on this topic

An analysis of the Victims' Rights Directive from a gender perspective

Estimating the costs of gender-based violence in the European Union - report

Endnotes

[1] World Health Organization (2005), [Violence and disasters](#)

[2] UNODC (2019), [Global study on homicide: Gender-related killing of women and girls](#)

[3] FRA (2014), [Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results report](#)
